

HLAA-NJ NEWS, VIEWS & DATES – NOVEMBER 2015

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

HLAA-NJ Plans November 21 Annual Meeting Featuring Elections and Mini-Fair of Exhibitors

New officers and trustees will be selected for the coming year and beyond, while attendees to this year's annual meeting of the Hearing Loss Association of America's New Jersey State Association on Saturday, November 21, from 1 to 4 PM at the East Brunswick Public Library, in East Brunswick, will be treated to a Mini-Fair exhibition of various hearing loss-related vendors and providers who will showcase their products and services. Members of the general public are invited to attend, but voting in the meeting's annual election will only be open to members of HLAA-NJ. Additional access for deaf and hard of hearing participants will be provided by signing interpreters, as well as simultaneous CART captioning for the entire meeting.

Featured speakers at this year's 2015 Annual Meeting will include Janice Schachter Lintz, CEO of Hearing Access & Innovations, a successful advocate for hearing access, who will discuss strategies people can use to get hearing access and services. She will also speak about loop systems, the currently favored low-cost method of making hearing accessibility available to large groups of citizens or residents in auditorium or group settings, and how individuals or groups can get them in their areas. Before introducing Ms. Schachter, however, the annual meeting group will hear welcoming remarks from Dr. David Alexander, director of New Jersey's Division of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, a unit of the State's Department of Human Services.

Elections will also be held. Among those nominated to serve as officers of HLAA-NJ beginning January 1, 2016 by the organization's nominating committee are:

President – Joel Strasser
Vice President – Dr. Ann Marie Olson
Corresponding Secretary – Joleen Marsillo
Recording Secretary – Wayne Roorda
Treasurer – Judy Heimbach

Exhibitors at the Mini-Fair will have display tables for their products and literature, and are expected to be staffed by their internal experts and proprietors who will be available to answer questions posed by all visitors and attendees, and include the following:

- **NJ Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing** - services and resources
- **NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation** – regional agencies, services and resources
- **NJ Division on Civil Rights** – services and resources
- **NJ Theatre Alliance/ Cultural Access Network** – captioned & accessible performances/arts resources
- **EmCom System** - induction loop demonstration
- **Sprint CapTel** - captioned telephone services and demo
- **CaptionCall** – captioned telephone and service
- **"Ask the Audiologist"** – professional audiologist will be available to answer questions
- **Cochlear Implant (CI) Support Group** - HLAA-NJ members with CIs answer questions
- **Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)** – information, resources and events

HLAA-NJ works to create awareness of hearing loss issues in the state of New Jersey. It is dedicated to developing a statewide network to address outreach, advocacy legislative and equal access issues that impact people with hearing loss.

For information about HLAA-NJ, the New Jersey state association of the Hearing Loss Association of America, please contact HLAA-NJ President Linda Schaab at info@hearingloss-nj.org. Or, visit the website at www.hearingloss-nj.org or the HLAA's website at www.hearingloss.org

October 18 Walk4Hearing Raised \$79 Thousand, With \$31.4 Thousand That Stays in New Jersey

About 900 walkers in some 41 fund-raising teams descended on Mercer County Park in Hamilton and West Windsor for HLAA-NJ's 8th Annual Walk4Hearing on Sunday, October 18 and raised a total of \$78,568.45, of which 40 percent, or \$31,427.38, will statistically stay inside the State of New Jersey, Walk organizers have told us.



Let's look at how New Jersey money is used. The Hear O Israel team used their funds to pay for a loop system for their temple. University Hospital used their Walk funds to purchase pocketalkers and other hearing equipment for their patients. The HLAA-NJ state association uses part of its share of Walk funds to fund college scholarships for worthy high school students with hearing loss. NJ AG Bell uses their Walk funds to support scholarships to their national leadership training program. The Deaf/Blind team, the only one devoted to deaf/blind people in New Jersey, uses their funds to run their organization.

As for the Walk itself, organizers speeches were radioed as remote captioning to Walkers with SmartPhones, and interpreters were on hand to interpret the words of our fund-raising cheerleaders. To keep our walkers marching we fed them our traditional hot dogs, skillfully grilled by Chef Wayne, and to keep them awake Brewmaster Marvin kept the coffee flowing, while Queen Linda kept the skies clear of rain and snow.

