Hear It Is!

Oregon



Spring 2016 Issue 65

Community Needs Assessment: Progress Report

Western Oregon University was awarded almost \$200,000 from the State of Oregon Department of Human Services, Aging and People with Disabilities, Advocacy and Development Office to conduct a Community Needs Assessment to identify the social, health and educational disparities experienced by the Deaf Community with the goal of detecting where gaps in these services exist. This assessment was mandated and funded by SB5026 when SB449A failed to pass in the Oregon Legislature.

The effort is led by Dr. Denise Thew Hackett, and the core team includes Mr. James Brune, and Dr. Cheryl Davis. The Research Institute at WOU is also lending their expertise to provide assistance with data analysis with the support of Dr. Marjorie McGee. There will be numerous collaborations and partnerships, including a Community Advisory Board (CAB) that will work with the research team to evaluate the process and outcomes on a monthly basis.

Applications are currently being accepted for those interested in participating on the Community Advisory Board (CAB). The first information meeting about the CNA project and how to apply for a position with the CAB took place on Friday May 6th. Deadline of applications for the first round was on Friday, May 13th. The aim of the Community Advisory Board is to have representatives from Oregon's diverse Deaf population, defined to include people who are culturally D/deaf, DeafBlind, deaf-blind, Deaf Plus, Hard of Hearing, Late-deafened, Veterans with hearing loss, hearing aid or cochlear implant users and those experiencing hearing loss.

The research will be carried out using a Community Based Participatory Research approach to include the voices of as many individuals as possible from the various contingents included in the above definition of Deaf population. Data collection will be carried out through English/Spanish webbased surveys, signed web-based surveys, focus groups, and key informant interviews. Communication access and accommodations will be provided for all events.

This process started May 1, 2016 and with very short and fast paced timeline of data collection, as the final report will be due December 31, 2016 and presented to the Oregon Legislature in 2017. For more information, contact Denise Thew Hackett, thewd@wou.edu.

From My Lips to Your Ears

Editorial by Chuck Vlcek

Can a deaf person dance? Well, yes, you don't have to hear to learn and perform dance movements. In time to the music? Well, that's a little tougher. As well or better than folks who can hear? Now that's a stretch. At near professional levels? That's a big stretch.

So did one Nyle DiMarco stretch the imagination of dance judges and a national TV audience by winning the DWTS mirror ball trophy over some pretty talented competition (see story on page 6).

It is rather ironic that another contestant flubbed the beginning of a dance because she couldn't hear the beginning of the music due to crowd noise. In all fairness it is one thing to practice without hearing the music and not expecting to hear it, and something else altogether to practice with the music and expect to hear it during the performance.

Remarkably, one of the judges noted that DiMarco in some ways actually had an advantage over the other contestants. He

grew up relying on body movements and body language, which gave fluidity and expression to his dance movements. And even though he could not hear it, he had "musicality" – he could feel the beat and flow with it.

Not everyone will accomplish great things by working around a challenging condition, but you will never know until you try.

HLAA, Oregon State Association

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President Clark Anderson Vice President Eileen Marma Secretary Chuck Vlcek Treasurer Cathy Sanders

Board members: Vincent Portulano, Richard Little, Kathryn Eckert-Mason, Tashi Weinstein, and John Hood-Fysh.

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Hear it is! will regularly print your hearing loss-related stories – personal experiences, coping strategies, and evaluations of technology are welcomed. Maximum word count is 500 words. Article contributions should be made to the editor at info@hearinglossOR.org.

For advertising information and rates, contact Eileen Marma at info@hearinglossOR.org.

Deadline for Summer 2016 edition: June 30, 2016.

Board Election and Annual Meeting Results

As expected, Tashiko "Tashi" Weinstein and Chuck Vlcek were elected to HLAA-OR's Board of Directors. This is Tashi's first 3-year term and Chuck's fifth. Former board member Duane Davis declined to run for another term, so the total number of board members remains at 9. Each of the officers were re-elected to their respective positions for another one-year term (see list on the previous page). Eileen Marma had been appointed to fill a vacancy in the V.P. position, so this will be her first full term.

