

# ABOUT HLAA

- **Who We Are**

Founded in 1979 by Howard E. “Rocky” Stone, the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) is the nation’s leading organization representing consumers with hearing loss. The programs and events we offer are designed to focus on you —the **person**. HLAA strives to give people the tools they need to live more successfully with hearing loss and to show them **they do not have to face hearing loss alone**.

- **Our Mission**

*The mission of HLAA is to open the world of communication to people with hearing loss by providing **Information, Education, Support and Advocacy**.*



# Statement of Strategic Intent

HLAA seeks to enable people with hearing loss to live life fully and without compromise. Success will be achieved when:

- Stigma withers away. Hearing loss is no longer considered shameful.
- People take action. Effective, affordable, and easy-to-use hearing devices are routinely worn by people with hearing loss.
- Costs come down. Medicare and all other insurance plans cover a full range of hearing technology and aural rehabilitation programs.
- More public spaces are communication accessible. High-quality assistive listening devices and captions are available in theaters, transportation, government buildings, and houses of worship.
- Consumers have know-how. People understand how to successfully cope with their hearing loss, and how to obtain and use the technology and therapies they require.
- Providers follow best practices. Clinicians offer a wide spectrum of devices and treatments, know how they work, and base care on an assessment of each person's hearing and lifestyle needs.
- Technology works seamlessly. Audio devices, including mobile phones, easily connect to one another without glitches, incompatibilities, or additional devices like streamers.
- Hearing loss is recognized as a key public health issue. Healthy hearing is deemed essential to human physical and psychosocial health so that screening for hearing loss occurs routinely in primary care.
- Hearing loss prevention is routine. School children are taught how and why to protect their hearing. Laws limiting noise levels in public spaces are enforced.

# Information and Education

Our primary purpose is to educate ourselves, our families, friends, coworkers, teachers, hearing health care providers, industry, government, and others about hearing loss. HLAA provides adults and children with tools for self help; sensitizes the general population about the special needs of people who have hearing loss; and promotes understanding of the nature, causes, complications, and remedies of hearing loss.

- We provide information on many aspects of hearing loss, from technological and medical advances to coping and parenting strategies.
- We want to help you become an informed consumer on what options are available to you to help you make the best decisions on how to deal with hearing loss.



# Support and Advocacy

**Support** comes in many forms as it means something different to everyone. HLAA offers a wide range of local and national programs, events, and resources that offer something for everyone. See our programs and events page for more information on our support tools, including our national network of chapters and state organizations, *Hearing Life* magazine and *Hearing Life e-News*, the annual HLAA Convention, the Walk4Hearing, and monthly webinars.

HLAA is a leading voice in improving communication access for people with hearing loss. Our **advocacy** efforts range from the grassroots, local level all the way up to Capitol Hill. In fact, some of the most powerful and effective advocacy efforts begin with you – the person with hearing loss.

We **advocate** for communication access in the workplace, hotels, schools, court systems, medical, and entertainment facilities. HLAA promotes new technology, medical research, and legislation that will alleviate the effects of hearing loss, and we encourage and participate in research to improve hearing aids, assistive listening devices, and other technology needs of consumers with hearing loss.

HLAA also promotes and encourages self-advocacy. Speak up, whether it's at school, work, social activities or even at home. Let people know you have a hearing loss and tell them what you need to best communicate.

