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Share your voice and help Georgia Southern give a voice to those who have lost their own

April 28, 2022

Approximately 7.5 million people in the United States have trouble using their voice, according to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders. Georgia Southern University's RiteCare Center for Communication Sciences and Disorders is on a mission to help those people improve their communication skills.

The center is hosting its second annual Voice Drive to collect voice recordings that will then be submitted to VOCALiD, a voice artificial intelligence company. VOCALiD crafts custom, synthetic voices using state-of-the-art machine learning and speech-blending algorithms.

According to VOCALiD, by sharing your voice through the human voicebank, you are providing the opportunity for others to experience the gift of a unique voice. Donations provided to the voice bank become customized digital voices. The more individuals who donate their voices, the more options a person who has lost their voice is able to choose from, allowing them the opportunity to find a voice that better matches their personality and identity.

These recordings can be later used by individuals with voice-speech loss, such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), apraxia, aphasia and Huntington's disease, among others.

Approximately 3,500 sentences are needed to create a complete digital voice. This takes an average of 5-7 hours and recordings are broken up into 10-15 minute sessions over the course of several weeks.

Recordings can be submitted from your own home via your own schedule. You will need a computer and a microphone headset. The deadline to submit recordings is May 11.

For additional information, please contact Tory Candea at tcandea@georgiasouthern.edu.

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