

ADVOCACY

Published in the *Federal Register* on January 7, 2016, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued two notices related to hearing aids, referencing the [PCAST recommendations](#) and the Institute of Medicine's (IOM) ongoing efforts. HLAA will be submitting comments and intends to participate in the Public Workshop on April 21, 2016.

1. Reopening the Comment Period on the PSAP Draft Guidance

When the FDA issued the Draft Guidance on PSAPs, it allowed a period of public comment. In light of the PCAST and IOM activities, the FDA is reopening the public comment period. The deadline for comments is May 4, 2016.

The FDA asks parties to comment on three issues raised by PCAST:

- (a) The degree to which current FDA requirements are a barrier to hearing aid accessibility, affordability and use;
- (b) The appropriateness of creating a category of "basic" hearing aids with labeling for over-the-counter (OTC) sale;
- (c) Whether or not the benefits of OTC hearing aids would outweigh the risks of foregoing the requirement of medical evaluation.

2. FDA Public Workshop on Streamlining Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) for Hearing Aids – April 21, 2016

Reacting to the PCAST recommendation that the FDA exempt hearing aids from the Quality System Regulations (QSR), FDA is convening a public workshop to discuss the current QSR/GMP and consider an alternative model for quality verification. The FDA will also consider the possible use of alternative quality standards developed by standards development organizations and key stakeholders. Written comments can be submitted until May 19, 2016.

New Open Captioning Law in Hawaii

The law mandates theaters play at least two showings per week of each movie produced with open captioning. [Click here](#) to read more.

CONVENTION: EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION ENDS JANUARY 31

Discounted registration rates for the HLAA Convention 2016 are available through January 31. Register by the deadline to be entered in a drawing for an **iLuv SmartShaker**, a wireless alarm controlled by your smartphone (iOS and Android). SmartShakers will be awarded to 15 lucky early-birds! In addition, early-bird registrants of the Full Activity package will be eligible to select their table at the *Capital* banquet starting in February (the next opportunity will be in April). Find all the information about the Convention [here](#).

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

HLAA Welcomes Two New Members to the Board of Trustees

HLAA is pleased to announce the addition of Mary Miskimen Clark and Sebastian Pawlowski to the Board of Trustees.

[Mary Miskimen Clark](#) has had a lifelong hearing loss and began wearing a hearing aid when she was five years old. One of her sisters, who also has a hearing loss, was the one who introduced her to HLAA (then SHHH) when she became a member in 1990. Mary has a degree in medical technology and she has worked in hospital labs and academic research labs, but most of her career was in the medical device industry. She retired in 2010 and moved from California to New Mexico. She has volunteered extensively for HLAA at the local, state and national levels. An experienced trainer and facilitator, Mary has given workshops related to hearing loss since 2000. Since her retirement, Mary has been teaching classes through the OSHER program under the University of New Mexico Continuing Education curriculum. Her courses on *Living with Hearing Loss* and *Hearing Loss 102 (or I Have a Hearing Aid – Now What?)*, have been well received and continue to be popular with students. She has served as an officer at both the chapter and state level in California and in New Mexico at the chapter level. As a result of the leadership development classes offered through HLAA in California and Bethesda, she has become an advocate for chapter and state organizations.



[Sebastian Pawlowski](#) has been working for nearly 20 years in a myriad private sector and nonprofit industries and has focused extensively on digital technologies and building one-to-one relationships with communities his organizations served. Sebastian received his bachelor's degree in political science from the Catholic University of America and his master's degree in international affairs and a master of business administration in information technology and marketing from the American University in Washington, D.C. He has been teaching college and graduate-level courses in business administration, specializing in information systems, strategy and digital marketing since 2002. He, his wife Megan and four children reside in Virginia.



Sebastian's daughter, Katherine, was the Walk4Hearing's first National Ambassador in 2015. He and his family have been active with the Walk4Hearing and HLAA for several years. As a parent of a child with a hearing loss, Sebastian's work is founded on his

personal family experiences, having spent years trying to understand how to better the life of his eldest daughter as she continues to mature and find solutions to her changing needs. This is why using technology to enable productivity so hearing loss is never a limitation is of concern to him and his family, as it is to thousands of others.

[Click here](#) for complete information about Mary and Sebastian, along with all of HLAA's Board members.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

Consumer Electronics Show (CES)

HLAA Board Member Richard Einhorn, HLAA Executive Director Anna Gilmore Hall, HLAA former Executive Director Brenda Battat, and HLAA Professional Advisor on Technology Linda Kozma-Spytek represented HLAA at the CES show in Las Vegas. They talked with consumer electronics companies about the technology needs of people with hearing loss.

HLAA to Exhibit at NBC4 Health & Fitness Expo

Come visit us at **Booth 1640** at the NBC4 Health & Fitness Expo, January 9 & 10 at the Washington Convention Center. See more at the [official website](#). Barbara Kelley, deputy executive director and editor-in-chief of *Hearing Loss Magazine* will appear on *Viewpoint*, a local NBC-4 program, this Sunday, January 10, 5:30 a.m. to talk about HLAA and our participation in the Expo.

PERSONNEL

Director of Chapter Development



HLAA is delighted to announce that Valerie Stafford-Mallis has joined the staff as HLAA's director of chapter development. In this role, Valerie will be partnering with HLAA's Chapter members and leaders in building strong and vibrant HLAA chapters. [Click here](#) for more information about Valerie.

Valerie's first week has been a rewarding flurry of reading and responding to all the HLAA members and chapter leaders who took time out of their busy days to welcome her to HLAA. She responded to numerous inquiries and requests from chapter leaders. One of the recurring questions was about differentiating the existing channels of chapter communication. Valerie began creating additional resources to go on the [Leader Support](#) section of [hearingloss.org](#).

She envisions creating materials chapter leaders can download, add their chapter logo to, and use.

Position Opening: HLAA Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) Education and Training Coordinator

Job Summary: The HAT Education and Training Coordinator is the lead staff for HLAA's Network of Consumer Hearing Assistive Technology Trainers (N-CHATT) program, a consumer volunteer, train-the-trainer program. This program builds a network of consumer trainers with the knowledge and skills necessary to train others impacted by hearing loss in the successful integration of hearing assistive technology to support individual hearing and communication needs at home, work, school, and the community. This blended learning format includes an online community, webinars, and in-person training workshops. This is a grant-funded, part-time position. [Click here](#) for more information about the position. For serious inquiries please send an email with your resume, cover letter and salary requirements to jobs@hearingloss.org. Please put "N-CHATT" in the subject line.