# HLAA Membership

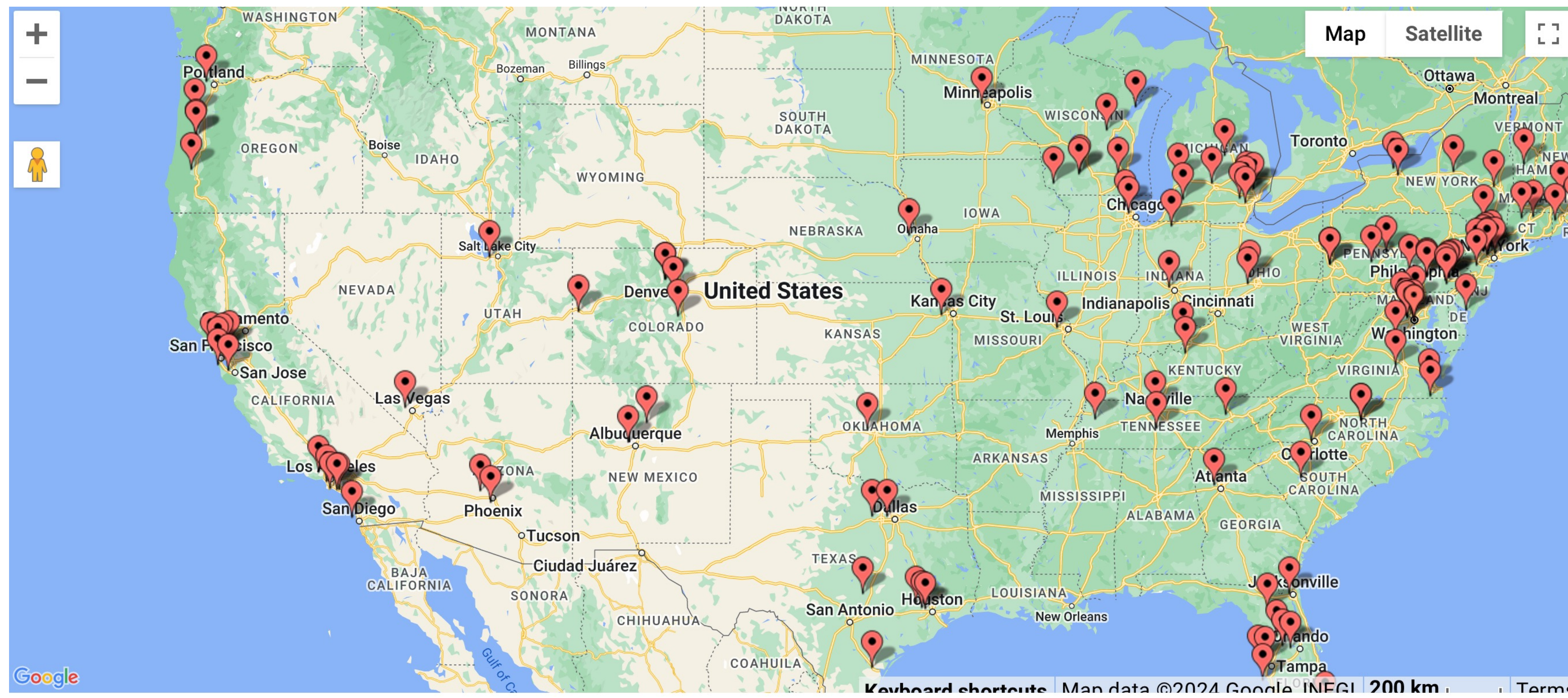
- **Be Part of HLAA**
- It's now easier than ever to **become a member** of HLAA's unique community of support! HLAA is the leading organization representing more than 50 million Americans with hearing loss, and empowering millions more who are at risk of developing this invisible disability. Make a gift in any amount to help us make an impact on this growing public health crisis.
- **Your Annual Support as an HLAA Member Makes Our Voice Stronger. As a Member, You Will...**
  - Make an impact helping millions thrive with hearing loss
  - Get *Hearing Life* seasonal magazine delivered to your home\*
  - Get the latest in hearing news, events and action alerts each month
  - Get involved in important local and national advocacy initiatives
  - Donations of \$45 and higher have option to receive magazine by mail.
- It's now easier than ever to **become a member** of HLAA's unique community of support! HLAA is the leading organization representing more than 50 million Americans with hearing loss, and empowering millions more who are at risk of developing this invisible disability.



# Find A Chapter

**Virtual Meetings:** Many HLAA Chapters are holding virtual meetings on line via Zoom, especially during the pandemic. Please reach out to individual chapter leaders for meeting options. Chapters welcome anyone to meetings. If you need information or want to meet others with hearing loss, please reach out to our chapters.

