

HLAA-NJ NEWS, VIEWS & DATES – MARCH 2016

***Compiled by Joel Strasser, APR, Fellow PRSA, President,
Hearing Loss Association of NJ (HLAA-NJ)***

May 1 HLAA-NJ Scholarship Deadline Looms As New \$1000 Grants Await Bids by 2016 NJ HS Seniors with Hearing Loss

HLAA-NJ's May 1 deadline for this year's scholarship grants loom as applications are now coming in from throughout New Jersey from high school seniors with hearing loss. With funding made possible in part by the successful Garden State Walk4Hearing in October, up to four \$1,000 scholarships are being offered to successful candidates. HLAA-NJ's scholarship program encourages and supports young students by publically celebrating their successes and achievements with hearing loss. Aligned with the HLAA-NJ goal to bring awareness to life challenges of hearing loss, the application requires a thoughtful essay on how hearing loss has impacted the student's life, and how its challenges have been met.

Winners will be announced in May, and an award ceremony and celebration open to all will be held in June (TBA). Students with these qualifications are encouraged to apply: 1) high school senior between the ages of 17 and 20, 2) New Jersey resident, 3) wear hearing aids and/or cochlear implants, 4) acceptance into a college, university or vocational school by June 1, 2016. The official application is posted online at www.hearingloss-nj.org, and can only be submitted online. Application deadline is May 1, 2016, and no late applications will be accepted. Questions about the application forms or process are welcome and may be sent to Latisha Porter-Vaughn, HLAA-NJ Scholarship Chair at latisha.porter-vaughn@hearingloss-nj.org

(Arlene: Please add links if needed or appropriate.)

If You Want Looping, or Accessibility, You Must Ask for It!! Here's How:

Like anything else in life, if you want something, you must ask for it. As a hearing-challenged person, if you need to hear it, you've got to understand it. You've got to insist. And, when insisting takes longer or doesn't work, you've got to persist. Some people will object, or just ignore you. Why? It's not their problem. Or, to them, maybe they see it as a distraction. Or, perhaps it's a cost factor. Whatever – if you need it, it's your constitutional right to have it, so you can understand -- just like everybody else. Don't be timid. It's the law.

HLAA-NJ will soon add a powerful collection of tools to our website designed to help New Jersey hearing loss advocates marshal resources to strongly increase looping

and other forms of improved communications accessibility throughout the state. It will be up to our readers and others throughout the state to put these tools to active use.

When completed, the HLAA-NJ website will provide these features that looping and accessibility requesters can use:

- Backgrounder on Looping Explained: What and How?
- NJ looping installers listing or directory
- List of target facilities where complaints have been filed
- Facility-type eligibility categories, as compiled by Past President Arlene Romoff
- Sample/template complaint letters, for others to follow or emulate
- Names of committee members/activists who have expressed interest in helping
- Sample compliance certifications and graphic symbols
- NJ Accessibility directory (in progress)
- Looping USA directory

As suggested by Past President Arlene Romoff, the following are examples of public venues in New Jersey that should have looping or other assistive listening systems. If they don't, we encourage you to request them:

- Community rooms and auditoriums at senior centers and 55+ communities
- Library meeting rooms
- College and school auditoriums/theaters
- Public rooms at Ys
- Hospital public meeting rooms
- Council/legislative chambers/meetings at town, county and state levels
- Courtrooms (many currently have wide area ALDs that are largely ineffective, or individual ALD devices with dead batteries)
- Theaters, most generally have ALDs, but check if they work for **you**
- Town Hall meetings by the Governor
- Places of worship (not covered by law, but can handled by private requests)

The way we see it – it's a five-step process to get accessibility. How long it takes will vary, but these are the steps you **HAVE** to take. But, don't **YOU** be the one to delay the process.

STEP ONE: Call the facility and ask to speak to the manager. Explain to the manager that you are a regular visitor or patron of their facility, that you value and enjoy

your relationship, but that you have a problem hearing the content of their programs or meetings. Explain to them that there are simple steps they can take to remedy the situation, including placement of a simple wire induction loop system that would make it easier for you to hear when you activate the T-coil in your hearing aid. Tell them that as a person with a hearing disability you have the legal right and obligation to advise them that there are both State and Federal regulations that they should follow to insure that you and other customers, clients or patrons with hearing loss that require them to make reasonable accommodations for you to hear and understand the information or program content of what they have to offer. Ask them when they expect to be in compliance and tell them that you plan to remain in contact with them until the situation is rectified. Also, ask who is the overall person in charge of their facility. Keep a telephone log of whom and when you spoke to them, and offer to be back in touch with them within 30 days.

