

## **HLAA-NJ NEWS, VIEWS & DATES – JUNE 2015**

***By Joel Strasser, APR, Fellow PRSA, Trustee and Public Information Officer, Hearing Loss Association of New Jersey (HLAA-NJ)***

### **Four HLAA-NJ Scholarship Winners Announced**

This year's 2015 HLAA-NJ College Scholarship winners of our \$1,500 individual awards have been announced, and their checks and certificates will be presented at a special awards ceremony on Sunday, June 14 in Chatham, NJ. This year's winners include:

- Matthew J. Cabrera, senior at Marist High School, Bayonne, who plans to attend Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY.
- Charles M. Castillo, senior at Seneca High School, Tabernacle, NJ, who plans to attend American University, Washington, DC.
- Claire M. Fitzpatrick, senior at Verona High School, Verona, NJ, who plans to attend University of Scranton, Scranton, PA.
- Kayla I. Raquel, senior at Mountain Lakes High School, Mountain Lakes, NJ, who plans to attend Gallaudet University, Washington, DC.

Here are details on the award ceremony and social:

Date and Time: Sunday June 14, 3-5 PM

Place: Gloria dei Lutheran Church, 300 Shunpike Road, Chatham, NJ

Please note that all are invited to attend, including spouses, and that both the building and parking are handicap accessible. DDHH is expected to provide both CART and two interpreters, in as much as two of our winners use ASL, though not necessarily exclusively. Scholarship chair Alice Glock seeks volunteers from among our members for various functions, including some of the presentations, so please contact Alice at [aglock@optimum.net](mailto:aglock@optimum.net) to offer your assistance.

### **News of HLAA-NJ Local Chapters**

**HLAA-Bergen County Chapter** is finalizing plans for future meetings, and welcomes contact from interested potential members and leaders, who are invited to contact Ken Keuhlen at [kbk1011@hotmail.com](mailto:kbk1011@hotmail.com)

**HLAA-Essex County Chapter** will meet **Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup>** at the Union Public Library, 2nd Floor, 1980 Morris Avenue, Union, NJ, to celebrate the month of May as Better Hearing and Speech Month. The meeting is from 11:30 a.m. – 1:45 p.m. Please join us for a roundtable discussion on why early identification and early intervention for hearing loss are so important.

Special guest speaker is Gina Petrus Thomas. She is an advocate for increasing hearing loss awareness and mother of a 4-year-old daughter, Gianna, who was born with hearing loss and wears cochlear implants. Gina has been active wherever she goes including being nominated and elected as a HearStrong Champion, Active participating in ballet at the local ballet school, has a team name in the NJ Walk4Hearing for past 3 years (Princess Gianna)

**HLAA-Essex County Chapter** will meet Saturday, **June 13<sup>th</sup>** at the Union Public Library, 2<sup>nd</sup> Flr. 1980 Morris Avenue, Union, NJ, from 11:30 to 1:45 PM. Please join us to learn more about Clear Captions and get your free phone, “Ensemble, Words Matter, powered by Clear Captions. Ensemble is for the 48 million Americans with hearing loss, for those who don’t take conversations for granted, and those who understand the weight and meaning of words. Ensemble is a captioned phone that displays text of conversations in near real-time on a large color touchscreen so the listener can see and hear what callers are saying.”

Special guest speaker is Scott Ferrante, Territory Manager for ClearCaptions, New York and New Jersey. Please join us to learn more about ClearCaptions and “get the whole conversation” buzz!!

Also, Dr. Leslie Herman, Doctor of Audiology at Summit Hearing Aid Center, will speak. For nearly 30 years, Dr. Herman and her staff have provided patients of all ages with the highest level of care in the diagnosis and treatment of hearing loss. She will share the importance of hearing healthcare and how an audiologist can help you hear your best. Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART) will be provided by the State of NJ, Dept. of Human Services, Division of Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

**HLAA-Middlesex County Chapter**, which meets every 3rd Tuesday each month from September to June, except July or August, meets next on **Tuesday, June 16**, 7:30 pm, First Baptist Church of South Plainfield, 201 Hamilton Blvd., South Plainfield, NJ 07080. The meeting room is looped and the speaker will provide a sign interpreter as well as a CART reporter.