[HLAASNC@outlook.com](mailto:HLAASNC@outlook.com)





# Start a Chapter

- HLAA chapters consist of a vast assortment of distinguished core of volunteers who have brought HLAA to their communities to reach out to people with hearing loss. A chapter begins as a support and information group. Step-by-step with your efforts and our guidance, the group will develop into an HLAA Chapter.
- Please contact [chapters@hearingloss.org](mailto:chapters@hearingloss.org) if there is anything you don't understand or have questions about.

# Chapter Leader Resources

## Who is an HLAA Leader

- *Chapter presidents*
  - *State association and state office leaders*
  - *Chapter coordinators*
  - *Anyone who holds an office or heads a committee*
  - *Potential leaders being groomed to step up when the time comes for a change in leadership*
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- The Hearing Loss Association of America and its state organizations (associations and offices) and chapters are all one organization. States and chapters are a critical part of the national organization and carry out the mission of HLAA within states and communities while they represent HLAA. This reach into the grassroots across the country is crucial to creating awareness about hearing loss through local programs and outreach. HLAA is dedicated to helping our leaders across the country to start and grow a successful state organization, chapter, or chapters within a state.
  - HLAA State organizations and Chapters improve the lives of people with hearing loss. HLAA Chapters ensure that it members and people with hearing loss participate fully in life. We could never accomplish our mission without dedicated volunteers like you.



# Programs and Events 1/2

The Hearing Loss Association of America gives members the tools they need to live more successfully with hearing loss. The programs, events and services we offer are designed to focus on you—the person with hearing loss.

## **Advocacy**

*HLAA advocates for equal access for all Americans with hearing loss in areas such as telecommunications, employment, health care, education and community life. We promote self-advocacy and empowerment to help bring about change on both the local and national levels.*

## **Communication Access in Health Care Settings**

*HLAA is dedicated to ensuring that hospitals and other medical settings comply with the Americans with Disabilities to provide communication access. We have tools and information for patients and for health care providers.*

## **Chapters and State Organizations**

*HLAA Chapters are a place where you will meet others going through the same thing you are—right in your own community. Share stories, hear guest speakers, get information on technology and develop lifelong friendships.*

## **Hearing Life**

*Our quarterly magazine, Hearing Life, features personal stories that will inspire and empower you, articles on research and technology, hearing aids, cochlear implants, hearing assistive technology and more. HLAA members receive the magazine in the mail and the magazine is available online.*

## **Hearing Life e-News**

*Our biweekly newsletter is delivered directly to your inbox and brings you updates and breaking news on many hot topics affecting people with hearing loss. Sign up for Hearing Life e-News on our homepage—there's no cost and no obligation.*

## **The Industry-Consumer Alliance for Accessible Technology (ICAAT)**

*The Industry-Consumer Alliance for Accessible Technology (ICAAT) is a federally funded project under the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Technology RERC at Gallaudet University. Project partners include the Hearing Loss Association of America, Gallaudet University and the American Institutes for Research. ICAAT's goal is to bring together technology developers and consumers who have hearing loss to inspire and support the development of more usable,*

# Programs and Events 2/2

- [Walk4Hearing](#)

*The HLAA Walk4Hearing is the largest event of its kind for people with hearing loss. Held in cities across the country, the Walk4Hearing brings together people with hearing loss, their families and friends who walk to raise awareness about hearing loss, good hearing health, and communication access. Funds raised support both local and national programs and services for people with hearing loss.*

- [Annual Convention](#)

*The HLAA Convention is the nation's largest hearing-friendly event with accessible workshops and a trade show with the latest technology and services for people with hearing loss. Members receive discounted registration.*

- [Hearingloss.org](#)

*We hope you enjoy this newly redesigned and mobile-friendly HLAA website, **hearingloss.org** – it is packed with a wealth of information on hearing loss, including hearing loss basics, financial assistance resources, technology, resources for HLAA Chapters, information on webinars, the Walk4Hearing, the HLAA Convention and the Get in the Hearing Loop communication access program.*

- [Get in the Hearing Loop](#)