A set of proposed changes to HLAA-OR's bylaws (described on page 6 in the winter issue) was given final approval by the board at the quarterly meeting that was in conjunction with the annual meeting. The changes basically tweaked election and appointment procedures, and more precisely defined the start and end times of a board member's term. Only members of the incoming board are now eligible to hold office, to be elected by those incoming board members immediately after the Annual Meeting. We now have 9 board members, but the bylaws permit up to 17. The president is now empowered to appoint persons to unfilled board positions (with board approval) who will serve until the next election. Also, if there are more available board positions than candidates running for them at an election, formal balloting may be waived, and the candidates approved by the outgoing board at the Annual Meeting.

HLAA-OR Quarterly Meeting Dates

The next meeting will be held July 9, 2016 at Albany General Hospital (Room 1AB, 3rd floor). *The following meeting will be held on Oct. 1*.

To confirm, contact President Clark Anderson at clarkoa@msn.com or leave a message at (541) 736-4804. Guests are invited to attend but should first contact President Clark Anderson.

"Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. In fact, it is the only thing that ever has." -- Margaret Mead.



Check out the main convention page on http://www.hearingloss.org/content/convention

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Convention 2016 Registration will be Open: In keeping with tradition, early-bird registration will open no later than October and will provide discounted registration rates through January 31, 2016. Increased rates will begin February 1 and continue through May 31 when pre-convention registration closes. On-site registration will be available.

Individual Membership in HLAA is \$35 for 1 year, \$95 for 3 years, or \$140 for 5 years.

One-year membership in HLAA is \$20 for student, \$45 for couple/family, \$50 for professional.

Membership includes the award-winning bi-monthly magazine, *Hearing Loss*. Write to HLAA, 7910 Woodmont Ave., Ste. 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814; 301-657-2248 (Voice); 301-657-224 (TTY); 301-913-9413 (Fax) or www.hearingloss.org.

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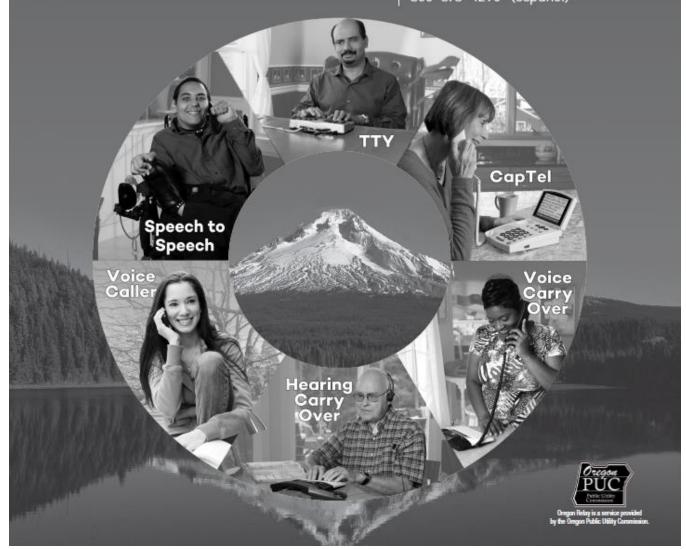
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Within Earshot: News You Need to Know

Deaf Dancer Does DWTS

Nyle DiMarco, a signing deaf person, has recently won the coveted Mirror Ball Trophy at Dancing with the Stars. To followers of DWTS and the Deaf community, this is becoming old news. Others need to know more about DWTS to appreciate the magnitude of this accomplishment.

DWTS is a show on ABC television where persons who are prominent in other fields are paired with top-notch dance instructors. The couples compete with each other for the top prize, the Mirror Ball Trophy, over a few weeks. Each week the lowest ranking couple is eliminated from the competition until three finalists remain. Three or four judges score their performances on a 10point scale, but this accounts for only half the total score. The other half comes from viewers who vote for their favorites. Thus popularity comes into play as much as performance. Voters may also try to "save" a promising couple who just happen to have a bad night or what they felt were unfairly low scores by the judges.