**HLAA-Morris County Chapter** will meet **Saturday, May 30th** at the Summit Speech School at 705 Central Ave, New Providence, NJ. Come to our Coffee and Conversation from 10:00 to 10:30 as a great way to make new friendships and learn from one another. Meeting from 10:30 to 12:30. Please note that this is a different location than was announced previously.

Special guest will be Pamela A. Paskowitz who will talk about Aural Rehabilitation. She is the Executive Director of Summit Speech School. She has a doctorate from Ohio University in speech pathology and a master's degree in education of the deaf from Smith College. As a firm believer in Aural Rehabilitation, she will share what it is and how it can help us to hear better. Please join us to learn practical information on improving our hearing.

In addition, Morris County is looking to attract **18 - 35 year olds** so they can start their own group. Please pass this info to anyone in that age group. Questions? Contact: [Pat.Dobbs@HLAA-NJ.Org](mailto:Pat.Dobbs@HLAA-NJ.Org).

**HLAA-Morris County Chapter on Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup>** will have a booth at the fun *Fishawack Festival* in Chatham from 9:00 to 4:00. Come join the fun. Also if you'd like to volunteer to help man the booth, contact Ann Marie Picardo at [anmpicardo@netzero.net](mailto:anmpicardo@netzero.net).

**HLAA-South Jersey Shore Chapter** will meet **June 18th**, 5:30 pm – 8:00 pm, at Cape Regional Medical Center, 2 Stone Harbor Blvd., Cape May Court House, NJ 08210. GSP to Exit 10.

**Other organizations of interest:**

**Ocean-Monmouth Hearing Loss Support Group's** next meeting is **Sunday, June 7th** at 1:30pm at the Manalapan Library, 125 Symmes Drive, Manalapan. Special guest will be Debby Schaser, owner and founder of Canine Hearing

Companions, Inc., of Vineland, NJ. She has been training hearing dogs for the past 22 years, with the active help of local federal prison inmates, and can also talk about therapy dogs who help returning war veterans suffering from PTSD and also make hospital visits, clinical dogs, crisis dogs and others. She usually brings one of her trained dogs to demonstrate what they can do. Mark your calendar prominently for this special program on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Walk4Hearing Important Dates, Events and How to Contribute**

**Sunday, August 30, 2015** – Walk4Hearing KickOff event will be held at Maggiano's Little Italy, located in "The Shops at Riverside," 70 Riverside Square Mall, Hackensack, NJ. **RSVP by: August 21, 2015 to:** Ann Marie Olsen, [Newjerseywalk4hearing@hotmail.com](mailto:Newjerseywalk4hearing@hotmail.com) or 347-731-1883.

There are several purposes for holding a Kickoff event before a Walk. They are to gather as many confirmed and likely potential supporters of the Walk together to motivate them to support it, to provide supporters with some basic training on how to use the materials distributed at the Kickoff to organize a team of walkers to participate and raise money for the Walk.

**Sunday, October 18, 2015** – Walk4Hearing: Mercer County Park, Hughes Drive, West Windsor and Hamilton, NJ, 10 AM, Registration and Check-In; 11 AM, Walk begins.

Walk4Hearing events are fundraising 5K (3.1 miles) walks held across the United States. Since its formation in 2006, Walk4Hearing has raised over \$9 million dollars for programs and services for people with hearing loss, and has grown into the largest awareness and fundraising event for the [Hearing Loss Association of America® \(HLAA\)](#). Collaborating with local HLAA chapters, Walk4Hearing educates the general public about hearing loss while easing the associated stigma. Striving to make hearing loss a public health issue, thousands of people of all ages, races, and backgrounds have come together to display their compassion for the cause and to make hearing loss an issue of national concern. For further details about the HLAA-NJ Walk, contact Wayne Roorda at [bigbearnj@gmail.com](mailto:bigbearnj@gmail.com)



