

# Clearly Speaking

Speech language pathologist Cheran Zadroga helps kids boost their self-esteem while having fun at the same time.

By Matt Bendell



COURTESY OF CHERAN ZADROGA

Cheran Zadroga not only assists students in learning—but continues to learn herself.

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**C**heran Zadroga may be a hard name to say for anyone, but for some of Zadroga’s students names like John Smith or Jane Doe are just as hard to say. As a certified speech-language pathologist (SLP) Zadroga spends countless hours helping students at Moss Park Elementary in **Lake Nona** get over their speech and language impediments, gain self-confidence and have fun doing it.

Whether it’s helping someone speak without a lisp or helping someone relearn to talk after a brain injury, speech and language pathologists can work in a variety of settings; such as hospitals, home health care, private practices, nursing homes and public schools.

As the child of two teachers, Zadroga thought at first that teaching was not for her. Then one day she was invited to observe children in the University of Central Florida’s Communication Sciences and Disorder Clinic. Seeing the children struggle with their speech and eventually succeed, she realized teaching was her destiny. “I want to inspire children and let them know that with hard work, dedication and a positive attitude they can all be successful.”

By investigating various techniques as well as researching and creating new ones, Zadroga has been able to effectively make a difference for her students. She says, in order to be a successful speech-

language pathologist you have to be creative, think outside the box and be passionate about what you are doing.

Zadroga recalls one student in particular who has a fluency disorder and stuttered. Together, they discussed the student’s feelings about how her classmates reacted to her speech and what response she would like to see from them in support of her.

“We researched famous people who overcame shuttering problems, like athletes, actors, and musicians,” Zadroga says. Then, along with the student, Zadroga gave a presentation to her entire class discussing famous stutterers and how they overcame their speech impediments. “Simply taking the time to listen to someone who stutters, not finishing their sentences and not speaking over them can give them all the confidence they need to overcome and move forward.”

Zadroga says she loves being in the classroom and working with her fellow teachers. Fourth-grade teacher **Katie Riggan** says “Cheran goes above and beyond to enhance student achievement while making learning fun and exciting for everyone.” Fellow SLP **Janet Proly**, too has seen Zadroga’s dedication firsthand. “Beyond her full-time employment as an SLP, Cheran is passionate about improving her own skills in the areas of language and literacy,” says Proly.

Naturally, one of the things that makes Zadroga such a good teacher is the fact that she remains teachable and continues her own education. Today, Zadroga is currently working on completing her doctorate in SLP. **L**

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Learn more about speech-language pathology and Cheran’s research at [CentralFloridaLifestyle.com](http://CentralFloridaLifestyle.com).