



2022 Winter-Spring Edition

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Disabilities are Not Binary. Why Do We Treat Them That Way?

Association of American Medical Colleges News — HLAA board member Zina Jawadi states, "Too often, disability is thought of like a light bulb: on or off. A person either has a disability or does not. In reality, most disabilities fall somewhere along a spectrum, and viewing them through a binary lens can have profound consequences."

[Read more](#)

Show Respect to people who
wear hearing aids and/or
cochlear implants.
They paid money to listen to
you.



Early Bird Registration is now OPEN for HLAA 2022!

After a two year hiatus, that included online conventions, the in person HLAA convention is back! This annual event shares an incredible amount of information through workshops, presentations, a research symposium, and an amazing exhibit hall that give people a good look at not only what is available, but what is coming. Do think about attending.

Registration costs rise after the March 4th deadline. There are some scholarships available for first time attendees from HLAA.

Stipends Available for 2022 National Convention

The HLAA Wisconsin Board of Directors approved awarding two, \$500 stipends to help offset costs to attend the 2022 national HLAA convention.



If you plan to attend, feel free to apply. Complete the application form by Friday, May 6th.

Applicants must be members of HLAA. Awardees will be selected by an HLAAWI committee. Those who receive stipends, will be expected to submit a report on their convention experience in either a newsletter article or at the annual meeting in October.

Note: The deadline for Early Bird Convention registration, which includes substantial savings, is March 4.

Chapter & state board officers receive discounted registration if registered prior to April 29th. Each organization is also allowed one 'delegate' who may or may not hold an active role, to register at this low rate.

Go to the website for clarification. The schedule, and what registration includes can be found at the national website. www.hearingloss.org

HLAWI President's Message by Jim Rau...



Last year was awful in so many ways. In HLAA WI, we didn't accomplish much while waiting in vain for COVID to release its grip. But we survived, as we improved our Zooming skills to salvage something.

The annual meeting was held in October, via Zoom. We elected new Board members and some new officers. Following the meeting we heard a presentation from Michael Harvey PhD about the psychology of hearing loss. Thanks to Jack Spear for arranging for the speaker and working to set up the video. Video available: jhspear@hlaamadison.org

Now for some important stuff. We are restarting our legislative initiative. The last effort ended flat, EXCEPT we learned a lot. We will do better this time. Of course, with politics nothing is guaranteed except that it will be a lot of hard work. I see a lot of signs of enthusiasm among Board members and other HLAA members in Wisconsin. We will be certain to need help from all Wisconsin members to succeed. Don't be afraid to get your feet wet and your hands dirty on this.

Tom O'Connor, from Fond du Lac, has resigned from our Board of Directors. I wish to thank Tom for all his years of service to HLAA WI, which pre-dates my time in HLAWI. Tom remains on the Governor's Council for Deaf and Hard of Hearing and on the Governor's Committee for People with Disabilities. We wish Tom a happy retirement from the HLAA WI Board.



Tom O'Connor

The scholarship award program will continue as before. Information is included in the committee's report in the next column, and on page 5.

We hope to have an "in-person" conference and annual meeting this fall. (I know, that's what we said last year). Let's hope that COVID will not prevent that in 2022. To pull off this event will require a team effort with chapters and the state association working cooperatively on the planning and conduction. Stay tuned on the website, and on e-mail notices you receive from HLAWI.

Hope to see you all soon.

Jim Rau

Iron River, WI

E-mail - jimrau@cheqnet.net

Annual Meeting Report & Board News...

The annual meeting was held in October 2021. Elected to the Board were incumbents Pamela Martin, Shirley Sharp, Juliette Sterkens, and Jack Spear. Michelle Frisbee will serve her first term. The Board then elected the following officers: Jim Rau, president, Pamela Martin, vice president, Shirley Sharp, secretary, and Michele Frisbee, Treasurer. Jerry Lapidakis remains immediate past president. Christine Wiedmeyer Otte has resigned from the Board but will remain on the Scholarship Committee. Tom O'Connor has also resigned from the board, but will remain on the Governor's Council for Deaf/Hard of Hearing. We thank Christine and Tom for their dedicated service to HLAWI for many years. We are pleased that Christine will remain chair of the scholarship committee.

