



## **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. 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 weeks 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.

## **ADVOCACY**

### **HLAA Issues Media Release...**

#### **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 (**Voice over Long-Term**

Evolution) 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.

[Read Chairman Wheeler's blog and feel free to post your comments](#)

## **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.

[See the news on hearingloss.org and click on the video series to view.](#)

## **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 Stasser (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.



## CHAPTERS

The Lakeland Chapter in Florida has a [new video on YouTube](#) welcoming people with hearing loss to learn more about them and to learn about their hearing loss. The chapter is also planning the Lakeland Chapter Hearing Wellness Expo: February 20, 2016 at the First Presbyterian Church, 175 Lake Hollingsworth Drive, Lakeland, Florida.

## STATE ASSOCIATION AND STATE OFFICES

HAAA established a distribution list designed to reach out to HAAA State Association and State Office leaders. Distinct from our HAAA 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 HAAA 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

### 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*



## 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](#)

## CONVENTION 2016/IFHOH CONGRESS

### 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 (TEXT), 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](#).

### [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](#).

## PERSONNEL

We are 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. Click on the links in the titles for the job descriptions and how to apply.