### **Be Sure to Correctly Designate Your Intended Walk Beneficiary**

If it's the donor's intention to benefit people with hearing loss *inside* the State of New Jersey, it's important to understand the importance of registering correctly. Donor's first choice should be to designate "HLAA New Jersey State Association," as 50% is shared with HLAA National (which is what happens with any designation) - and 40% would go to HLAA-NJ. Also, as there are other alliance teams, those are listed for people who already know specifically whom they're designating their 40% proceeds for. All others, or just anyone wanting to participate in the NJ Walk4Hearing should be selecting HLAA New Jersey State Association if they are not specifically intending to donate to any other group. In prior years, some Walk funds did not go to donors intended beneficiaries because they were not correctly designated during the registration process.

Walk checks should be made payable to "NJ Walk4Hearing." It is important for each donor to carefully select what gets checked off when registering to participate in the Walk. On the first online page, there's a dropdown list of "alliance teams". HLAA New Jersey State Association is listed first - and unless people are walking for specific other causes (like AGBell, or Summit Speech School), then they should choose HLAA-NJ. There is also a category, "HLAA National," which may have misled donors in prior years. When a donor checks off HLAA National, 90% goes to HLAA National and nothing goes to benefit people with hearing loss inside the state of New Jersey, or HLAA-NJ at the state

level. So, it becomes critically important, both prior to the Walk, and definitely on the day of the Walk, for donors to make the correct designation. It's only after all the money is collected, either by check or credit card, that it is divided up according to the category specifically designated by each respective donor.

### **Puzzle page**

For the solution to last month's puzzle, click on this link:

[http://www.chem.umn.edu/groups/baranygp/puzzles/bionics/Answer\\_Key.pdf](http://www.chem.umn.edu/groups/baranygp/puzzles/bionics/Answer_Key.pdf)

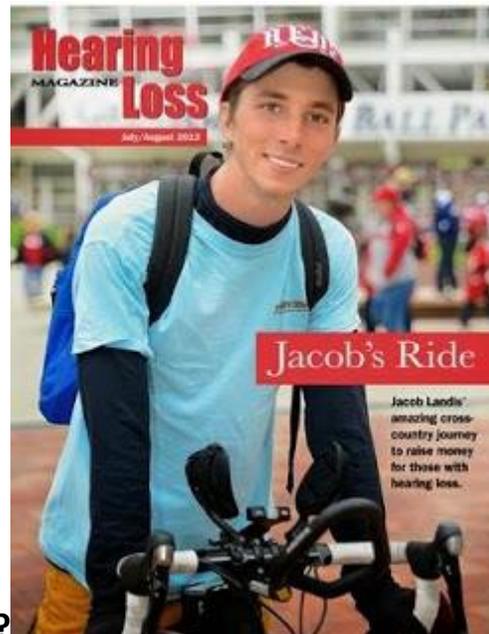
Only one reader correctly identified the familiar HLAA-NJ person named in the puzzle as **Arlene Romoff**. The winner of the puzzle ID contest was Marie Nordling, leader of the Middlesex Chapter.

Support Jacob's Ride in 2015!



*Hitting a home run for hearing* Many of you met Jacob Landis at the 2013 Convention in Portland. A lot of chapters also supported him during his efforts as he rode across the country to visit all 30 Major League Baseball parks to raise awareness and funds for cochlear implant recipients. His mission continues with two rides planned for this year and both offer many chapters in his path a chance to support Jacob right in your hometown. The topline details of his two 2015 rides are below. If your chapter would like to learn more about supporting Jacob and when he will be in your area, please [let me know](#) and I will alert you to the

options that have been suggested by his organization. Or you can connect directly with [his team](mailto:info@jacobsride.org) at: [info@jacobsride.org](mailto:info@jacobsride.org).



**Why does Jacob ride?** **Jacob's Ride** was established in 2013 to raise funds and public awareness about the benefits of cochlear implants for the deaf. Jacob Landis, a cochlear implant recipient, has dedicated himself to helping others receive the gift of hearing.

