

Hearing Loss Association
of America
2021 Annual Report

**Leading the Charge
for Hearing Health**



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

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A MESSAGE
FROM OUR
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

This is Our Moment

More than 40 years into our mission, HLAA is the strongest it's ever been. Through an unrelenting pandemic, together we've met the needs of our community and continued to adapt and grow. We are now stepping into an historic time for hearing health in the U.S. and HLAA has had a key role in these improvements.

Hearing health is finally beginning to get the attention it deserves, and the door is opening to greater awareness and accessibility.

A Voice in Policy and Legislation

This year, HLAA continued fighting for access to quality hearing care and brought our voice to real solutions. I am so proud that HLAA hosted the very first Patient-Focused Drug Development Meeting on sensorineural hearing loss with the permission of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

We advocated for years for hearing aid coverage to be added to Medicare and we're gratified that it was written into proposed legislation. Though the legislation is stalled, we continue seeking paths to meet the needs of older Americans who are at greatest risk of hearing loss.

We made progress on legislation allowing over-the-counter hearing aids, which will change the way some adults take a first step to address their hearing loss. With the president's urging, the FDA moved to publish proposed rules for these hearing aids, and HLAA went to work to ensure the rules fully protect consumers.

A Voice in the Media

Through these key events, HLAA furthered its voice as an expert in the field. We appeared in TV news, major newspapers, podcasts, radio and niche publications. In the media, and working with our coalition partners, we made the case that hearing health is critical to overall wellness.

The World Health Organization issued the first-ever World Report on Hearing which laid out a global care model for hearing across the life course. HLAA provided numerous comments, giving important context and raising awareness.

Growing Our Impact Together

In this report you'll find the highlights of a busy and important year. This work is possible thanks to our members and volunteers, donors and sponsors, and health and hearing care providers. Thank you for embracing our mission and sustaining us with your time, talents and donations. I want to recognize HLAA's board of directors, and our staff and Chapter leaders whose energies never cease to amaze me.

As we celebrate HLAA's impact and look to the future, with you, we are well-positioned to increase our outreach and impact even further. We are united in our common goal to lead the charge for hearing health at this crucial moment.

With appreciation,

Barbara Kelley
Executive Director

Patients Help Shape Future Treatment

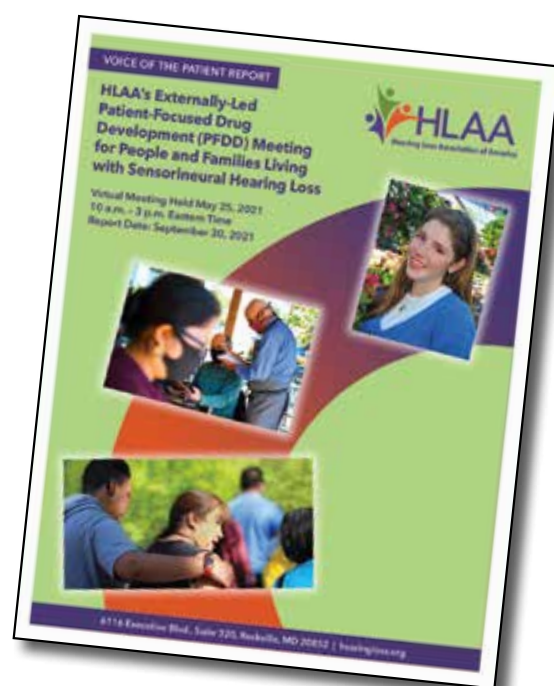
HLAA hosted the first ever Externally-Led Patient-Focused Drug Development Meeting on Sensorineural Hearing Loss. The event brought together patients and caregivers, FDA officials and researchers, industry, health providers and other experts in hearing loss. The goal of the meeting was to hear the stories of people living with sensorineural hearing loss and inform the FDA and industry in the development of therapies and technology solutions. Sensorineural hearing loss is the most common type of permanent hearing loss and results from damage in the inner ear.

More than 400 people participated and had the chance to make comments. Thanks to our 58 partner organizations and especially these companies for their support: Acousia Therapeutics, Akouos, Decibel Therapeutics, Frequency Therapeutics, Otonomy, Pipeline Therapeutics and Sensorion.

The *Voice of the Patient* report is a resource for researchers and innovators and for people with hearing loss seeking strategies and treatments.