*Get in the Hearing Loop is dedicated to providing and promoting community education, advocacy on behalf of people of hearing loss, and consultation services to help venues of all kinds successfully implement hearing loop technology.*

- [Webinars](#)

*Educational and product showcase webinars are held each month and presented by renowned experts in the field. The live webinars are captioned and recorded for playback later.*



# Hearing Help

- Your decision to do something about your hearing loss begins with understanding what is happening. Here is information for you or someone you know who may have trouble hearing. Get accurate information about hearing loss, its causes and what to do about it. The Hearing Loss Association of America contracted with Knowlera Media to produce a series of seven, four-minute, captioned videos on hearing loss. Information you need to be adequately briefed on the topic is all in one place in an easy-to-access format. If you think you have a hearing loss or know someone who does, please point them to the videos where hearing health care professionals and people with hearing loss talk about what you can do about it.

- **Hearing Loss Basics**

- [Symptoms & Diagnosing](#)
- [Types, Causes and Treatment](#)
- [Genetics and Hearing Loss](#)
- [Prepare for Appointments](#)
- [Prevention](#)
- [Living Well with Hearing Loss](#)
- [Find a Professional](#)
- [Forums – Mayo Clinic Connect](#)
- [Helpful Links](#)
- [Glossary](#)

- **Technology**

- [Hearing Aids](#)
- [Over-the-Counter \(OTC\) Hearing Aids](#)
- [Cochlear Implants & Other Implantable Devices](#)
- [Hearing Assistive Technology](#)
- [Hearing Loop Technology](#)
- [Captioning and CART](#)
- [Alerting Devices](#)
- [Phones & Mobile Devices](#)
- [Auditory Training Programs](#)

- **Communities**

- [Employees](#)
- [Parents](#)
- [Patients/Providers](#)
- [Students / Young Adults](#)
- [Veterans](#)
- [HLAA Virtual Meetings](#)

- **Financial Assistance**

- [Medicaid](#)
- [State Agencies](#)
- [State Telephone Programs](#)
- [State Hearing Aid Insurance Laws](#)
- [State Hearing Aid Affordable Care Act Rules](#)

# Do You Think You Have Hearing Loss

- If you or someone you know might have a hearing loss, you are not alone. Statistics tell us that it takes the average person seven years from the time they think they have a hearing loss until the time they seek treatment. Don't be a statistic. Seek treatment for your hearing loss.
- **Symptoms**
- **"I can hear but can't understand." Other Things to Consider**
- **Diagnosing Hearing Loss**
- **Hearing Health Professionals**
- **Helping You Prepare & Live Well with Hearing Loss from the Ida Institute**
- **Hearing Aids**
- <https://www.hearingloss.org/hearing-help/hearing-loss-basics/symptoms-diagnosing/>



# Technology

Unlike the situation years ago, nowadays just about everyone with any type or degree of hearing loss can be helped with some kind of **hearing assistive technology** – whether it be **hearing aids**, **cochlear implants or other implantable devices**, hearing enhancement technology, apps, **assistive listening devices**, or **captioning**.