**TWO rides scheduled for 2015!**

**May 26th-July 19th**

**"Jacob's Ride - Riding for the Gift of Hearing"**

**Coast to Coast, 3,800 miles in 54 days**

This Ride will be a coast-to-coast journey, beginning on the Pacific Ocean at Ventura Beach. First, Jacob will ride to [Advanced Bionics](#) headquarters in Valencia for the official send-off. From there, **Jacob's Ride** will go through Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, Omaha, Kansas City, Saint Louis, Milwaukee, Landisville, and New Holland, PA. The Ride will end in Ocean City, Maryland on July 19, 2015. During

this trip, Jacob plans to attend seven baseball games (four minor league and three major league).

### **August 1st-5th**

#### **"Homerun for Hearing II"**

#### **4 Maryland Ball Parks, 287 miles in 5 Days**

The second Ride will be a quick, short and fun event, with Jacob riding to all four of the minor league teams in Maryland. Jacob will visit the Bowie Baysox on August 1st, the Frederick Keys on August 2nd, the Aberdeen Ironbirds (Cal Ripken's team) on the 3rd and the Delmarva Shorebirds in Salisbury on August 5th. We plan to encourage other bicyclists to ride along. More details will be posted as they are finalized.

**Learn more at:** <http://jacobsride.org>

HLAA National works at the national level to make life better for people with hearing loss. Periodically, we bring you the news on hot issues, but you can always [read the latest Advocacy News and Updates on our website](#). For more information or comments, [email Lise Hamlin](#), director of public policy at HLAA.

### **Advocacy Updates**

## **HLAA Board of Trustees Takes a Stand on the Affordability and Accessibility of Hearing Technology and Hearing Health Care**

The HLAA Board has adopted three new policy statements which are posted on HLAA's website on the [Policy Statements page](#). Below is a short summary of each of the statements.

### **>> Medicare Coverage of Hearing Aids and Aural Rehabilitation**

Medicare covers hearing evaluation only if a physician orders the tests, and the purpose of the test is largely diagnostic, that is, to select the type of medical or surgical treatment needed for a hearing loss or other medical issues. Medicare explicitly excludes "hearing aids or examinations for the purposes of prescribing, fitting, or changing hearing aids." Because hearing aids are statutorily excluded under Medicare, any coverage for Medicare beneficiaries will require amending Title 18 of the Social Security Act.

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) supports amending Title 18 of the Social Security Act to include coverage of hearing examinations for the purposes of prescribing, fitting or changing hearing aids, coverage of the hearing instruments themselves and aural rehabilitation.

### **>> Screening for Hearing Loss in Primary Health Care Settings**

According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD), National Institutes of Health, more than 36 million Americans report that they have hearing loss, 10 percent of the U.S. population. A study by researchers at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, which based its statistics on audiometric testing, found that one in five Americans age 12 and over, approximately 48 million people in the U.S., has a hearing loss. It is also well documented that hearing loss adversely affects quality of life and is linked to other serious health conditions, including falls, depression, and cognitive decline. At the same time, access to hearing health care and the technology that could help people with hearing loss is hindered because consumers face multiple barriers which include a complex and confusing system. One such barrier is lack of screening in primary care. Reports indicate that hearing screening in primary care is uncommon,

occurring approximately 17-30 percent of the time even in elderly individuals who are at risk for hearing loss.

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) supports the inclusion of a standardized approach to screening for hearing loss in primary health care settings that includes both a subjective and objective component in all adults during routine physicals; the “Welcome to Medicare” assessment; and Medicare annual risk assessments, that are accomplished in primary care settings.

### **>> Wider Access to the Full Spectrum of Hearing Technology Benefiting People with Hearing Loss**

According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD), National Institutes of Health, access to devices and emerging technologies that could help people with hearing loss is limited because consumers face multiple barriers, including a system that is confusing and involves competing interests. This thwarts the ability of the individual to find the best and most affordable options to address his or her particular situation.

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) supports a hearing health care system that provides consumers access to the full spectrum of safe and effective hearing technology to meet their individual needs. This model should include:

Easy access to the full spectrum of hearing technology based on individual need and ability to pay. Hearing technologies include hearing aids and the full range of assistive listening devices including personal sound amplification products (PSAPs).