STEP TWO: At the same time as your initial telephone call, send both the manager you have spoken to as well as the overall person in charge of that facility written letters reiterating all or much of the above by US postal mail. Advise them that you are sharing your experiences with the Hearing Loss Association of New Jersey (HLAA-NJ), and that you expect to check with them again in 30 days to determine if their facility has made these needed changes and come into compliance with both State and Federal regulations as they relate to providing reasonable communications accessibility to persons with hearing disabilities. (Please note that sample letters of request and complaint will soon be posted on the HLAA-NJ website for readers to either copy or use as models.) Please forward one copy of each of your request/complaint letters, complete with recipient's postal mailing addresses, to joel.strasser@hearingloss-nj.org.

STEP THREE: On receipt of your copy of your written request/complaint, HLAA-NJ will then forward a Looping/Accessibility Advisory to the same facility, advising them on how to comply and offering them the names of qualified installers whom they can contact to complete their looping installation. The advisory will also request that they advise us within 30 days on how they plan to accommodate the requestor's complaint.

STEP FOUR: If the facility either does not respond after 30 days, or provides an ambiguous delay, HLAA-NJ would then forward a Non-Compliance Advisory, indicating that if there is no anticipated plan for movement toward compliance within the next succeeding 30 days, we would then advise the requester to seek recourse through either or both the State or Federal governmental level, or with non-government legal counsel, depending on specific circumstances.

STEP FIVE: If the facility does comply, HLAA would then issue and provide an HLAA-NJ signed Notice of Compliance, a mountable plaque that can be posted at each

such facility, which would essentially state that the facility has been equipped with either a looping system that meets the IEC 60118-4 international standard, or such other accessibility tool that places the facility in full compliance with State and Federal regulations.

HLAA-NJ Assembling List of Looping Installers for New Jersey

Looping installers in or near New Jersey who would like to be listed in an active directory to work on projects, facilities or venues inside the State of New Jersey are being asked to make contact with HLAA-NJ so that we can refer you for projects being planned or researched. Also, facility managers or owners who have used looping installers to satisfactorily complete projects within New Jersey are asked to recommend such installers by providing us with company names and contact information so that their services can be listed in a statewide directory now being compiled for use by HLAA-NJ and by state officials who seek to refer projects for subsequent installation.

To list installers in the New Jersey Looping Installers directory, please send information directly to: joel.strasser@hearingloss-nj.org, or telephone 732-415-7556. Be sure to include company name, e-mail address and business telephone numbers, and the name of the company's principal contact or project manager for looping installations.

Chapter News for March

HLAA-Morris County Chapter has scheduled its next monthly meeting on **Saturday, March 12, 2016**, with a program on cochlear implants, from both a researcher's point of view and from a specialist's point of view. The meeting will be at the Summit Speech School, 705 Central Avenue, New Providence, NJ, with coffee and conversation from 10 to 10:30 AM, and meeting to 12:30 PM. Captions and Open FM system will be provided for accessibility.

Also, on **April 3rd, 2016**, the chapter plans a social event as a luncheon with time and place to be announced.

In addition, HLAA-Morris County seeks to attract 18 - 35 year olds so they can start their own group. Please pass this information on to anyone in that age group. Questions may be directed to Pat.Dobbs@HLAA-NJ.Org.

HLAA-Paterson Chapter will hold its March chapter meeting and open house on **Saturday, March 19th, 2016** from 1:30 to 3:30 PM at the Paterson Main Public Library, 250 Broadway, Paterson, NJ 07501. The Paterson Chapter is launching its "Hear the Movement" T-Shirt Campaign in March, a fundraiser for the entire month only. Also on

Friday, March 4th, the Paterson Chapter is meeting with the St. Joseph Hospital's Children Audiologist Team (Paterson, NJ) to seal a new partnership. The Hearing Loss Association of America is the nation's leading organization representing people with hearing loss. With 48 million (20 percent) of all Americans having some degree of hearing loss, making it the third major public health issue after heart disease and arthritis, attendance is encouraged by those with hearing loss or who have a family member with hearing loss, would like support from others in the hearing loss community or want questions answered about hearing loss. Paterson Chapter's April meeting has been scheduled for **Saturday, April 16, 2016**. Stand by for further program details.