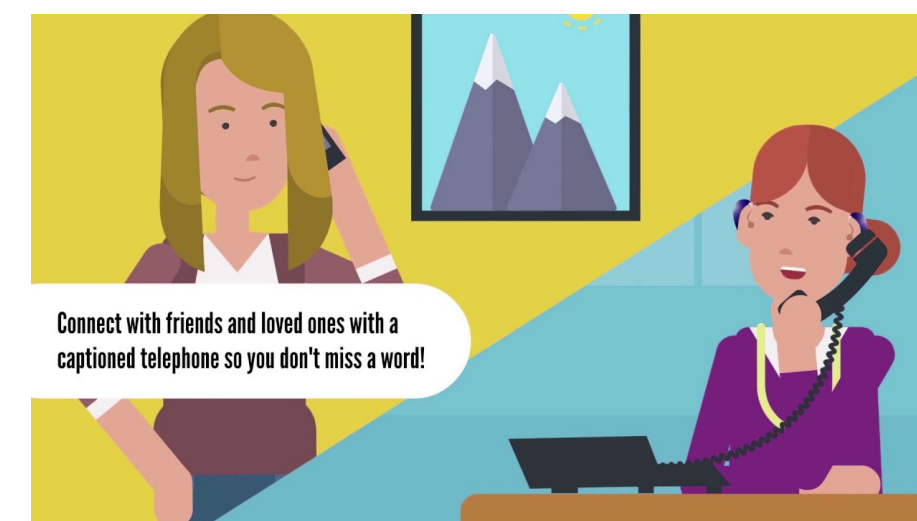
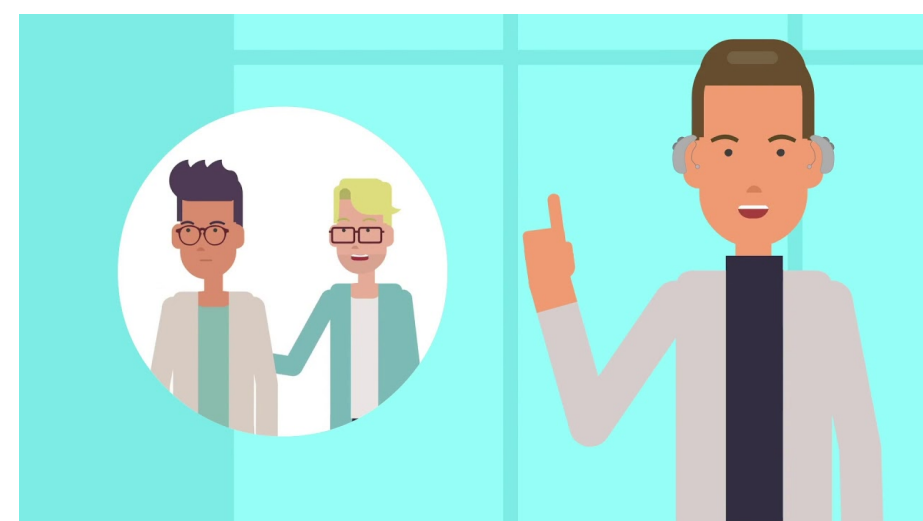
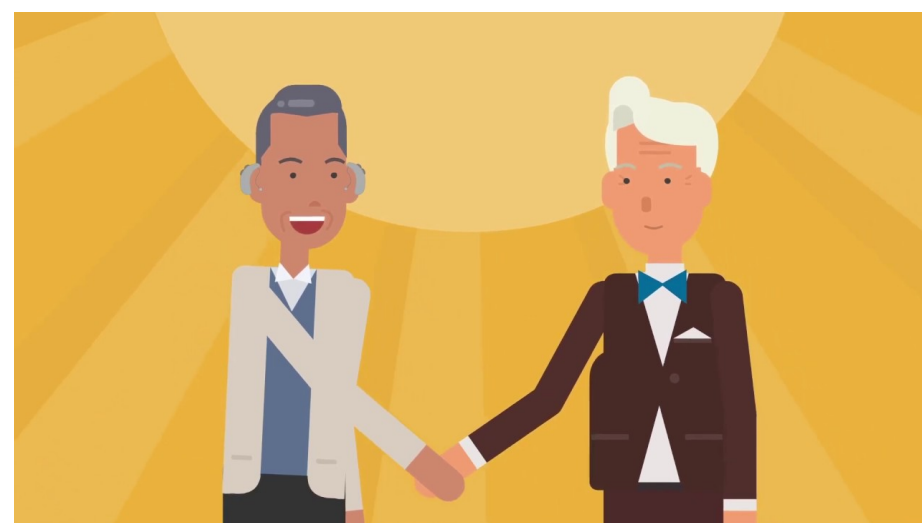
If you are told there is nothing you can do and you should just learn to live with hearing loss, get a second opinion.