- To the greatest degree possible, hearing technology should not be proprietary and should be usable by consumers of all brands of hearing devices.
- Access to appropriate hearing technology through multiple points of entry, including: hearing health care specialists (audiologists, hearing aid specialists, otolaryngologists); direct website access; pharmacies; and retail outlets.

- Creation of functional performance standards for all hearing technology.
- Utilization of multiple platforms – websites, informational brochures, product labeling and in-store information – to provide the information and education needed to ensure informed consumer decision making, including, but not limited to:
  - expected performance of the hearing technology;
  - means of comparison to other similar hearing technology;
  - and
  - limitations of the hearing technology

## ADVOCACY

### FCC

HLAA National, along with other advocacy and consumer groups, wrote to Chairman Wheeler of the FCC to express our ongoing and serious concern with the Commission's decision to require Video Relay Service (VRS) providers to start collecting deaf, hard of hearing and deaf/blind users' last four digits of their Social Security numbers. Only deaf and hard of hearing users, who account for 50 percent of every relay call, are required to do this. This is unequal treatment and flies in the face of the ADA's mandate for equal access to the telecommunications system. We and the other Consumer Groups have long opposed the collection of Social Security number information for any form of relay service and have made this clear in numerous FCC ex partes and filings going back to May 2012.

## **Friends of the Congressional Hearing Health Caucus**

The Friends of the Congressional Hearing Health Caucus (FCHHC), an alliance of hearing health organizations including HLAA, is hosting a briefing luncheon on Thursday, June 11, from 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m. at the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

Brenda Fitzgerald, M.D., Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Public Health, and Dana Suskind, M.D., Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics at the University of Chicago Medicine, will present at the luncheon which will focus on improving outcomes for families and children who are deaf and hard of hearing, and providing an overview of developments in Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) programs to increase positive outcomes for children from birth through pre-school.

To RSVP for the forum, please call or email Matthew Jones at 202.712.9050 or [mjones@bostrom.com](mailto:mjones@bostrom.com). Anyone local to the Washington Metro Area is encouraged to attend to help raise awareness of HLAA and our mission!

## **Department of Justice Meeting**

The Policy and Strategy and Disability Rights Sections of the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, has invited HLAA along with other disability rights groups to attend a listening session on June 10 with Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Vanita Gupta and other representatives of the Division to discuss our concerns about civil rights priorities, including strategic enforcement, legislative, and policy goals. Anna Gilmore Hall will attend that meeting.

## **Real Time TEXT**

Lise Hamlin representing HLAA National attended a Real Time Text demo at the Washington, DC office of AT&T. The demo focused on the ability of web-enabled mobile devices to provide text information in real time. But also of note is that RTT is also capable of providing text-supported voice calls. So, someone with a hearing loss could have a voice call, and ask for text whenever he/she didn't understand what was being said. However, AT&T is the only provider that has

announced rolling out RTT. That means that RTT will be used only on AT&T products and services; there is yet a required standard in place that would ensure that RTT to be interoperable with all products and providers. This will not happen quickly. AT&T expects the rollout to happen in 2017.

For more information, see AT&T's blog at [http://about.att.com/content/csr/home/blog/2015/05/modernizing\\_real-tim.html](http://about.att.com/content/csr/home/blog/2015/05/modernizing_real-tim.html)

### Get in the Hearing Loop Campaign

HCAA Chapters and State organizations interested in seeing HCAA's new Looping Advocates Tool Kit and talking about their current and future looping activities are invited to a meeting on Friday, June 26 from 1:30 p.m.-2:45 p.m. Please RSVP to Lisa Devlin at [ldevlin@hearingloss.org](mailto:ldevlin@hearingloss.org). Details and agenda will be sent out as the date gets closer.