Some contestants have little or no prior dance experience, while others have a fair degree of experience or were in fields such as ice dancing that were readily transferable to ballroom dancing. These ballroom dances include jive, quickstep, foxtrot, cha cha, tango, Argentine tango, rhumba, salsa, paso doble, Viennese waltz, freestyle, contemporary, and some others.

The competition begins with 12 couples. Some contestants obviously can't dance and are quickly eliminated, allowing other

contestants to get their feet wet and become comfortable with their partners. Each contestant has just one week to learn one or two dances and the choreography has to be developed. Practice is physically and mentally challenging and exhausting. Injuries can and do occur.

The quality of dancing in the finals is excellent, almost professional. Nyle was quite able to handle the physical challenges. The obvious "special" challenge for Nyle was to be able to keep in time to the music and to remain synchronized when required to do so. He also needed to be able to communicate with his partner (via interpreter) during practice.

Nyle explained that while he couldn't hear the music, he could feel the beat, and could rely on visual and touch cues from his partner, Peta. He showed that practice and touch cues alone were sufficient, to a degree, by dancing blindfolded for a minute.

During the finals, one of the judges said that Nyle definitely belonged there. The judges also praised his partner for meeting her own special challenge of teaching him the dances and helping him work around his deafness. While Nyle finished a close second in the judges scoring, inspired voters put him over the top.



HLAA Appoints New Executive Director

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), the nation's leading organization representing people with hearing loss, has announced in March the appointment of Barbara Kelley as its new executive director.

Margaret Wallhagen, Ph.D., chairperson of the Board, commented, "Barbara's commitment to HLAA is unquestionable. Her 28 years of dedicated service to the organization in various roles is exemplary. She has not only shown great leadership and fortitude in stepping into the acting executive director role this past January but also expresses a vision for the future that exemplifies an understanding of the needs of persons with hearing loss. We have every confidence she will transition smoothly into the official executive director role."

A search committee was appointed in February and chaired by HLAA Board member Jan Blustein, M.D., Ph.D. Blustein commented, "In her years rising through the ranks and culminating in serving as deputy executive director for the past eight years, Barbara has won the admiration of the HLAA community. We found deep support for her candidacy within HLAA and among our outside stakeholders. Her blend of abilities, talents, and familiarity with HLAA's environment is just what we were looking for in our next executive director."

Hired by Founder Rocky Stone in 1988, Barbara has been a part of the organization's growth, beginning with editing the first issues of the *SHHH Journal* until most recently the award-winning *Hearing Loss Magazine*. She has also helped manage the office team and worked on many of the HLAA programs.

Barbara said, "It has been my life's work to contribute to the mission of the organization through a range of activities. I look forward to using my history and knowledge of the organization to ensure that HLAA remains the valued consumer voice for people with hearing loss in both shaping public policy and helping people live well with hearing loss. I'm energized by our members and supporters whose dedication to HLAA is unwavering. I look forward to working with our members, board, supporters and staff in my role as executive director."

Chapter Building Workshop Update: Chapters in Oregon and Washington are still in the early stages of planning a joint workshop to be held February 25 or March 4, 2017. Keep these dates open and stay tuned.



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Chapter Capers

<u>Douglas County Chapter:</u> At the March meeting a speaker from the Toastmasters Club provided information about how that club functioned. At the April meeting guest speaker Vaughnde Edwards gave a status report on Oregon's community needs assessment (see page 1). The August picnic was discussed at the May meeting. Tasha Havens will host it on August 6th, beginning at 10 a.m. This will replace the regular meeting for that month.

<u>Portland Chapter:</u> Their speaker at the March meeting was a representative of City of Portland Fire and Rescue, speaking about fire prevention and emergency preparedness. In April they saw the film "<u>Lives Worth Living</u>," documenting the fight by activists to get the ADA passed. In May <u>CaptionCall</u> spoke about their captioned telephones, loaned at no charge to people with hearing loss.

President Anne McLaughlin stepped down as president at their annual board election on May 16, after five years of service. There were no candidates for president or vice president but there were three new volunteers for at-large board positions joining four incumbents to bring the board to seven members. The board members elected are Judy Barnes, Tad Boxell, Steve Brier, Judy Cirillo, Jocelyn Cox, Pat Krishnamurthy and Anne McLaughlin. The board will continue to recruit speakers and hold programs when re-starting in September, after the chapter's usual June-July-August summer hiatus.