HLAA-Middlesex County Chapter, which meets on the 3rd Tuesday of every month, except for July and August, will hold its next meeting on **Tuesday, March 15th** at 7:30 PM at First Baptist Church of South Plainfield, 201 Hamilton Blvd. South Plainfield, NJ. January's and February's meetings had to be cancelled because of inclement weather conditions. If you would like to attend please contact Marie Nordling by e-mail: manord63@yahoo.com and check for the program update.

HLAA-Essex County Chapter will meet **Saturday, April 2, 2016**, 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM, in the Auditorium of United Way of Montclair, 60 S. Fullerton Ave., Montclair, NJ, First Anniversary Celebration, Program: Guest Speaker, Mark C. Alexander, Professor of Law and Associate Dean for Academics, former senior advisor to President Barack Obama, speaking on: "Your Ability, You're the Only One That Can Use It." Light refreshments will be served.

HLAA-South Jersey Shore Chapter will meet **Thursday, March 17th, 2016**. This group meets on the third Thursday of each month from 5:30 PM to 8 PM, with presentations starting at 6 PM, at Cape Regional Medical Center, Maruchi Room, 2 Stone Harbor Boulevard, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210. Interested participants are encouraged to make further contact with Carolyn Richards at Carolyn.richards@hearingloss-nj.org

HLAA-Bergen County Chapter plans no regular general membership meetings for the immediate future while the Chapter works to install a major looping system in its traditional meeting place, the Ethical Culture Society building in Teaneck, NJ. Until the looping project is complete, the Chapter welcomes participation from those interested in the local Bergen County looping effort, as well as contact from interested potential members and leaders, who are invited to contact Ken Keuhlen at kbk1011@hotmail.com

CAPTIONED LIVE THEATER PERFORMANCES IN NJ

By Arlene Romoff

Below is a listing of the Open Captioned performances at the five theaters in NJ that provide one open captioned performance per production, for the balance of this season. All of them provide discounted ticket prices. To order tickets, call the box office and request to be seated in view of the captioning - and be sure to request their discounted price.

Paper Mill Playhouse - Millburn, NJ – 973-376-4343

<http://www.papermill.org/about-us/audience-info/accessibility-info.html>

A Bronx Tale - Sunday, March 6 at 7 PM
 Pump Boys and Dinettes - Sunday, May 1 at 7 PM
 West Side Story - Sunday, June 26 at 7 PM

George Street Playhouse - New Brunswick, NJ – 732-246-7717

<http://www.georgestreetplayhouse.org/accessibility.php>

Open-captioned performances for patrons with hearing impairments follow below:

Sex With Strangers: March 26; 2 PM
My Name is Asher Lev: April 30; 2 PM

McCarter Theater - Princeton, NJ—609-258-2787

http://www.mccarter.org/VisitorInfo/VisitorDefault.aspx?page_id=32

Tickets are a discounted \$25 each

The Mousetrap - Saturday, March 19 at 3 PM
 All the Days - Saturday, May 21 at 3 PM

Two River Theater - Red Bank, NJ—732-345-1400

<http://www.tworivertheater.org/about/accessibility.php>

Tickets are a discounted \$25 each

<i>Ropes</i>	Saturday, March 19 at 3pm
<i>Pericles</i>	Saturday, May 7 at 3pm
<i>I Remember Mama</i>	Saturday, June 25 at 3pm

State Street Theater – New Brunswick, NJ – 732-246-7469

Write to: Jackie.neill@co.middlesex.nj.us

Reserved seat tickets are \$7.00 each

For open captioned performances in NYC, one must register with TDF at their website - www.tdf.org and click on Accessibility Programs and follow instructions. Tickets need to be ordered in advance and are mailed.
<https://www.tdf.org/nyc/33/TDFAccessibilityPrograms>

IMPORTANT DATES ON THE 2016 HLAA-NJ STATE CALENDAR

Members and friends of HLAA-NJ are cordially invited to attend business meetings and other functions of HLAA-NJ as we meet at various times during the year to plan and finalize the activities of the state association. Help us further our collective mission to represent and provide New Jerseyans with hearing loss with information, education, support and advocacy outreach that allows them to function in mainstream society, and enhance their quality of life, while raising awareness of hearing health/hearing loss.