Legislative Initiative

A lively email discussion had been generated prior to the annual meeting when Julie Olson, newsletter editor & past board president, asked questions and offered comments about our past involvement in legislation. That discussion took on a life of its own with comments from board members. The discussion indicated that the time is ripe for us to resume our effort to ensure that people who purchase hearing aids receive adequate information from people who sell them about options such as telecoils AND BlueTooth. This will be a big part of our work for the next year or two. See more on page 4.

Scholarship Report

Michelle Frisbee offered to work with Christine Otte and Neethi Magar on the HLAWI Scholarship Committee. Christine Otte reported that the updated 2022 HLAA Scholarship application is posted on the HLAA WI website. It reflects the date for submission and includes some changes to the essay instructions that will better direct applicants to provide what we are looking for. The rubric we use to evaluate the applications was revised to give more weight to student advocacy and independence with his/her hearing loss, and less on the actual degree of hearing loss. **The deadline for applicant submission is March 31, 2022.** [College Scholarship 2022 - HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA WI \(hlaawi.org\)](https://hlaawi.org/College-Scholarship-2022-HEARING-LOSS-ASSOCIATION-OF-AMERICA-WI)

Strategic Planning

Michelle suggested that the Board become involved in developing a clear strategic plan. Jerry has information on earlier strategic plans that will help us get this rolling.

Stay tuned. We will need YOUR support!

"I asked the clerk in the grocery store where the canned fruit was. He said 'I'll see and walked away. I asked another clerk and got the same answer, 'I'll see' I finally gave up and found them myself. They were in aisle C."

...Your hard of hearing buddy.



**The Milwaukee Walk4Hearing
is Saturday May 21st
at Veteran's Park in Milwaukee
Join the HLAAWI "State Steppers"!
Have fun helping us support our mission.
This is Wisconsin's Walk4Hearing!**

Great news! The 2022 Walk for Hearing will be an actual, in-person walk this year. We hope you'll join us to make it a success! It will be held on **Saturday, May 21 at Veterans' Park in Milwaukee.**

Join the HLAAWI State Steppers Team to show your support. Go to: https://www.walk4hearing.org/site/TR?fr_id=2771&pg=entry to join the Team. It's fun to go to the event in Milwaukee, but if you can't do that, you can still be a team member and help raise funds for HLAA.

All the information you need can be found at the link above. Make a personal donation then email your family and friends and ask for their support. Post on your Facebook page that you are participating in the Walk and ask for support. Tell people why you support HLAA this way. Let them know how important it is to raise awareness and provide support for people like you, who are hard of hearing. The Walk is an important revenue source for HLAA at all levels, including chapters and state associations. Money raised by the 'State Steppers' will help pay for our annual high school scholarship, and for stipends for people with hearing loss to attend educational events.



A note: Don't be confused that the Walk is called the "Milwaukee Walk for Hearing". It is our 'Wisconsin Walk' held in Milwaukee.

Jerry Lapidakis

Team Captain - HLAA Wisconsin State Steppers

Since 2006, the Walk4Hearing has:



Participating in Walk4Hearing means joining thousands of people across the country who know what it's like to live with hearing loss. Hearing is an important part of overall health and this event calls on all of us to step up. By being active, engaged, and making hearing health a priority, good things happen and people with hearing loss can live well. Whether you walk with our team, form an alliance for another team or organization, or support walkers by donating, know you are greatly appreciated. Remember: it's easy to complain about things that frustrate us; that nothing is working. You change things for the better and make it work when you become a part of the movement to make hearing loss an issue of national concern. Thankyou for your support!

I Love My Tech ... But *by Jerry Lapidakis, Past HLAAWI State President*



If you are like me, you rely on the wonderful technology that helps us connect and understand the world around us. We use apps on our smartphones to access functions on our hearing aids and cochlear implants. We use apps to see texts of phone messages. We use mini mics to hear better with others. We use captioned telephones, TV streamers, and telecoils to access hearing loops. We use a shaker or strobe flasher to wake us up or let us know someone is at the door, or that our house is on fire! We use captions and CART services to attend Zoom meetings. It is all wonderful and amazing.