## What is Hearing Assistive Technology?

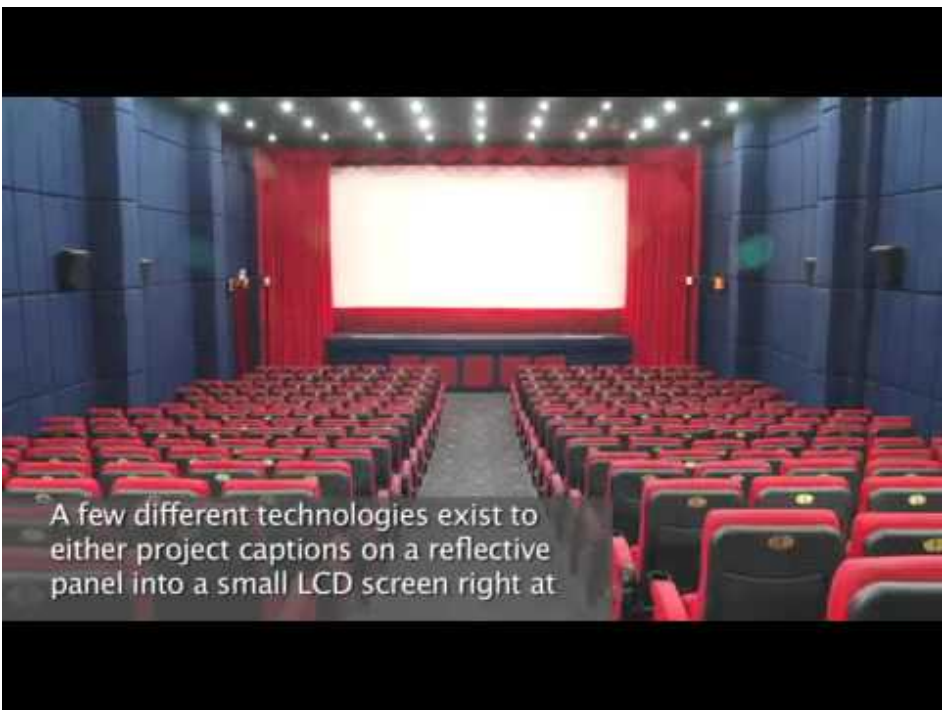
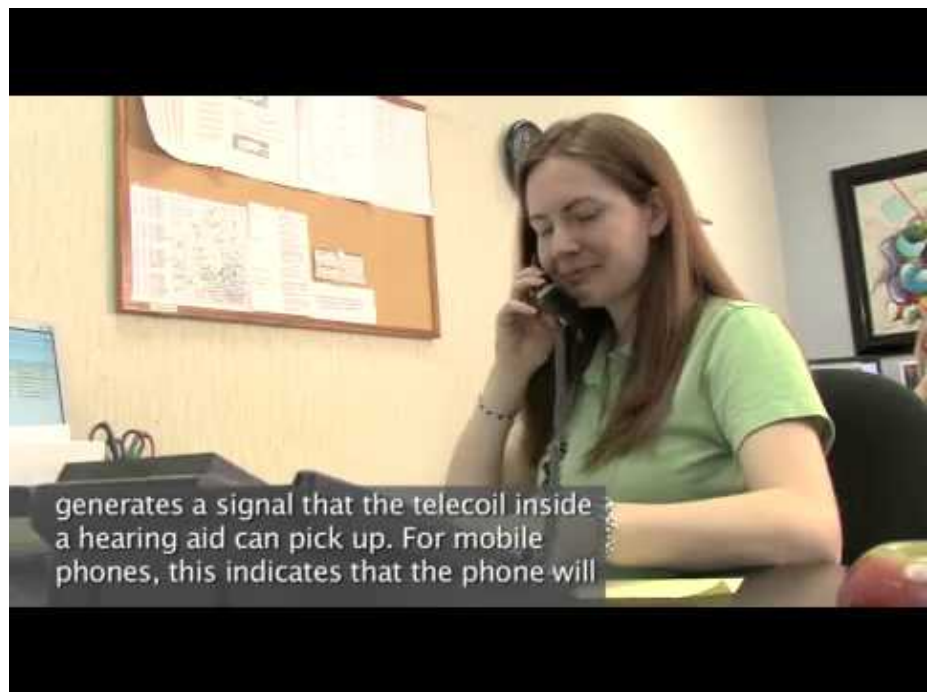
Use of hearing assistive technology (HAT) is one important way for consumers to address their hearing loss. HAT includes assistive listening systems (such as FM, hearing loop systems, and infrared), telecommunications products and services (such as captioned telephones and relay services) and alerting devices (such as alarm clocks, smoke-detectors, etc. that use loud audio alerts, vibrating receivers and/or flashing lights). There are also equipment distribution programs, state assistive technology programs and other helpful resources that are beneficial.