Our successful initiatives have included bringing captioned movies and open captioned live theater to NJ, improving patient care in hospitals/medical settings, an annual scholarship program for high school seniors with hearing loss, bringing captioned telephone and conference call services to NJ, ensuring full communications access at public events, and advocating for increased funding and staffing at agencies and organizations serving people with hearing loss.

May – 2016

Hearing Loss Association of New Jersey
Board of Trustees Meeting
Saturday, May 7, 2016
1:00 PM to 5:00 PM
East Brunswick Public Library
2 Jean Walling Civic Center
East Brunswick, NJ 08816-3529

June – 2016

[Hearing Loss Association of America](#)
Annual Convention
Thursday, June 23 to Sunday, June 26, 2016
Washington Hilton

1919 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20009 US

August – 2016

Hearing Loss Association of New Jersey
Board of Trustees Meeting
Saturday, August 6, 2016
1:00 PM to 5:00 PM
East Brunswick Public Library
2 Jean Walling Civic Center
East Brunswick, NJ 08816-3529

October – 2016

New Jersey Walk4Hearing
Saturday, October 16, 2016
10:00 AM to 1:00 PM
Mercer County Park
Hughes Drive
West Windsor, NJ

November – 2016

Hearing Loss Association of New Jersey
Board of Trustees Meeting
Annual Meeting
Saturday, November 19, 2016
1:00 PM to 5:00 PM
East Brunswick Public Library
2 Jean Walling Civic Center
East Brunswick, NJ 08816-3529

NEWS from HLAA-NATIONAL:

Please note that all newsletters from HLAA-National will be sent separately to all members of this distribution list as they are issued by our national office.

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Once the NPRM is published in the Federal Register, stakeholders (e.g., the public, mobile phone manufacturers and service providers, organizations representing the interests of people with disabilities, academics, emergency managers, etc.) will have 30 days to submit comments and 60 days to submit reply comments. HLAA will be responding.

HLAA Passes 9,000 Facebook Likes This Week

Facebook and Twitter are two excellent ways to increase the visibility of HLAA, Walk4Hearing and our Chapters! Please encourage your friends and colleagues to "like" the HLAA and Walk4Hearing pages.

<https://www.facebook.com/HearingLossAssociation>

[Twitter.com/hlaa](https://twitter.com/hlaa)

HLAA to Exhibit at NBC4 Health & Fitness Expo

Come visit us at **Booth 1640** at the NBC4 Health & Fitness Expo, January 9 and 10 at the Washington Convention Center. See more at the official website.

ADVOCACY

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) has announced that it is exploring the feasibility of conducting a negotiated rulemaking that would ensure captioning of in-flight entertainment and videos, better-defined service animals, as well as carrier reporting of disability service requests, among other issues. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not apply to airplanes in flight, which are governed by the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA). While there is some split of authority, the prevailing rule is that private individuals may not bring suit under the ACAA, so the disability access issues can only be brought to the attention of the DOT. To learn more and submit your comments no later than January 6, 2016, check the HLAA National website.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Survey on Banking for People with Hearing Loss

The World Institute on Disability (WID) and the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) are conducting a brief 10- to 15-minute survey about access to and use of banking and financial institutions for people with hearing loss. Results from this survey will be used to inform the financial and banking industry as to best practices to make information and services more accessible to people with hearing loss. No individual identifying data or characteristics will be provided to any outside agency, organization or business. All responses will be combined and no individual responses will be made available. After the completion of the study, all contact information will be destroyed. Check the HLAA National website for further details.

WEBINARS

December 16, 8 p.m.-9 p.m., Christine Cassel, M.D., president and CEO of National Quality Forum, will present *Aging America and Hearing Loss: The PCAST Report Explained*. See the Schedule page for more information. Webinar times are Eastern Standard Time. All webinars are free, captioned, and recorded. The recordings are posted on the Webinar Replay page of the National HLAA website.

CONVENTION 2016/IFHOH CONGRESS

ATTENTION STATE AND CHAPTER LEADERS

HLAA State and Chapter Leaders, please plan to attend special sessions in the afternoon on Wednesday, June 22. Additional information about the Convention and leader workshops will be posted on our website at hearingloss.org/content/chapter-news. The leader registration guidelines and form are also posted on that page.

Also of note, the HLAA Board of Trustees meeting has been moved to Wednesday evening to make way for two plenary sessions on Thursday morning

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