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.



Chapter News for November

HLAA-Morris County Chapter's next meeting is on **Saturday, November 7**, 10:00 to 10:30 am, Coffee and Conversation, and 10:30 am to 12:30 pm for the meeting. Location will be the Summit Speech School, 705 Central Avenue, New Providence, NJ. CART captioning will be provided by the NJ Dept. of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, plus there will also be Assistive Listening Devices. Chapter president Pat Dobbs will speak on "Traveling Adventures with Hearing Loss," describing how she dealt with her hearing loss while traveling recently in Alaska and the Yukon, including camping out alone at night.

HLAA Morris County Chapter's Holiday Party will be held **Saturday, December 5th**, 4 to 8 PM at the home of Mary-Ellen Marmo, 300 Main Street, Apt 811, Little Falls, NJ.

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-Middlesex County Chapter, which meets every 3rd Tuesday each month from September to June, except July or August, meets next on **Tuesday, November 17th**, 7:30 pm at the First Baptist Church; 201 Hamilton Blvd.; South Plainfield, NJ. Meeting program will include a panel discussion covering updates on the Walk4Hearing, the DDHH Advisory Council meeting and the HLAA-NJ Annual Meeting.

HLAA-South Jersey Shore Chapter will meet **Thursday, November 19th**, 5:30-8pm, at Cape Regional Medical Center, Maruchi Room, 2 Stone Harbor Blvd., Cape May Court House, NJ 08210. GSP to Exit 10.

HLAA-Essex County Chapter will meet **Saturday, November 28th** at the South Orange Public Library, 65 Scotland Road, South Orange, 1:30 to 3 PM. Program: Let Your Voice Be Heard, an open teen forum to give a voice to our youth and young adults about their hearing loss. Psychological Impact of Hearing Loss: Confusion, "Checking Out," Loss of Self-Reliance, Isolation and Loss of Identity. Light refreshments will be served.

HLAA-Bergen County Chapter will not meet in November. The chapter welcomes contact from interested potential members and leaders, who are invited to contact Ken Keuhlen at kbk1011@hotmail.com

NEWS from HLAA-NATIONAL:

HLAA Sends Letter to the White House Urging release of ANPRM for Title III of the ADA

HLAA joined several other disability organizations in sending a letter to the White House urging immediate release of the NPRM for Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Five years ago an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) addressing the obligation of public accommodations to provide websites that are accessible to individuals with disabilities was issued by the United States Department of Justice. The issue of equal access to websites is of critical importance to all people with disabilities. Yet the release date of the NPRM for revising the Title III regulations of the ADA, originally scheduled for January 2012, has been extended no less than five times. Our letter urges President Obama to release the NPRM for Title III of the ADA without further delay and take immediate action to ensure equal Internet access for all Americans with disabilities.

Friends of the Congressional Hearing Health Caucus

More than 150 congressional staffers, hearing advocates and guests attended a Screening Reception held by the Friends of the Congressional Hearing Health Caucus (FCHHC) yesterday in the Rayburn House Office Building. HLAA is an

active member of FCHHC. About 50 attendees had their hearing screened and ears checked. CHHC Co-Chairmen Reps. Dave McKinley (R-WV) and Mike Thompson (D-CA) attended the event and urged hearing champions to continue to advocate for important hearing health issues in Congress. Rep. Thompson noted that hearing health is an important element of overall health care, and that it is critical to address hearing loss early to avoid negative impacts on a person's learning and earning potential. Rep. McKinley noted the importance of following up on passage of HR 1344, the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) bill which was passed by the House in September, and is now being considered by the Senate.

Federal Communications Commission

Tools for Expanding Closed Captioning of Public Access Programming

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is holding a forum to start a discussion about closed captioning of public access and governmental programming shown on television. The forum will be held on **November 10, 2015, 1 p.m.-5 p.m. EST at 445 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20554.** It will include conversations about the benefits of closed captioning. This event will engage policy makers, local politicians, engineers and more, in order to raise awareness of the issues surrounding captioning of public access and governmental programming.

