

HLAA TC

November 2019



The mission of HLAA TC is to open the world of communication to people with hearing loss by providing information, education, support and advocacy.

Next Speaker:

November 16, 2019

“New Frontiers in brain technologies for treating hearing loss and tinnitus”
Dr. Hubert Lim

December 21, 2019

“Clear Speech”
Mary Bauer

*Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist
Minnesota Department of Human Services*

January 18, 2020

Legislative Update
Emory Dively



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Hearing Loss Association of America Twin Cities Chapter (HLAA TC) is held the 3rd Saturday of the month (September thru May). We gather at 9:30 to socialize, and begin our meeting at 10 AM at The Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute, 3915 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, MN 55442. The meeting adjourns at noon.

President's Message



Christine Morgan
President's Message HLAATC
November 2019

Can you believe the beginning of the holiday season is only days away? Yikes!

We have had a great start for our 2019-2020 season with terrific speakers and more to come. I hope you were able to make it to October's meeting to share the Anniversary Cake! 30 years for HLAA-TC and 40 years for National HLAA. Both organizations are robust and growing! Please welcome our new Secretary, Ed Benck and Director-at-Large, Dwight Maxa to our Board. We would also like to invite members to serve on our Legislative Committee (see Lionel), Membership/Hospitality Committee (see Christine), and Social Media Committee (see Mike). This is a great opportunity to get involved in your organization.

This month's speaker is Dr. Hubert Lim from the University of Minnesota speaking on New frontiers in Brain Technologies for Treating Hearing Loss and Tinnitus. December's speaker is Mary Bauer from DHS speaking on Clear Speech. Don't you wish everyone spoke clearly?

Don't forget the December holiday party complete with potluck and white elephant gift exchange. Clean those closets and "pass on" that third gravy dish, purple towels (that don't go with your orange bathroom), and the juicer you received from Aunt Alice. It's time to "re-gift".

Let's take time this month (before we shop til we drop) to give thanks for the people in our lives, food on our tables, roofs over our head, and our

health (be it as it may). It is the season to be thankful and to step back from the commercialism. Time to look deeply at what really matters!

I am thankful for all of you, the Board, the volunteers, the members, and the guests who have made our organization stronger. We may not always agree but we all know what it is like to have hearing loss in a hearing world. Consider this a safe place to tell your story to those who understand and will support you.

Warmest wishes,

Christine

Thanksgiving reminds us to give thanks for the abundance and people in our lives.



Marie Koehler of Minnesota Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services received the above sticker prototype from the St. Paul Police Department. The sticker, similar to what some county Sheriffs' departments are providing, could be displayed on car windows or the front door of a home to alert police and emergency staff of special needs of the occupant.

It is agreed that such stickers might help some people, but could also place some individuals at risk by identifying a vulnerability.

The SPPD is willing to print the stickers and make them available if there is sufficient interest, but is looking for feedback from the community. Your feedback is valuable, even if you are not a St. Paul resident.

Send your comments to Marie ASAP at
marie.koehler@state.mn.us

October Meeting Summary



Mike Higgins
Vice President

The following is adapted from a presentation by David Fenley, Director, Minnesota Council on Disability at the October 19, 2019 HLAA-TC meeting. You can view his presentation titled “Your Rights Under the ADA” at (<https://www.hlaatc.org/site>) on the Resources tab. Also see the Job Accommodation Network (<https://askjan.org>) on our website, Resources tab / Organizations.

Statutorily, the Minnesota Council on Disability exists to advise the Governor, the legislature, state agencies, other disability organizations and the general public in Minnesota. Or, pretty much advising everyone in Minnesota on all disabilities and the ADA. Someone can have a disability and not consider themselves disabled. Self-identification is up to the individual. A benefit of the ADA is that you're probably covered, and you have certain rights.

Data from HLAA's national website attests to the prevalence and economics of Hearing Loss.

- 30 million people, 12 years or older, have hearing loss in both ears
- 13% of the U.S. population has this disability

These numbers speak to businesses because they represent a significant volume of customers. Many of them may require some accommodation. Broadening the parameters, 25% of the US population 15 years or older has a disability and by age 65, half the population has a disability as defined by the ADA. From a business perspective, these populations represent almost half a trillion of dollars in the US and globally \$8 trillion of disposable income.

The Americans with Disabilities Act consists of Five Titles

Title I - Employment

Title II - Public sector, government

Title III - Public accommodations, or the private sector

Title IV - Telecommunications and specifically to hearing loss and deaf communities

Title V - Miscellaneous provisions (not included in the presentation)

(October Meeting Summary, cont.)

