



# This Week in Bethesda

## THIS WEEK IN BETHESDA

**This Week in Bethesda** (TWIB) is a weekly report from the HLAA National office. It started years ago as an internal bullet point report to the HLAA Board of Trustees and former Board members. Then, TWIB morphed into a more detailed report that was also shared with Chapter leaders to read at their meetings, cut and paste into their newsletters, or post on chapter and state websites.

By popular demand, we are making TWIB more widely available. TWIB will be posted on [hearingloss.org](http://hearingloss.org) on the homepage under "HLAA Updates." We will also put it on the [State and Chapter Development blog](#), post it to the Leaders Listserv, and send it via email to the leaders we have on record. We encourage everyone to share it.

TWIB is not the only news channel from the national office. Be sure to encourage people to sign up for the free, online [HLAA e-News](#). It is published two times monthly with one issue focusing on HLAA advocacy work ("HLAA in Action") and one on general news. You will also find invaluable news and information in [Hearing Loss Magazine](#) (a benefit of [joining HLAA](#)) and on [hearingloss.org](http://hearingloss.org)

Please note: There are some occasions where TWIB is not published; for example, holiday periods, HLAA Convention time, and when the Board of Trustees meet.

In the months ahead, we will be looking at all the ways we communicate with our members and what reaches people best. TWIB will certainly be part of the discussion. Thanks for reading and have a great week.

## ADVOCACY

### **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.



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The meeting will be open to the public and webcast with open captioning at [www.fcc.gov/live](http://www.fcc.gov/live). For more information, click [here](#).

## **HLAA Board of Trustee Members Join the HLAA New York City Chapter to Testify Before New York City Council**

HLAA Trustees Richard Einhorn and Katherine Bouton, along with other members of the HLAA 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.

- [Visit the PEAT NDEAM webpage and share your story](#)

## **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](http://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 here on the HLAA website](#).

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

HLAA's Board of Trustees announces two new Board members, Shari Eberts and Jan Blustein. Additional information about them and other Board members are available on [here](#) on hearingloss.org.

Shari Eberts from New York City is a hearing health advocate, writer and speaker. She blogs about her experiences living with hearing loss and tinnitus at [LivingWithHearingLoss.com](http://LivingWithHearingLoss.com). She serves on the Board of the Hearing Health Foundation (Chair 2012-2015), a nonprofit organization funding research into biological treatments and cures for hearing loss and tinnitus. Shari has an adult-onset, genetic hearing loss and hopes that by



sharing her story, it will help others to live more peacefully with their own hearing loss. Prior to her advocacy work, Shari had a 20-year career on Wall Street. Shari holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Duke University and an MBA from Harvard Business School.

Jan Blustein, M.D., Ph.D., is a professor of health policy and medicine at New York University, where she teaches courses in statistics, program evaluation, and research methods. Health service equity, chronic illness, and the Medicare program are some of her longstanding interests. Ensuring financial access to health care services has been a consistent theme in her research, which has been widely published in leading health care journals. Dr. Blustein is interested in raising awareness of age-related hearing loss in the medical community, and making hearing screening a routine part of primary care. She works on issues related to insurance coverage for hearing health care and hearing technologies. She holds a medical degree from the Yale School of Medicine, and a Ph.D. from New York University.



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## **HLAA NATIONAL STAFF**

Recruitment for two critical staff positions within HLAA has concluded. David Hutcheson will join the staff on Monday, October 26, as the director of marketing and communications. Kendall L. Brown will join the HLAA staff on Monday, November 9, as the web technologies manager.

We are actively recruiting for the position of chapter development and encourage people to spread the word about this exciting opportunity. [The job posting is on our website.](#)