Additional Information

FCC Announces Roundtable Event to Discuss Closed Captioning of Public Access and Governmental Programming

The Federal Communications Commission is holding an all-day summit to facilitate discussion of the telecommunication needs of people with cognitive disabilities and effective means of meeting those needs. Panels will include:

- ♦ Communication Technologies for Independent Living
- ♦ Emergency Preparedness/Living in the Community Safely
- ♦ Ensuring and Funding Access to Equipment, Training and Broadband

An expo of vendors and distributors of assistive technologies will be held during the summit. The expo is aimed at familiarizing participants with available communication technologies to assist individuals with cognitive disabilities. The meeting will be open to the public and webcast with open captioning at www.fcc.gov/live.

HAAA Board of Trustee Members Join the HAAA New York City Chapter to Testify Before New York City Council

HAAA Trustees Richard Einhorn and Katherine Bouton, along with other members of the HAAA New York City Chapter testified before the New York City Council on October 22, 2015, in support of three bills to increase communication access for people with hearing loss. One of the bills requires that all government meetings open to the public be held in a facility equipped with hearing loops by 2020.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Survey About Access to and use of Banking and Financial Institutions

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 information 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. Please participate in the survey now by clicking here. Thank you for participating!

PEAT Celebrates NDEAM, Seeks Personal Experiences with Accessible Technology

Given accessible technology's crucial role in advancing the employment of people with disabilities, the Partnership on Employment & Accessible Technology (PEAT) is enthusiastically observing National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) and encouraging employers, technology providers and users to do the same. As part of its celebration, PEAT is using its NDEAM Web page to showcase a guest blog post on "Bring Your Own Device" (BYOD) policies penned by Accessibility Partners' Dana Marlowe, as well as personal stories that demonstrate the power of accessible technology in fueling the employment success of people with disabilities. Employees with disabilities and employers who have insights to share in this area are invited to submit a short success story today. The capstone of PEAT's NDEAM activities will be a Twitter chat on BYOD and other leading practices related to accessible technology and universal design in the workplace. All are invited to join this collaborative Twitter conversation on October 28, 2015, from 2 p.m.-2:30 p.m. EDT using the hashtag #PEATtalks.

ADA-PARC is Conducting a National Survey on Transportation Access and Experiences

You are invited to participate in a national survey titled, Transportation Access and Experiences, which is designed to improve understanding of accessibility of public transportation for people with disabilities. Responses to the survey will be used to make improvements at regional and national levels. If you are a person with a disability, you can take the survey now. The researchers are looking for as many responses as possible. So, please feel free to forward this survey along to people in HLAA Chapters and State organizations. This survey is being conducted by the ADA Participation Action Research Consortium (ADA-PARC), a

collaborative research project of seven ADA Regional Centers. Learn more at www.adaparc.org. If you have any questions or comments regarding this survey, please contact Jill Bezyak from the Rocky Mountain ADA Center. Thanks in advance for your participation in this important research and for helping to spread the word.

Younger Adults More Likely to Use New Gadgets for Hearing Loss

According to a blog at *Consumer Reports*, a new report on hearing loss in young adults released last week by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows that people age 18 to 39 with hearing loss are more likely than people age 40 and up to use some sort of assistive technology, such as headsets, FM microphone systems, text messages, amplified telephones, or live video streaming. Click here to read the blog at Consumer Reports.

AWARDS

Honor HLAA's finest by submitting an award nomination by **December 4, 2015**. Nominate a chapter, state organization or individual. All the information and applications are on the HLAA website.

CONVENTION

The Call for Papers has officially opened for HLAA Convention 2016 and IFHOH Congress, a joint event expected to bring 2,200 people to the nation's capital, June 23-26. Interested in presenting a workshop? Go to <http://bit.ly/CallforPapers-EducationTracks> to submit your proposal.

Call for Papers – Deadline for Submission, December 4, 2015

See the information on the Call for Papers page about submitting your workshop proposal. This year we are using an online collection site for proposals for the educational workshops – the link to the site is on the Call for Papers page. The Call for Papers form for State/Chapter Development workshops is also posted on this page, and once completed must be emailed to Nancy Macklin. Should you have any questions, call Nancy at 301.657.2248 Ext. 106 or email Nancy Macklin.

Proposals for State/Chapter Development workshops must be submitted using a special form available from HLAA National (see their website).

Deadline for all proposals is **Friday, December 4, 2015**.