The ADA identifies a disability as any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. There must be a record of the disability and a public perception of disability. An individual without a disability might be discriminated against because they have the appearance of a disability. Others may have a nonapparent or not visible disability. Identified or not, in any of these situations, the ADA protects you and your rights.

Title I - Employment

No employer may discriminate against any individual with a disability regarding any aspect of employment. The ADA requires a “reasonable accommodation” process. Once an employee requests an accommodation a discussion between employee and employer begins. An employer can't tell you what's right for you, however, negotiations are permissible if the accommodation requested is proven to be unreasonable or an undue burden. The employee is responsible for pursuing the accommodation. The Department of Human Rights investigates and rules on employment discrimination cases. This process can take months for a ruling.

Title II - Public sector, government

All government entities must be accessible. Buildings must be accessible, websites and videos and must have captions. Government must furnish auxiliary aids and services when necessary to ensure effective communication. Agencies must include the cost of accommodations in their budgets and cannot charge for accommodations so that those with disabilities can participate. In Minnesota, agencies must post and provide the accommodations available. Also, a Title II policy requires state agencies complete and submit an annual report documenting agency compliance with Title II.

Title III - Public accommodations

If you can go there, and if anybody can go there, it's a place of public accommodation. Movie theaters, convention centers, hotels, motels, train stations, museums, grocery stores. Essentially, if it's not your home and not the government, it is a place of public accommodation. Businesses have a lower level of accommodation which is “readily achievable” often referred to “cheap and easy”. A business that refuses to make a reasonable accommodation effort can face discrimination charges brought by the Minnesota Department of Human Rights. Penalties typically require changes to their business practice, a fine, and public humiliation. State agencies, when they build a new facility or when they renovate, must install hearing loops. Title II has no grandfather provision in the ADA but there is a Safe Harbor provision for businesses that met the accessibility standard in 1990 when the ADA became law.

Title IV - Telecommunications specifically to hearing loss and deaf communities.

Digital accessibility is a basic definition referring to websites, videos, documents, and anything in the digital realm must be equally accessible to all people. That means that it must be either captioned or coded in a way that can communicate with you. Whether it's a screen reader, or CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation). Digital accessibility is not technically covered under the ADA. Court decisions find that Internet, electronic documents, PDFs, email, etc. falls into the spirit of the law. You need to be able to use the Internet to do things in this world. Therefore, it's part of the ADA. That's what judges have ruled on, but, since it's not in the ADA yet, businesses aren't required to provide accommodations

We see accommodations every day. Some might say a reasonable accommodation is a privilege or a special advantage. At best, a reasonable accommodation is an equalizer.

November Speaker



Dr. Hubert Lim

The Talk:

“New Frontiers in Brain Technologies for Treating Hearing Loss and Tinnitus”

The Speaker:

Hubert Lim is an Associate Professor in the Biomedical Engineering and Otolaryngology Departments at the University of Minnesota and is serving as an Institute for Translational Neuroscience Scholar.

He also serves as Chief Scientific Officer of Neuromod Devices Limited (Dublin, Ireland), a company developing bimodal sensory neuromodulation technologies for treating tinnitus and other health disorders.

Dr. Lim obtained his PhD in Biomedical Engineering at the University of Michigan in 2005 under the mentorship of Dr. David Anderson and performed postdoctoral research at Hannover Medical School in Germany from 2006-2009 with Dr. Thomas Lenarz while also consulting for Cochlear Limited.

His research focuses on neural prosthetics, neuromodulation technologies, sensory neuroscience, neural plasticity, and neuro-immune physiology with the aim of developing new stimulation treatments for hearing disorders, pain and inflammatory diseases in collaboration with multiple companies and clinicians. Additional information can be found at <http://soniclab.umn.edu>.



Lionel Locke

COMMENTS FROM THE TREASURER

Thank you to everyone who have stepped forward during the first two meetings of our year and paid their 2019-2020 dues. While the amount is just \$15.00 annually, these funds go directly to supporting our chapter expenses including newsletters, postage, and all those items that allow our organization to run efficiently. For those who join our group during the year, we continue to accept the annual dues payment through the year. Our financial year runs from September through August.

Did you know that HLAA-TC is also a recognized 501 (c) (3) tax exempt organization? We have had this tax designation since March 1994. I would invite you to consider making a year-end gift to HLAA-TC. Your support of our organization would help fortify our local chapter now and into the future.

Your gifts of annual dues and possible other gifts help make our mission statement “TO OPEN THE WORLD OF COMMUNICATION TO PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS BY PROVIDING INFORMATION, EDUCATION, SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY” possible.

We at HLAA are very optimistic about the future and about all the things we can accomplish. Thank you for your consideration.

Lionel Locke, Treasurer HLAA-TC

Two cochlear implant social group events coming up. All are welcome!