## Helpful Videos on Hearing Assistive Technology

Check out these three short HLAA videos about Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) made possible from a grant from the **Consumer Technology Association Foundation**.



# Helpful Technology Videos Beyond Hearing Aids & Cochlear Implants





# Hearing Aids

A hearing aid is a small electronic device that you wear in or behind your ear. It makes some sounds louder so that a person with hearing loss can listen, communicate, and participate more fully in daily activities. A hearing aid can help people hear more in both quiet and noisy situations. However, only about one out of five people who would benefit from a hearing aid actually uses one.

A hearing aid has three basic parts: a microphone, amplifier, and speaker. The hearing aid receives sound through a microphone, which converts the sound waves to electrical signals and sends them to an amplifier. The amplifier increases the power of the signals and then sends them to the ear through a speaker.

Hearing aids are primarily useful in improving the hearing and speech comprehension of people who have hearing loss that results from damage to the small sensory cells in the inner ear, called hair cells. This type of hearing loss is called sensorineural hearing loss. The damage can occur as a result of disease, aging, or injury from noise or certain medicines.

A hearing aid amplifies sound vibrations entering the ear. Surviving hair cells in the ear detect the larger vibrations and convert them into neural signals that are passed along to the brain. The greater the damage to the hair cells, the more severe the hearing loss and the greater the amplification needs to be. However, there are practical limits to the amount of amplification a hearing aid can provide. In addition, if the inner ear is too damaged, even large vibrations will not be converted into neural signals. In this situation, a hearing aid would be ineffective.

# Cochlear Implants & Other Implantable Devices

A cochlear implant is a small, complex electronic device that can help to provide a sense of sound to a person who has severe to profound hearing loss. The implant consists of an external portion that sits behind the ear and a second portion that is surgically placed under the skin (see figure). An implant has the following parts:

- A microphone, which picks up sound from the environment.
- A speech processor, which selects and arranges sounds picked up by the microphone.
- A transmitter and receiver/stimulator, which receive signals from the speech processor and convert them into electric impulses.
- An electrode array, which is a group of electrodes that collects the impulses from the stimulator and sends them to different regions of the auditory nerve.

There are some types of conductive hearing losses that can be surgically corrected (e.g., fixing a hole in the eardrum or one of the middle ear bones) or improved with hearing aids. Other types of conductive hearing losses can be improved with implantable devices:

- An implanted middle ear device
- A surgically implanted, osseointegrated device (for example, the Baha or Ponto System)

**Implantable middle ear hearing devices** are designed to help increase the transmission of sound vibrations reaching the inner ear. Middle ear implants involve a small prosthesis attached to one of the bones of the middle ear. Rather than amplifying the sound traveling to the eardrum (as with a hearing aid), these prostheses help move the bones directly.

**Osseointegrated devices** are also treatment options for people with conductive or mixed hearing loss. These implants are surgically embedded to the outside of a person's skull, behind the ear. A tiny titanium abutment is anchored to the skull to which an external processor is attached. When the microphone on the processor picks up incoming sounds, the processor transmits these sounds via the abutment to the inner ear through skull vibrations.



Contact President Lance Ledet or Vice President Deanna Gay at the HLAASouthern Nevada Chapter at either email address listed below.

- [HLAASNC@outlook.com](mailto:HLAASNC@outlook.com)  
Lance Ledet
- [Myhearthears7@gmail.com](mailto:Myhearthears7@gmail.com)  
Deanna Gay

