

Press Release



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LDS to partner with Talaria, Inc. on newly awarded Small Business Innovative Research grant

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Talaria Inc, was recently awarded a Small Business Innovative Research grant for \$150,235 by the National Institute of Nursing Research to develop the Intercultural Communication Workshop. The multimedia internet-based educational tool will integrate instruction in accent, language, culture, and U.S. healthcare practices and assessment tools to improve the overall communicative competence of foreign-born healthcare providers. *Lorna Sikorski*, M.A., CCC, of **LDS & Associates, LLC** will collaborate with Dr. Eileen Van Schaik, **Talaria, Inc.** to develop an online version of the POEC Screen and the TEPL accent and ESL assessment tools, and to develop Module 1 of the workshop on speech intelligibility.

“Building effective communication – especially a good accent for English – is always challenging for adult language learners. For medical professionals, it’s a critical skill in patient care. I look forward to some productive research and development to extend the usefulness of our accent improvement tools to the increasingly popular concept of online education,” said *Lorna Sikorski*.

“This is an exciting opportunity to help foreign-born healthcare providers prepare to work in the American healthcare system. Better understanding of American language and culture will lead to improved provider and patient satisfaction,” said *Dr. Eileen Van Schaik*.

In Phase I of the grant, the **Intercultural Communication Workshop** will add instruction for improving vocabulary, communication skills, and knowledge of U.S. culture.

About LDS Associates

Based in Orange County, California, LDS & Associates specializes in the design and implementation of communication programs for foreign born professionals. Lorna D. Sikorski, M.A., CCC-SP, President of LDS, has emphasized adult second language learners for the past twenty years. In addition to running LDS & Associates Publishing, Ms. Sikorski has conducted professional training seminars on accent throughout the U.S. and Canada since 1984. She is also an active trainer for accented adults in the U.S. and in select international settings

About Talaria, Inc.

Based in Seattle, Washington, Talaria, Inc. develops online healthcare education courses for providers and patients. Talaria has received over 15 NIH SBIR grant awards since its inception.