What is your chapter doing? Send your story to the editor at cvlcek@centurytel.net See pages 14-15 for contact information for these chapters and events.

CI Corner

CI and Hearing Aids: Working Together

If you are a cochlear implant user, are you using a hearing aid in your non-implanted ear? Research has shown that even some cochlear implant users who do not notice any benefit from use of a hearing aid in their non-implanted ear alone, may actually obtain benefit in the bimodal condition. *Possible* advantages you may obtain from using a hearing aid in your non-implanted ear in conjunction with your cochlear implant (bimodal hearing) include: 1) increased environmental awareness, 2) improved ability to locate a sound, 3) a more natural sound quality for speech, 4) a more full/rich sound quality for music, and 5) improved speech understanding in a noisy environment.

New wireless accessories such as a wireless mini microphone, a TV wireless streamer, and a Bluetooth phone clip are now compatible with CI and hearing aid use for Cochlear Americas and Advanced Bionics. Listening with these assistive technologies in both ears can dramatically improve listening and telephone performance. Ask your audiologist what technologies are compatible with your CI and hearing aid.

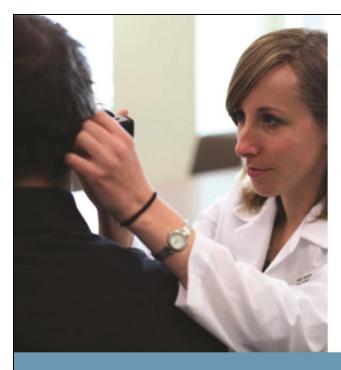
There has also been evidence that suggests people who receive a cochlear implant in an ear which has gone a long period of time without hearing aid use do not do as well. Over time, lack of sound information to your hearing nerve can cause these neural pathways to become dormant. In other words, "use it or lose it!" Providing your ear with sound information via a hearing aid, keeps the hearing pathway to the brain open. If you are considering a second cochlear implant in the future continued use of your hearing aid is a good idea.

We would advise you to consult your audiologist to determine whether using a hearing aid in your non-implanted ear may be beneficial, and to determine which hearing aid company may have compatible technology available for use with your CI processor.

We hope you have found this information helpful. Please send any questions you may have regarding cochlear implants to cochlear@ohsu.edu.

- OHSU Cochlear Implant Team (see ad on page 12)

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Here It Is! Oregon Spring 2016 Newsletter

Insurance Coverage for Hearing Aids for Oregon Adults

Hearing aids, which are covered for adults under Medicaid but not Medicare, would become available next year to people who have insurance coverage under a pending rule from Oregon Insurance Commissioner Laura Cali.

In an April 22 article published in Oregon Association of the Deaf's e-news, author Chris Gray described the circumstances surrounding this development.

Oregon already requires insurers to cover hearing aids for children up to age 18, since their ability to hear was essential for learning. This requirement was instituted in 2009. However, federal health regulators have since told the state health regulators that it cannot discriminate by restricting coverage for one age group unless the age-based restriction was based on *medical* need, which Oregon's was not. It should be noted that not all states require hearing aids for adults or children.

The state agency's Healthcare Reform Rulemaking Advisory Committee held a meeting open to the public but attended only by insurance representatives, although others listened by teleconference. The insurance representatives have been urging the state to resist the federal mandate. They claim that their rates had been set on the assumption that they would not have to cover hearing aids for adults and, if compelled to do so, would ask for a rate increase.

A 2014 study by the Hearing Review found that the average retail price of a quality hearing aid from an audiologist was \$4,400. Since insurers have leverage purchasing at bulk rates, they would pay much less than consumers are now forced to pay.

SQUARE DANCE, ANYONE?

