



# Graduate Student Spotlight



## Gwyneth Rost

**PhD - Speech Pathology and Audiology**

*BS, French - Grinnell College*

*MA, Linguistics - University of Louisville*

*MS, Communication Disorders - University of Louisville*

**Winner of Honorable Mention in the Social Sciences & Education Division at the 2007 James F. Jakobsen Graduate Conference**

**Please describe your thesis project in a short sentence.**

*I am interested in qualities of learners and of specific words that affect the ease with which children learn words. Specifically, does the variety of items that can be named by a given word affect the way children learn that word?*

**How did you decide to go to graduate school?**

*I found that I loved research, and going to grad school gave me the opportunity to do – and learn – something meaningful, useful, and that I love.*

**What made you decide to go to graduate school at Iowa?**

*I love Iowa! I really believe that I couldn't get a better education anywhere else, so when Karla McGregor (with whom I had wanted to work) took a job here, it was too good to pass up.*

**What are your long-term goals beyond your graduate degree?**

*I hope to have a career researching language- and word-learning in children.*

**How has being a graduate student at Iowa prepared you to achieve those goals?**

*Not only have I gotten the opportunity to study at a top-tier research university, and in one of the best programs in the nation, but there's an atmosphere of collaboration rather than competition, so I have studied with several, not just one, of the best minds in the field. I've gotten to work in multiple labs, on many projects, and to work through the thinking about those projects, which has been invaluable.*

**You are a winner of one of the top awards at the Jakobsen Conference in a previous year. What did you enjoy most about the Jakobsen Conference experience?**

*I enjoyed getting the chance to talk with students whose experiences were so different from – and yet so similar to – my own. The conference opened my eyes to the variety of research being done on campus, and I was really pleased by the number of people with such interesting research programs of their own that had questions and ideas for me.*

**What are some of your interests outside of school?**

*I love cooking and baking, spending time with family, crafts, watching movies and t.v., and reading.*

**Do you have a particular mentor who has played an important role in the development of your thesis or your career trajectory?**

*Karla McGregor, my mentor in the Department of Speech Pathology & Audiology and Bob McMurray, in the Department of Psychology, have both been extraordinarily generous in allowing me to participate in their work and to build my own research programs in their labs.*