But sometimes, just sometimes, don't you get an urge to throw your hearing aid into the toilet? Haven't you ever wanted to throw your TV streamer across the room when you could clearly understand the TV weather person but not your spouse sitting next to you?

I'll admit I go into a slight panic when the phone rings and I am watching TV. (Disclaimer: I avoid answering the home phone whenever possible.) But if I must, I jump up while turning off the TV streamer, frantically change the setting on my phone to telecoil and try to make it to the captioned phone before the caller hangs up. This is especially difficult when balancing a Crispy bar and a coffee cup!

I hear much better on my cell phone, but we still have a home phone, which is like a landline, but works from a wireless network. Don't ask. I don't know how it works either. I use my cellphone when I make calls with an app that shows text. I love that one!

All this is to say that I have a love hate relationship with hearing devices. And face it, as we get older it is harder to access and use all the available technology. I can begin to understand why some audiologists may not tell us about assistive features on our aids. Yes, it takes time, but we CAN get it if they will take time!

Oh, it happens more than we think. An elderly lady at our church complained to me that she couldn't access the hearing loop there. She said she puts the hearing aid on the charger she uses with her other aid so it should work. When she showed me her aid, I had to tell her that it wasn't rechargeable, and it needed a battery. You can image her embarrassment and frustration. But why wasn't she better informed about her aids? What stops an audiologist from informing a patient how everything works before they leave their appointment? And this lady is educated and mentally sharp. It takes time, but it sure can make a difference!

Even with all the frustrations that come with technology, I wouldn't give up any of my electronic marvels.

How about YOU?



Legislation is on the Docket Again for HLAAWI

In 2019 we worked very hard to get legislative bills written. Unfortunately, they got stuck in committee and nothing moved forward. COVID happened, and things just stopped. We want to start again. **Why? Because we believe that people who use hearing aids have a right to hear in public places.** Because of that, **we also believe that people who sell hearing aids should physically demonstrate how hearing aids can connect to the assistive listening technology that is mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act under 'communication access'.** We have a right to hear, but if we don't have personal technology that connects us, it's very difficult to 'connect'. **We believe that when hearing aids are sold, the buyer has the right to know about options like telecoils and BlueTooth.** One does not replace the other. Both are important and needed, but so often people end up not having a clue what those options are, and telecoils, the least costly option, isn't even explained, much less promoted. Let's do what other states have done and get legislation that requires an actual demonstration of telecoils with the purchase. It is not 'selling something extra'. It is selling the 'communication access' that we have a right to have.

This is a bipartisan issue. We must educate members of both political parties. Can YOU help us? People need to let their legislators know about this. Change happens when people commit to helping. Contact us: hlaawistate@gmail.com Let's Make an Organized Effort on this!

HLAA Wisconsin Board & Leaders



Board President
Jim Rau
Iron River WI
HLAA Virtual Veteran's Chapter
jjmrau@cheqnet.net



Secretary
Shirley Sharp
Milwaukee Chapter



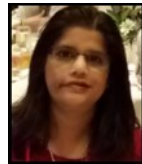
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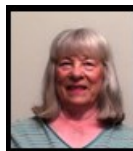
Juliette Sterkens AuD
HLAA Loop Advocate
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Vacant. Let us know if you're interested.



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Looking for a Program or an In Service Training?

Several HLAA members in Wisconsin have extensive experience presenting workshops, in service trainings, and basic 'Living Well with Hearing Loss' programs.



We've presented for hospitals, churches, service organizations, schools, Lifelong Learning Institutes, etc. Let us share our experiences with your group. Let us help you integrate your hard of hearing employees into your work force. We will share first person stories about strategies that work for us. We will explain and demonstrate unique technology that goes beyond hearing aids.

Help us dispel the ancient myths that surround hearing loss.

If this is of interest to you, your business or organization, contact us: hlaawistate@gmail.com

Seeking Committee Support

Might you help us in these areas?