By Chuck Vicek

While watching Nyle DiMarco waltz through DWTS (page 6), I was reminded of my own challenge when I joined a square dance club in Oklahoma several decades ago. I had a severe to profound hearing loss in both ears but wore a hearing aid in only one ear. It helped that the square dance caller had a good voice, and I tried to pick the square closest to him. It also helped that beginners were "walked" through new calls and routines, and the pace of calling was fairly slow afterwards. Certain dances done to songs were "fixed" – you knew what was coming next and the pace was slow. More challenging were the "patter" calls done to instrumental music, especially those that were uptempo. I was able to keep up with patter calls at medium speed but it took total concentration and quick reflexes. I also watched other members of the square who seemed to know what they were doing and used their initial movements to figure out any call that I missed. Challenging but fun!





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If you benefited from reading this edition, got a pearl of wisdom, or found a new resource for yourself or family member, please make a donation to support this newsletter.

If you have not contributed in the last 12 months and are able to do so, please use the form on the back of the newsletter, and mail your tax-deductible gift to:

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Chapters in Oregon

Local chapter meetings are open to all. Family, friends, and professionals are encouraged to attend and become involved. Through chapter meetings and newsletters you'll find:

- Insights into effectively living with hearing loss
- Support/Referrals/Information
- Information about the latest technology
- Coping strategies & tips
- An opportunity to make a difference
- Diminished feelings of isolation and aloneness
- Opportunities to share concerns and hear from others



Oregon State Association

We believe in education - for those who hear well and those who cannot - so that both may understand the causes, challenges and possible remedies for hearing loss. At our meetings, you'll find a comfortable place where hearing loss is accepted and not a problem. Many people report that being a part of a Hearing Loss Assoc. group has made a major difference in their lives. Your participation benefits not only you, but others who attend as well. Following is a list of the current chapters and contact people in Oregon.

HLAA of Central Oregon (HLAACO) meets on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 6 to 8 PM at the St. Charles Medical Center, 2500 NE Neff Road, Bend, in Conference Room A (by the front entrance).

Contact: Cliff Tepper 1664 NE Redrose Court

Bend, OR 97701 (541) 390-2174

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Please visit our Web site: www.wou.edu/rrcd or contact us at 503-838-8444 or e-mail: RRCD@wou.edu.

Applications are generally due mid-March each year.

HLAA of Lane County meets 2nd Thursday each month - 7 PM at the Hilyard Community Center, 2580 Hilyard Street - Eugene.

Contacts: Andrea Cabral e-mail: angora@comcast.net

(541) 345-9432 voice

PO Box 22501 OR Clark Anderson Eugene, OR 97402 e-mail:clarkoa@msn.com HLAA of Salem meets the 4th Tuesday each month (except July and August) - 6:00 PM at the Salem Hospital Community Health and Education (Building D), Creekside Overflow Room, 939 Oak Street SE, Salem, OR.

Contact: Mary Fagan

e-mail: hlasalem@live.com

(503) 409-5491

3253 Dallas Hwy NW Salem, OR 97304-4222

HLAA of Portland meets the 3rd Monday each month (except June, July and August) 6:30 PM in "Building 2", 2nd floor, on the Legacy Good Samaritan Campus, 1040 NW 22nd Ave. (at Marshall), Portland 97210

Contact Anne McLaughlin

e-mail: hlaportland@gmail.com

PO Box 2112

Portland, OR 97208-2112

www.hearinglossor.org/portland/

HLAA of Douglas County meets the 4th Monday of each month at 6:30 pm. Location is Mercy Hospital Community Education Room (2nd floor), 2459 Stewart Parkway, Roseburg.

Contacts: Vincent Portulano, President:

email: <u>HLAADC@outlook.com</u>

Robin Illers, Secretary (541) 580-7180

HLAA of Linn and Benton Counties meets the 3rd Thursday of each month (except July and August) – 6:30 PM at the Senior Center – 65 "B" Academy Square – Lebanon

Contact: John Hood-Fysh

e-mail: jhood-fysh@wwmore.com

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Chapter coordinator contacts:

Oregon: Richard Little

e-mail: Richard16@comcast.net (541) 223-8810 (cell text only) or

(541) 818-0003 (home)

PO Box 215, Sweet Home, OR 97386

Oregon: Vincent Portulano

e-mail: vportulano@hotmail.com

15491 Highway 99, Oakland, OR 97462

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