Registration for Convention

State and Chapter Leaders, again this year you can receive 4 discounted registrations for leaders **PLUS** one delegate registration which might be considered for someone being readied for a leadership position. Also, keep in mind that registrations will not be processed unless we have received a current State/Chapter Update Form on file. See

hearingloss.org/sites/default/files/docs/Chapter_State_Update_Form_fillable_v2.pdf

Keynote Speaker

Keynote speaker Jenny Lay-Flurrie was honored earlier this month as a White House Champion of Change. Jenny, who began experiencing hearing loss as a child, is now a Senior Director at Microsoft, leading the Trusted Experience Team (TEtT), which focuses on privacy, online safety, and accessibility. Read more about this dynamic speaker. Jenny will deliver her speech during the Opening Session on Thursday, June 24, 2016.

Washington Hilton Registration OPEN

Reserve your room online or call the hotel at 202.483.3000 (follow the prompts to reach Reservations), or call 1-800-HILTONS and book for the Washington Hilton. Be sure to mention the Group Code, HLAA. See details regarding rate on the Convention page.

Cruises offering hearing access supported vacations

Last call for the week-long Caribbean cruise leaving Ft. Lauderdale on November 8, 2015. Contact Lynn Rousseau at lynnrousseau50@gmail.com.

ADVOCACY

Lise Hamlin, representing HLAA, has been asked to work with MITRE's Council of Experts (COE) as a subject matter expert on Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Service (IP CTS). The MITRE Corporation is a not-for-profit company that operates multiple federally funded research and development centers. The COE was established by MITRE working under a contract with the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) to find technical solutions to problems facing VRS and IP CTS. Lise attended her first meeting of the COE on October 7.

HLAA also sits on the FCC's Disability Advisory Committee (DAC), which met for a full day meeting October 8. DAC is comprised of representatives from the disability community, industry and state agencies and provides recommendations to the FCC

to consider in their deliberations. HLAA is co-chair of the Video Programming Subcommittee and sits on the Relay Subcommittee. For more information, see <https://www.fcc.gov/events/disability-advisory-committee-meeting>

HLAA Strongly Supports Recommendations of PCAST Report “Aging America & Hearing Loss: Imperative of Improved Hearing Technologies”

Bethesda, MD (October 28, 2015) – The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), the nation’s leading organization representing people with hearing loss, enthusiastically endorses a new report issued by the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST). The findings of the report, titled “Aging America & Hearing Loss: Imperative of Improved Technologies,” serve to open the market for new innovation in hearing device technologies and also increase choice for consumers of hearing aids, both essential strategies long espoused by HLAA that are necessary to enhance hearing health care. The PCAST report focuses on the nearly 30 million adults over the age of 60 who have age-related, progressive, mild-to-moderate hearing loss. Only a small percentage of people with hearing loss (according to the report about 15-30 percent) seek treatment. There are several factors contributing to this low number, but the PCAST report points out that two of the driving factors are that the market is characterized by high cost and low innovation, and that the current distribution channels create a barrier to access. Please read the whole news release and the PCAST report on the HLAA website. Spread the news to chapters and members across the country.

Accessible Communications

HLAA joined the Disability Coalition for Technology Transition with Accessible Communications for Everyone (DCTTACE), a cross-disability coalition, in filing comments with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in response to the FCC’s Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on the nation’s transition to an all-Internet Protocol (IP) network. The FCC notes that communications networks are rapidly transitioning away from the historic provision of services over copper wire to new all-IP multimedia networks. The filing was made with the intent of addressing some of the needs and concerns of those with disabilities in relation to the transition to IP.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced they will consider a Report and Order and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that would update the scope of the **wireless hearing aid compatibility rules** and seek comment on additional measures that would ensure greater deployment of hearing aid compatible wireless handsets (WT Docket No. 07-250) during their November Open Commission Meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 19, 2015.

Hearing Aid Compatible Wireless Phones

HLAA filed comments with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regarding Hearing Aid Compatible wireless phones. We were joined in filing these comments by Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the National Association of the Deaf where together we make it clear that our goal has remained unchanged: we want to see 100 percent of wireless handsets built to be hearing aid compatible. We look forward to engaging the wireless industry in a constructive dialog to find a path forward to that goal.