HLAA Executive Director Barbara Kelley with moderator James E. Valentine, J.D. of Hyman, Phelps & McNamara



"The participation of people and their families in this meeting is absolutely critical, especially when thinking about the safety and efficacy framework of new therapeutics."

– Gavin H. Imperato, M.D., medical officer, Office of Tissues and Advanced Therapies, Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research of the FDA welcoming participants

Making Technology Accessible for Everyone

The Industry-Consumer Alliance for Accessible Technology (ICAAT) is preparing an interactive web portal to bring industry together with consumers to stimulate more accessible and responsive technologies. This project is a collaboration with Gallaudet University and the American Institutes for Research and is supported by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Get in the Hearing Loop has inspired a national movement of volunteers who are changing hearing access in public places through advocacy and education. Program volunteers reached more than 2,000 people this year, encouraging hearing loops in more public places such as government buildings, libraries, museums, theaters, supermarkets, places of worship and airports, trains and taxis. A preferred listening system for many people with hearing loss, hearing loops directly connect hearing aids, cochlear implants and bone conduction devices to audio sources. The program is funded by the David and Carol Myers Foundation.

The U.S. Transportation Security Administration named HLAA a 2021 Coalition Partner, recognizing our efforts to enhance the experience of people with hearing loss while traveling. HLAA webinars, survey data, best practices and COVID-19 screening considerations led to better interactions between TSA officials and travelers.

Communication Access in Health Care is a critical issue for which HLAA has had a long-standing commitment with its primary focus on patient self-advocacy. In 2020, HLAA established a program with a broadened vision that includes collaboration with a range of health care stakeholders. This year's efforts focused on establishing relationships with providers, administrators, researchers, policymakers, and patients and caregivers to facilitate change and enable reliable communication access in all health care encounters.

The Hospital Safety Program brings together advocates from hospitals around the country who share information about the accommodations their facilities have created for patients with hearing loss.



Calling for Action in Congress and Our Communities

HLAA advocates took a stand on the issues that matter most to people with hearing loss.

Working with Congress and the White House, HLAA addressed top policy priorities aimed at investment in hearing care services. We educated members of Congress and key committees about the importance of hearing aids for people 65 and older and the need for provisions in the Build Back Better Act. Thanks to our work along with coalition partners, the act that passed the U.S. House of Representatives in November 2021 included Medicare coverage for hearing aids and an historic investment in Medicaid services. While the Build Back Better Act failed to pass the Senate, we continue to explore all paths to Medicare coverage of hearing aids and hearing care services.

Over-the-Counter Hearing Aids will soon be on the market, and HLAA reviewed and presented comments on the FDA proposed rule that was published in October 2021. Ten other organizations signed onto the comments HLAA prepared, providing a consumer perspective on the regulation of this new category of hearing aids for adults with mild to moderate hearing loss.

HLAA Chapter and State Organizations fought for change, as our volunteers and advocates pressed for state and local legislation on issues such as captioning and insurance coverage for hearing care. A bill proposed by the HLAA New York City Chapter, and overwhelmingly passed by the New York City Council, now requires city movie theaters to offer weekly open-captioned screenings for every film.



HLAA Sun City Center Chapter, Florida members connect with captioned virtual meetings.

SERVING PEOPLE WHERE THEY LIVE

HLAA Chapters Keep Our Mission Alive in Communities

HLAA Chapters and State Organizations and their members have been on the front lines since COVID-19 first hit. Our chapters have overcome challenges and shifted their work to support their communities through online and video education and outreach. Online meetings furthered collaboration between chapters and created opportunities for people to find added information and support.

HLAA Groups Online Community has created a forum for volunteers to discuss current issues and to support and share ideas. Members can join interest groups for HLAA leaders and HLAA newsletter editors, topic groups on advocacy, technology and hearing loops, or follow the HLAA Veterans Across America Virtual Chapter. There are 417 members who participate in this national platform.

HLAA Sun City Center Chapter Leader Eloise Schwarz was awarded the 2021 Nonprofit Award from the South Hillsborough Chamber of Commerce for the chapter's exceptional work.



INCREASING EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

HLAA Workshops and Webinars

With dialogue on pressing topics our educational initiatives were accessible to more people.

HLAA Webinar and Virtual Meeting Series

presented 24 free, captioned events this year.

The Employment Task Force brought HLAA leaders together with company representatives committed to accessibility to share resources and ideas. The group developed a survey to better understand the issues people with hearing loss face in the workplace and while seeking employment, which was administered fall 2021. They also launched a series of HLAA webinars.