Veteran's Committee

Loop Committee

Fund Raising

Legislative

Mental Health Committee

Contact Jim Rau if willing to help.

jjmrau@cheqnet.net

2022 HLAWI High School Scholarship Award



HLAAWI offers a \$1500 scholarship award to a high school student with hearing loss who will pursue post secondary education in 2022. Information can be found on the home page at www.hlaawi.org

Applications must be submitted by March 24, 2022.

Funds to provide this scholarship are raised through independent donations and from participants in the annual Milwaukee Walk4Hearing. You can help us by joining the State Steppers Walk Team, or by making a donation to HLAWI or to someone on the 'team'. We hope you will work with us to keep this scholarship going! www.walk4hearing.org



Shari Eberts, Blogger, Asks the Question: When Will Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) Embrace Disability?

Shari Eberts is a member of the HLAA National Board of Directors. She writes a popular blog that is read by many. Her recent blog on the DEI issue raised some excellent questions. How hard should it be for people with hearing loss to receive the consideration of 'communication access'? Shouldn't we be included? You can read this blog at the link below, and subscribe to it if you wish. Well worth reading.

https://livingwithhearingloss.com/2022/02/01/when-will-diversity-equity-inclusion-embrace-disability/?utm_source=hearingtracker.com&utm_medium=newsletter

Help Us Loop Wisconsin!

The Wisconsin Hearing Loop Committee is seeking members that represent all areas of the state. We'd like to have a member from each HLAA chapter.

Loop Committee Roster as of 6/15/2021

Advocacy Advisor: Juliette Sterkens jsterkens@hearingloss.org

Technology Advisor: Mike Mair mike@myhearingloop.com

Committee Chair: Christine Klessig bommaklessig@gmail.com

HLAA Fox Valley Chapter: Christing Klessig

HLAA Madison Chapter: Jeanne Tyler

HLAA SW Chapter: Mike Mair

Veterans Virtual Chapter: Jim Rau

HLAA Metro Milwaukee **Vacant**

HLAA Door County Chapter **Vacant**



We Have An Advice Column...and Columnist!!

Diane Koosed, an HLAA member from Ashland WI, has suggested an 'advice column' for our newsletter, and she has offered to manage it. She asks readers to share their questions and concerns, and invites others to share their answers. We are Hard of Hearing Allies (HOHAs)! We hope you might be able respond to her first request for advice from *'Solemnly Swearing'*.

Dear Hard Of Hearing Allies (HOHA),

I hope you can help me. I received a questionnaire to determine my eligibility for jury duty. It asks if I need assistance to serve as a juror. (Well, duh...as they say!) I am hard of hearing.

I am to describe the accommodations I request. Years ago, as a juror, I had no success with the piddling assistive device I was expected to use. Then, as now, the only thing I can think of would be a room that is looped and a microphone for everyone who speaks. They need to hear this, but certainly won't provide it. Or, should I ask for CART?

Please help! Just think of all the people like us who are hard of hearing, but with good brains. People who are mentally able, and yet, not enabled, to perform this important civic duty. Thank you in advance for any advice you might have.

"Solemnly Swearing"

Please send your advice to [Diane Koosed](#) for publication in our next newsletter. Consider asking a question for others to answer in the next newsletter. This is a great way to provide peer support!

Hearing Aids on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1ovUcihNgg>

What are the world's best hearing aids 2022?



HLAA Fox Valley Chapter Invites You...

Fox Valley Chapter's next meeting is Monday, March 14th at 6:30 PM. We invite you to join us for the showing of the documentary *"We Hear You, Now You Hear Us"*, the groundbreaking documentary about hearing loss, the invisible disability that impacts 430 million people worldwide, including 48 million in the United States alone. By shining a light on the hearing loss experience, it strives to build awareness, community and a more inclusive world for all.

"We Hear You" was named **Best Film on Disability** in the June 2021 awards of the Cannes World Film Festival. The film was written and produced by HLAA members who live with hearing loss. You can read more at: <https://www.hearingloss.org/webinars/we-hear-you-documentary-talkback/> Some of you may have seen the film when it was featured in a talk back by HLAA. It was also shown by HLAA Madison. We look forward to a lively discussion afterwards, and would love to have you join us! You can request the link to this Zoom meeting at hlaafoxvalley@gmail.com Advance Registration by March 12th is required. Thankyou.