On October 29, 2015, FCC Commissioner Tom Wheeler posted an update to his blog about some of the activities the FCC is doing to ensure communications technology is more accessible to Americans with disabilities. Next month, the Commission will consider rules that would strengthen accessibility by Americans with hearing loss to emerging and future technologies and services by expanding the scope of our hearing aid compatibility requirements to all forms of voice communication. If adopted, this action would cover emerging technologies such as Wi-Fi calling and VoLTE (**V**oice **o**ver **L**ong-**T**erm **E**volution) as well as those that might develop in the future. In addition to these rules, the Commission will lay the groundwork for future improvements by calling on stakeholders to work collaboratively to develop a consensus plan for dramatically expanding the kinds of devices that Americans with hearing loss can use. If there is a better way to consider and implement accessibility at the front end of the handset-design process, millions of Americans with hearing loss will benefit. The draft item makes clear that a consensus solution is the preferred path forward, but the Commission will also seek comment on whether there are other steps it might take to ensure 100 percent of handsets are hearing aid compatible at the same time as promoting innovation and investment.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Hearing Health Matters: New Video Series

A series of videos produced by the Minnesota Video Vault, a project of Twin Cities Public Television, has released a series of captioned videos on aspects of living with hearing loss. Topics include age-related hearing loss, music and hearing loss, veterans who sustain hearing loss from combat, anatomy and screening, and more. HLAA members Frank Lin, M.D., Ph.D. (former HLAA Board member), Katherine Bouton (current HLAA Board member), Christine Morgan (president of the HLAA Twin Cities Chapter) and other HLAA members are featured.

HEARING LOSS MAGAZINE

The November/December 2015 *Hearing Loss Magazine* is in the mail and will be in your mailboxes mid-November. HLAA members can also access the digital magazine now. *Hearing Loss Magazine* is a benefit of HLAA membership so join or renew today if you would like to receive this publication chock full of information for people like you – consumers with hearing loss who want to know the latest on how to live successfully with their hearing loss.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Richard Einhorn (NY) appeared on Greenbriar TV (Comcast) in Brick, New Jersey, interviewed by HLAA Member Joel Strasser (NJ) on Monday, October 26. On October 29, Einhorn was on a panel titled Hearing Smart at the Audio Engineering Society Convention at the Javits Center in New York City.

STATE ASSOCIATION AND STATE OFFICES

HLAA established a distribution list designed to reach out to HLAA State Association and State Office leaders. Distinct from our HLAA Official State Leaders Yahoo Group, this distribution list will focus on state-wide issues rather than chapter issues. The intent is to encourage a dialog between state leaders and the national office, exchange ideas, success stories and challenges and help each other with new and interesting plans for the states. We have already sent out a welcome email, and on the news regarding the report from the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. Starting with presidents and directors, we welcome all who are interested in working on state issues to join this distribution list. Contact Lise Hamlin to be added to the distribution list.

WALK4HEARING

Walk4Hearing has been receiving local news coverage for Walks around the country. In Jacksonville, an article was featured in the Florida Times Union about a figure skater, Danielle Fanelle, her struggles with hearing loss, and why she participates in the Walk4Hearing. Delaware County News Network wrote about the Pennsylvania Walk4Hearing, and how HLAA and the Walk4Hearing benefit the hearing loss community. And in New Jersey, the Asbury Park Press told the inspiring story of two young brothers with hearing loss and their relationship with the Walk4Hearing.

PRODUCT/SERVICE SHOWCASE WEBINARS

Unlike the regularly scheduled webinars (third Wednesday of each month 8 p.m.-9 p.m. Eastern Time), the **Showcase** webinars might be scheduled on various days and times. All webinars are free and captioned. To join the webinars, go to the Schedule page and click the **Join Webinar** button. Be sure to mark your calendar for the two Showcase webinars in November:

- November 4, 7 p.m.-8 p.m.** – John Kinstler, outreach marketing manager for CapTel Captioned Telephone, will present *See What Everyone is Talking About!*
- November 10, Noon-1 p.m.** – Audiologist Diane Nens of *hi HealthInnovations* will present *Improving the Access and Affordability of Hearing Health Care*

PERSONNEL

HLAA-National is actively recruiting for two positions at HLAA – Director of Chapter Development and the Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) Education and Training Coordinator. Please encourage people to spread the word about these exciting opportunities.

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