We Hear You, Now Hear Us Talkback Live

spotlighted a new documentary featuring four people living with hearing loss. Produced by HLAA members Holly Cohen, Shari Eberts and Roxana Rotundo, the film was named Best Film on Disability at the 2021 Cannes Film Festival.

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Frequency Therapeutics

HLAA 2021 Convention was a two-day virtual event. Captioned workshops addressed assistive technology, communication access in health care and more. An interactive platform allowed attendees to participate in a digital Exhibit Hall where they could talk directly with exhibitors and industry partners.

The Annual Research Symposium *Hearing Care for All: Innovations in Extending the Reach of Hearing Care*, featured advances in delivering hearing care to communities underserved by clinic-based care and looked at cases in remote Alaska villages, the city of Baltimore, and neighborhoods along the U.S.-Mexico border. Hearing care leaders and community-based providers brought a range of expertise and perspective to the discussion. The event was supported by the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, National Institutes of Health.

HLAA ZOOM EVENT

we hear you
NOW | HEAR US

TALKBACK
DOCUMENTARY

Thursday, September 23
7–8 p.m. ET

HOLLY COHEN ROXANA ROTUNDO SHARI EBERTS TONI IACOLUCCI GAIL HANINAN
MODERATOR

Register at hearingloss.org

MOBILIZING COMMUNITIES

Walk4Hearing Surpasses \$1 Million

Walk4Hearing was held in 19 cities. Participants gathered online and in-person to raise hearing health awareness and funds that help people with hearing loss in local communities.

HLAA Chapters and nonprofits partner with the Walks, generating support for their organizations and HLAA.

550 teams
260 HLAA Chapters and other nonprofit alliance organizations
4,700 participants
9,772 donations

Our Sponsors Lead the Way

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Congratulations to Our Top 10 Teams

Name	Walk Location	Raised
Team Kiki	Pennsylvania	\$40,735
Walk New York!	New York City	\$24,466
Team Jessica	Westchester/ Rockland	\$17,721
Team Nikki	New York City	\$16,534
Texas Hearing Institute	Houston	\$16,475
Chesco Striders	Pennsylvania	\$12,305
Bailey's Besties	Pennsylvania	\$10,895
Avery's A-Team	Houston	\$ 9,700
Team Avery	Bay Area	\$ 7,893
Reach for the Stars	North Carolina	\$ 6,935

Hats Off to Our Top 10 Fundraisers

Name	Walk Location	Raised
Kierstyn Kuehnle	Pennsylvania	\$40,435
Jessica Nin	Westchester/ Rockland	\$17,622
David Kramer	New York City	\$16,434
Anne Pope	New York City	\$10,120
Kaleigh Meighen	Houston	\$ 9,600
Edwin Paschall	Pennsylvania	\$ 6,845
Ira Rubenstein	Washington DC	\$ 6,381
Avery Shular	Bay Area	\$ 6,328
Monica Preuss	Chicago	\$ 6,146
Benjamin Tashner	Milwaukee	\$ 6,135

Arizona Walk4Hearing

Joy is the Greatest Gift

Our deepest thanks to everyone who helped us to engage more people who need our help by making a gift to the HLAA 2021 Giving Campaign. A total of \$415,624 was donated by 831 supporters.

"To get the full value of joy you must have someone to divide it with." – Mark Twain

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Donors listed made a gift to the HLAA 2021 Giving Campaign and provided their permission to be included in this listing.

Supporters Bring Joy to More People

Joy is the greatest gift that HLAA can give, and it comes from the connection, support and activism that are at the heart of our community. With your support, we can engage more people who need our help, provide resources that empower, and advocate so the rights and needs of all people with hearing loss are met.

Mission Circle

We're grateful for our monthly donors whose generosity funds our work throughout the year.

Meg and Joe Duarte have been giving monthly since 2016. They met at the very first HLAA young adults meeting in 1982 and have been HLAA members throughout their married life. They are passionate advocates for communication accessibility and achieving equity through education and technology.



Joe is the Co-CEO of InnoCaption. Meg is a high school teacher for the deaf and hard of hearing in Fairfax County, Virginia.

"HLAA gave us the awareness and courage to live more powerfully and never limit our dreams and goals. We support HLAA because it made a difference in our lives, and we love seeing the difference it continues to make for others."

—Joe Duarte

Katherine Bouton gives monthly because she knows she can make a greater impact than she ever would with a single annual donation. A past member of HLAA's board of directors and previous president of the New York City Chapter, Katherine has contributed to our education and advocacy work greatly.