WisTech Assistive Technology Program

Increased funding for hearing aid assistance

TAP Hearing Aid Assistance will now offer up to \$1,500 for eligible applicants.

The Office for the Promotion of Independent Living (OPIL) is pleased to announce that the Telecommunications Assistance Program (TAP) is now offering applicants up to \$1,500 towards the purchase of new or refurbished hearing aids or cochlear implant processors. Funding is limited and will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. To be eligible, applicants must meet the TAP eligibility requirements.

For information on eligibility and how to apply, visit the [TAP webpage](#) or contact the [TAP program coordinator](#).

ODHH Community Connect

Thursday, March 3
12:30–1:30 p.m.



Join us for our first ODHH Community Connect on March 3.

What is ODHH Community Connect?

ODHH is hosting a series of informal meetings to share information, answer questions, and connect with our Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. Each meeting will have a general theme, and we encourage you to bring your questions and comments to share.

When is the next ODHH Community Connect meeting?

Our first ODHH Community Connect meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2022, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

What will we talk about at the meeting?

We understand that the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly impacted the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. During our time together, we want to answer any questions you may have regarding the virus, community regulations, and vaccines. More importantly, we want to talk about the challenges that our community has faced and how we can work together to get through them.

Are the meetings accessible?

Yes. We will have interpreters and live captioning for all of our meetings. If you need any other accommodations in order to fully participate, contact the Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Here is the Zoom Link: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WIDHS/bulletins/30a925c>

Ally's Act, H.R. 477 and S. 41 are bipartisan/bicameral national level bills that were re-introduced on January 25th, 2021 ensuring that **private insurance companies provide coverage** for osseointegrated hearing devices (OIDs), including Bone Anchored Hearing Aids (BAHA) and Cochlear Implants (CI), for children and adults birth to age 64, including services, upgrades, surgery and associated costs that come along with these devices. If Ally's Act becomes the law, this bill would help hundreds of thousands of children and adults have access to life changing treatment, allowing them to live the lives they dream, participate in the workplace and community and enjoy a high quality of life.

IMPORTANT:

Ally's Act has been assigned to (4) committees now. Write to the members of your state who sit on each one of these committees. If you do not find a rep from your state on each committee, please write to the Chairman or Ranking Member of that committee.

1. This is the link to the HELP committee:

<https://www.help.senate.gov/about/members>

2. This is the link to the Education and Labor Committee:

<https://edlabor.house.gov/about/membership>

3. This is the link to the Energy and Commerce Committee:

<https://energycommerce.house.gov/about-ec/membership>

4. This is the link to the Ways and Means Committee:

<https://waysandmeans.house.gov/about/committee-members>

This information was sent to us from Audiology Online with a request to let your legislators know this bill is important. More information can be found at: <https://earcommunity.org/about/allys-act-h-r-5485>

HLAA Madison

HLAA Madison holds periodic meetings online via Zoom video conferencing, however, the chapter is currently, 'on break' with no meetings scheduled for the next few months.



Our chapter arranged for Michael Harvey, PhD to present the program at the HLAAWI annual meeting. "A Psychology of a Hard of Hearing Identity: A Hearing Psychologist's Perspective." was well received. Dr. Harvey has presented at several national HLA A conventions, and has a long history working with and writing about the hard of hearing population. He was most recently published in the Winter 2022 issue of Hearing Life, the magazine that comes with membership in HLA A. His perspective is always insightful. The video of his presentation to HLA AWI is available on request. Contact:

jhspear@hlaamadison.org

HLAA Madison is seeking board and chapter support from people in the Madison region. Information can be found on the chapter's website: www.hlaamadison.org When meetings can resume in person, our goal is to vary meeting locations in the Dane County area to reach out to and include more people.

We believe our chapter is an important source of education, information, socialization, connection and validation. Hearing loss impacts all of our lives.

There are definite rewards to be had by becoming involved, and there are no requirements other than a desire to live and thrive despite having a hearing loss. Please say "Yes!" and respond to us at: information@hlaamadison.org

We look forward to hearing from you.