### PUBLIC AWARENESS



This year, we mark 25 years since President George H.W. Bush signed “the world's first comprehensive declaration of equality for people with disabilities.” And there is much more work to do – this is why we are asking for your support. The [ADA National Network \(ADANN\)](#) was established following the signing of the ADA, with [ten regional Centers](#) to provide ADA information, guidance, and training on the ADA in local communities throughout the country. The ADANN is participating in a number of “ADA25” celebration activities and events, and we encourage you to get involved.

Sign the [personal pledge](#) and/or the [organizational proclamation](#) and the [faith-based proclamation](#) supporting the principles of inclusion and the implementation of the ADA, and encourage others to do so.

**Check** out the [ADA25 Anniversary Tool Kit](#) often for news and updates; explore for publications, captioned videos, tips for writing press releases, a sample pledge and proclamation, information on how to find and use disability statistics, material on the background and history of the ADA, and other resources to help you plan and participate in observations and accessible celebrations.

**Discover** local [events through our ADA National Network](#) or [add your own organization's event](#) to the calendar. **Connect** with the [ADA Legacy Tour](#) as it makes its way around our country and on to Washington, DC this July 26. **See the following site for all above links:** <http://adaanniversary.org/pledge>.



May is Better Hearing and Speech Month! Sound Focus is donating \$5 to the Hearing Loss Association of America for every **AMP** pre-order through 5/31. Amp is a case for your iPhone that enhances sound by tuning to your hearing, tastes and environment around you. Co-founder Alex Selig was born with hearing loss and chose HLAA as a way of giving back. See <https://www.ampaudio.com/m/bhsm>

### **Sue Thomas FBEye Needs an Accessible Van**

Remember the TV series, Sue Thomas, FBEye? This message comes from the "real" Sue Thomas to HLAA: As a Motivational Speaker who is not only deaf but also afflicted with multiple sclerosis, I am in a contest to try and win an accessible vehicle that will enable me to keep traveling and speaking. Can you spread the word about the contest for me? Thanks so much, Sue Thomas.

See <https://lnkd.in/dpuCvDW>. You can vote for Sue Thomas once a day through 5/31!

Read more about Sue at <http://www.suethomasfbeye.com/Pages/default.aspx>

### **National Board of Trustee Members**

Board member, Dr. Jack Wazen is presenting five papers at the International Symposium on Osseointegration on guess what – Osseointegration!

Please check out Katherine Bouton's blog on Love Theater But Can't Hear it? Four Showstopping Solutions

<http://blog.aarp.org/2015/05/20/love-theater-but-cant-hear-it-four-show-stopping-solutions/>

## CHAPTERS IN THE NEWS

### New Jersey chapter supports children's cause

The Essex County Chapter honored National Red Nose Day on Thursday, at an event sponsored by Save the Children, by donning their red noses. The chapter has positioned itself as an all-family support group already drawing a strong group of parents and children with hearing loss to its several meetings plus community



events since opening.

## CONVENTION

**Registration deadline – May 31 – JUST A FEW DAYS LEFT TO REGISTER!**

Register today at <http://www.hearingloss.org/content/registration>



The **mobile Convention app**, sponsored by CTIA-The Wireless Association®, is now available in app stores. Just search for HLAA2015 in the following:

Google Play: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details>

BlackBerry World:

<https://appworld.blackberry.com/webstore/content/59960356/>

Apple Store:

<https://itunes.apple.com/WebObj.../MZStore.woa/.../viewSoftware...>

Windows Phone Store: <http://www.windowsphone.com/.../9229a039-b79d-4bbb-9cda-8d228...>

You can also use the app on any device with a browser – just go to [eventmobi.com/HLAA2015](http://eventmobi.com/HLAA2015)

Use the mobile Convention app and ***Play to Win!***

### **5 Fabulous Prizes!**

1st Prize: iPad Mini 3 + Case

2nd Prize: Roger Pen + Roger MyLink by Phonak

3rd Prize: Complimentary Full-Activity Package for Convention 2016 + 3 nights at the Washington Hilton in DC

4th Prize: Roger EasyPen + Roger MyLink by Phonak

5th Prize: Roger Clip-On Mic + Roger MyLink by Phonak

Winners will be announced at the *Rocky Stone: Operation 35* Banquet (winners need not be present to win).

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