

HLA-NJ News and Views

A Monthly Column from The Hearing Loss Association of NJ

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Hearing Loss Association of New Jersey Hosts 6th Annual Garden State Walk4Hearing, October 20

With more than 31 million Americans currently impacted by some degree of hearing loss, the Hearing Loss Association of New Jersey's five chapters in Bergen, Middlesex, Ocean/Monmouth and Morris Counties and the South Jersey Shore will join the national effort led by the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) to fight the nation's silent disability by hosting the 6th Annual Garden State Walk4Hearing. The 5K (3.1 miles) walk in Mercer County Park, West Windsor, NJ, will begin Sunday, October 20 with registration at 9:00 a.m. As the largest series of walks of its kind held in major cities throughout the U.S., the Walk4Hearing raises funds for hearing loss prevention and education programs, and is dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with hearing loss.

The Walk4Hearing is a great opportunity for individuals, families, and groups to step up and raise awareness to help end the stigma of hearing loss in our area. There are a variety of ways people can get involved, such as walking to raise funds, organizing a team of walkers as a team captain, sponsoring a walker, joining a team, volunteering, or making a donation.

An estimated one-third of Americans have some form of hearing loss, the third most common public health issue after heart disease and arthritis, while nearly one-half of all seniors over age 75 are affected by this seemingly invisible loss of hearing. Some 30 of every 1000 school-aged children experience hearing loss. Chances are, most people will be affected by hearing loss in some way. People with hearing loss struggle to enjoy a dinner in a noisy restaurant. Smoke alarms will not awaken them. And, with thousands of U.S. armed forces returning from wars in Iraq and Afghanistan with hearing loss, more and more people need help.

Since 2006, thousands of people nationwide have joined the HLAA's Walk4Hearing. HLAA is the nation's largest consumer advocacy organization for people with hearing loss, and is dedicated to providing education, support and advocacy to help people with hearing loss live full and productive lives. Funds from previous Garden State Walks4Hearing have enabled HLA-NJ to provide college scholarships to worthy NJ high school seniors with hearing loss, establish a public Assistive Listening Device (ALD) demonstration center at Montclair State University (where audiologists are trained) and other efforts to raise awareness and support to counter and remediate hearing loss.

For more information and an update on the October 20 Walk4Hearing, go to: www.hearingloss-nj.org, or to register for the Walk, join or sponsor a team or volunteer, visit www.walk4hearing.com.