SW Wisconsin/Platteville Chapter



HLAA Southwest Wisconsin Chapter meets in Platteville on the last Wednesday of the month. Meetings feature special presenters who educate and inform attendees about resources for people who live with hearing loss.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

Meetings are held at Platteville Senior Center/PEAK Program (608)889-6017, located at 155 W. Lewis Street (Former O.E. Gray School.) Time 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM (Coffee and baked goods served at every meeting.)

For more information: Call Jackie 608-642-0008, Bill (920-889-6017 or email: hlaaswwi@gmail.com

"Our mission is to educate, to share information, to advocate, and to provide peer support"

HLAA Fox Valley Chapter



The chapter meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 6:30 PM. (Currently via Zoom.)

Request our newsletter/meeting notice [HERE](#). Put 'newsletter request' in the subject header. It's published monthly, except in August and January. **NOTE: Due to COVID19, the chapter is holding virtual meetings via ZOOM videoconferencing technology. This will continue until further notice. Once we can meet in person we hope to hold hybrid meetings that will allow us to continue to include people from other areas as well as those who can attend in person. Join us!**



We look forward to seeing you. Our meetings are captioned. If you'd like to participate, Let us know via our e-mail address so we can send you a link to our meetings.

Like our Facebook Page! Sign up to participate on ZOOM at:

hlaafoxvalley@gmail.com

We have a non brand specific CI meeting bimonthly. You are welcome to Join us! E-mail to let us send you "the link". This group enjoys meeting via Zoom. Come learn with us!

Our HOPE group meets, just to talk, ask questions and share our experiences every other month, alternating with the CI group.

Information on programs, links, etc. is in our newsletter. Request it if interested. We can send in print or by e-mail. E-mail version has live links. Your choice! We'll be happy to add you to our list.

HLAA Metro Milwaukee

Meets the 2nd Thursday in March, May, July, September, November & December, in Wauwatosa. **Contact:**

BJ: BJEHLAAMKE@gmail.com Jim jgoddevne@gmail.com

HLAA Door County/Sturgeon Bay

Meets the 4th Wednesday of the month in Sturgeon Bay at 10:30 AM.

Contact: Stan Whiteman swwhiteman46@gmail.com

We do not have updated information about the Door County Chapter or the Milwaukee Chapter as of 02-20-22. Information here was submitted some time ago. The contact information should be current.

Congratulations to Wisconsin HLAA Writers!



David



Jim

CHEERS to Jim Rau and David Seligman, who both had articles published in the 2021 Fall issue of *Hearing Life Magazine*, the magazine that comes with membership in national HLAA. Jim's article shared his experiences working with the Veteran's Administration; trying to get them to understand the value of hearing loops. David's article, called "Listening for Two" shared his hard of hearing experiences with his hearing wife. They both offer insights on coping and advocating for what one needs.

HLAA encourages people to submit articles that share personal stories that will benefit other readers; many of whom are new to living with hearing loss. We hope to see more articles from our state members! If you'd like to submit your article, here's the link: <https://www.hearingloss.org/news-media/hearing-life/submit-an-article/> There are instructions for format, deadlines, etc. at this link.



We *All* are Accessibility Leaders

February 8, 2022

By Barbara Kelley, Executive Director, HLAA

HLAA was invited by the CTA Foundation to participate in the Accessibility Leaders Roundtable at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in January. The CTA Foundation is a public, national foundation affiliated with the Consumer Technology Association (CTA). The foundation facilitates dialog among industry, consumers, government, advocacy groups and other key stakeholders. Through their grants, which HLAA has been a recipient of in years past, the CTA Foundation supports programs that improve the lives of seniors and people with disabilities.

Being there among other leaders in the disability field is eye-opening. I get a chance to meet colleagues across disabilities who are doing exciting and meaningful work. We compare notes but, mostly, I learn from them.

It's important that HLAA is there. The past 10 years, hearing loss has moved up from the eleventh spot to become the fourth leading cause of years lived with disability—ahead of even diabetes and dementia. And, given the CTA Foundation's focus on seniors, we know that rates of hearing loss rise beginning at age 50 and 65% of people aged 70 and older have some degree of hearing loss.