Adult Cochlear Implant Social Group

Sunday, November 10, 2019

12:00-2:00 PM

**Rockford Road Library
6401 42nd Avenue North
Crystal, MN 55427
612-543-5875**

Host: Joe Sehl

You are welcome to bring a spouse, partner, friend, family member, and/or significant other to any of these events! If you would like to bring a refreshment to share that would be wonderful!



Adult Cochlear Implant Social Group 9th Year Celebration!

Adult Cochlear Implant Social Group

Sunday, December 8, 2019

1:30 – 3:30 PM

**Dakota County Wentworth Library
199 East Wentworth Ave
West St. Paul, MN 55118
651-554-6800**

Host: Sara Oberg

It will be held in the large meeting room. You are welcome to bring a spouse, partner, friend, family member, and/or significant other to any of these events! If you would like to bring a refreshment to share that would be wonderful! We will mingle and eat at 1:30 PM. At 2:00 PM we will be seated in a circle for questions, discussion, answers, more eating, and mingling!



Noisy Planet (with free app!)

The National Institutes of Health provides these tips for minimizing hearing loss caused by excessive noise:

Learn how to protect yourself and your loved ones from noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL)...

NIHL occurs when noise damages tiny hair cells within the cochlea... Since people can't grow new hair cells to replace damaged ones, hearing loss from noise is permanent...

Luckily, NIHL is preventable... You can help prevent hearing loss from noise by following these simple lifestyle changes:

- **Turn down the volume.** Keep the volume low on smartphones, tablets, computers, and TVs, and set maximum volume levels on devices used by children and teens. You can measure the decibel levels of devices and environments with a [free app](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- **Move away from the noise.**
- **Wear hearing protectors, such as earplugs or earmuffs...** Earplugs or protective earmuffs can help.

www.Noisyplanet.nidcd.nih.gov

By Laura Hagedorn when she was starting her blogs:



...I'm thankful for the hearing I have.... About a year ago I was in an accident that caused me to suffer many injuries with a Traumatic Brain Injury ([TBI](#)) being one of the major ones. I was in a coma for 3 weeks and when I came out of it we realized I was not hearing anything (and thankfully I had a hidden skill for lip reading, which came in handy... For the first 5 months after my accident I couldn't hear anything. Now I can "hear" ... but my hearing is greatly compromised (I used to have perfect hearing).

There's nothing like losing most of what you have to make you thankful for what is left... Thanks, Laura, for this reminder.

-- editor

<https://writingbylaura.com/2018/01/25/essay-thankful-thursday/>

News from CATSS (University of Minnesota's
Center for Applied and Translational Sensory Science)



FALL 2019, from the director Peggy Nelson:



“... we are actively studying the social and personal interaction effects of hearing loss for persons and their families...We hope you'll visit our website, sign up for some of our studies, or stop by to see the work in progress. Send us your ideas and insights, as the perspective of consumers and family and friends are important to us. We can learn a lot from one another.”



Research under way at CATSS includes several projects to explore the impacts of sensory impairment on spatial localization. One such project looks at Spatial localization in older adults with single and dual sensory impairment.

“The ability to locate visual and auditory stimuli is important in many everyday tasks. While localization may be taken for granted in many healthy adults, many forms of sensory impairment result in difficulty localizing stimuli... for instance, does visual impairment prevent accurate localization of a car that can be both seen and heard, or can the sound of the car be used to compensate for poor visual localization?” Research is being conducted by a group of researchers including Dr. Gordon Legge, Dr. Peggy Nelson, Dr. Yingzi Xiong, and graduate student Doug Addleman.



An additional project explores the impact of the “source confusions” on social interactions.

See more at catss.umn.edu

Calling all members -- volunteers needed!

HLAA-TC has been invited to participate in *Cigna's Healthy Aging 40+ Expo* on Thursday, November 21. This is our opportunity to educate people in the health care industry about hearing loss and HLAA-TC! This event is in Eden Prairie and open only to Cigna's 700 employees.

The expo is from 11 AM to 2 PM, with setup at 10:30. We need a couple of people to help us at our table. If you can lend a hand, please contact Lionel at treasurer@hlaatc.org.

Photos from October Meeting





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Next meeting: November 16, 2019

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Vicki Martin, editor@hlaatc.org

Meetings are held the 3rd Saturday of the month September through May at the Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute in Golden Valley (3915 Golden Valley Road), MN. We gather at 9:30 to socialize and the meeting starts at 10. **Accommodations:** All meetings are real time captioned by Lisa Richardson and her staff of *Paradigm Captioning* (www.paradigmreporting.com). The meeting room is also looped for T-coil or receiver.

Please visit the chapter's web-site at www.hlaatc.org or visit us on Facebook: groups/HLAA-TC.