CES is a mammoth city-wide technology show produced by CTA, the trade association representing the \$422 billion U.S. consumer technology industry. **And, we are people with hearing loss who want to use technology to participate in the hearing world.** We had the chance to explore CES which is bursting with technology — everything from start-up companies to long-time leaders in the field such as Samsung where we had a private tour of the new accessibility features on their TVs. It's one thing to set your own captions, but I saw TVs with artificial intelligence that will move the captions out of the way if needed. For example, off the speaker's head or away from the scores of a game running along the bottom.

Does the typical company think of accessibility when developing products? Our group learns that some do, and some don't, so we spend a lot of time at CES enlightening companies. I'm proud to say that inspired by our experience at CES over the past several years, HLAA has a program called the [Industry Consumer Alliance for Accessible Technology](#). Our goal is to bring together technology developers with consumers who have hearing loss to create and inspire more accessible, innovative and responsive technologies.

Do you ask for captioning at a medical appointment? Maybe you ask someone to speak slower and more clearly, or maybe you asked a TSA agent to remove his or her mask when going through airport security? (By the way, HLAA serves on TSA's Disability and Medical Condition Coalition, and we advocated for lowering masks to help lipread and hear.) If you do anything even remotely similar, you are an accessibility leader. You are a leader by participating in the Walk4Hearing, and in chapter meetings because you help create awareness of this invisible disability.

At all life stages, communication and good hearing health connect us to each other, our communities, and the world. Don't let hearing loss limit you — early intervention can ensure that people with hearing loss are able to achieve their full potential. Learn more at [HearWellStayVital.org](https://www.hearwellstayvital.org).



About the Hearing Loss Association of America....

HLAA's Statement of Strategic Intent

HLAA seeks to enable people with hearing loss to live life fully and without compromise. Success will be achieved when:

- Stigma withers away. Hearing loss is no longer considered shameful.
- People take action. Effective, affordable, and easy-to-use hearing devices are routinely worn by people with hearing loss.
- Costs come down. Medicare and all other insurance plans cover a full range of hearing technology and aural rehabilitation programs.
- More public spaces are communication accessible. High-quality assistive listening devices and captions are available in theaters, transportation, government buildings, and houses of worship.
- Consumers have know-how. People understand how to successfully cope with their hearing loss, and how to obtain and use the technology and therapies they require.
- Providers follow best practices. Clinicians offer a wide spectrum of devices and treatments, know how they work, and base care on an assessment of each person's hearing and lifestyle needs.
- Technology works seamlessly. Audio devices, including mobile phones, easily connect to one another without glitches, incompatibilities, or additional devices like streamers.
- Hearing loss is recognized as a key public health issue. Healthy hearing is deemed essential to human physical and psychosocial health so that screening for hearing loss occurs routinely in primary care.
- Hearing loss prevention is routine. School children are taught how and why to protect their hearing. Laws limiting noise levels in public spaces are enforced.

Whether you are a 'member' or not, HLAA represents all 48 million hard of hearing Americans.

If hearing loss is a 'problem' for you, join the HLAA movement to make hearing loss an issue of concern. Help us advocate for support and the technology we need to have effective communication access. Numbers matter. Together we will make good things happen.

WWW.HEARINGLOSS.ORG

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Learn about current hearing loss issues and how HLAA is working for you.

[SIGN-UP](#) This is a free service from HLAA.

Winter 2022



The Winter 2022 Issue of *Hearing Life Magazine* is posted at www.hearingloss.org. It includes some terrific stories and a lot of good advice.



NOTE: Hearing Life Magazine is in no way affiliated with Avada Hearing Aid Distribution Co. that calls itself HearingLife.

HLAA offers a variety of opportunities for people with hearing loss to come together to learn and discuss issues & concerns related to hearing loss. Check them out on the national HLAA website.

As much as we'd all like to get together in person, we find that Zoom offers opportunities we never dreamed of. Come learn with us! All of our events are captioned!

www.hearingloss.org

Disclaimer: HLAA does not endorse products or providers. HLAA advocates, educates, shares information and provides peer support.