Katherine Bouton is a former New York Times editor and author of two books on living with hearing loss.



Amy Becktell has been a member of the Mission Circle since 2006 and an HLAA member since the 1990s. She's been involved with our efforts in Atlanta, Denver and Arkansas and is now a leader of the Western Colorado Chapter.

Amy knows the importance of steady revenue and wants her contributions to provide assurance of sustained funding for planning.

BUILDING AWARENESS

HLAA in the Media

People are looking to HLAA as a trusted source of timely information, and they know we will respond with pertinent perspective. Our media presence has grown as reporters and the public seek to understand our issues.

HLAA had more interviews and placements than any previous year. We were quoted and made appearances in these news outlets.

ABC News
Advisory Board
Consumer Reports
National Public Radio

NBC Online
The New York Times
Washington Post
WTTW Chicago PBS

A new *Hear This* blog from HLAA leaders shared insights on hearing health topics including over-the-counter hearing aids, isolation, accessibility and advocacy.

***Hearing Life* magazine** became available online in the summer of 2021. This shift enables us to share more stories with the public.

HLAA Community and Support Facebook Group—The moderated discussion group grew to 2,500 members this year. People asked questions, shared ideas and sought advice about hearing loss therapies and treatments.

HLAA is a partner for the *Hear Well, Stay Vital* campaign. The powerful awareness campaign reached a value of \$10 million with placement of public service announcements in 108 U.S. media markets and 245 stations. Developed by the Hearing Industries Association (HIA), the campaign promotes hearing health and encourages a behavior change so that hearing wellness will become routine. We amplified the campaign through digital media and are proud to partner with HIA along with other major hearing professional, research and advocacy groups.

HLAA Media Impact

600,000 new session users on hearingloss.org



19,039 followers on Facebook



11,900 followers on Twitter



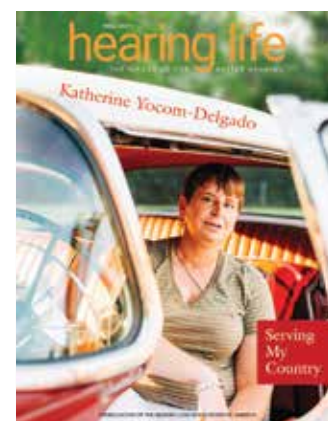
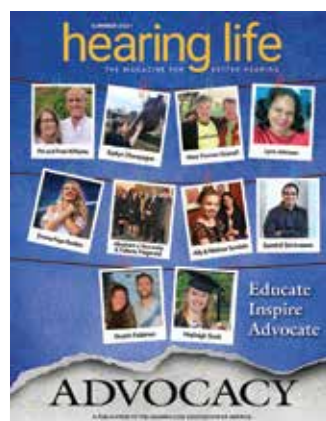
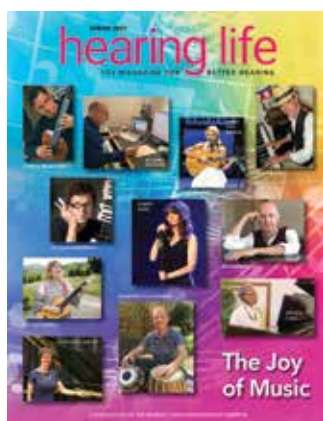
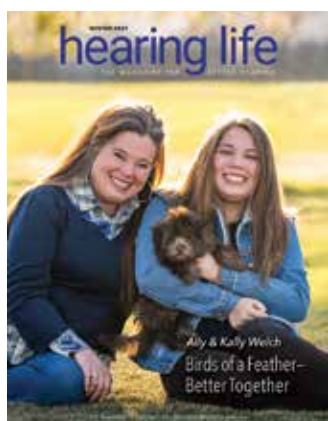
2,742 followers on Instagram



4,176 followers on LinkedIn



1,440 subscribers on YouTube



Hearing Life magazine issues in 2021

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Ensuring Our Future

Thanks to the support of generous donors and partners, we were able to fulfill our mission this year.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES as audited for fiscal year ending Aug. 31, 2021

Support and revenue

Contributions	\$1,863,240
Walk4Hearing national share	384,499
Investment income	528,744
Advertising	91,495
Membership	123,068
Grants and contracts	90,487
Conferences and other income	35,966

Total support and revenue	3,117,499
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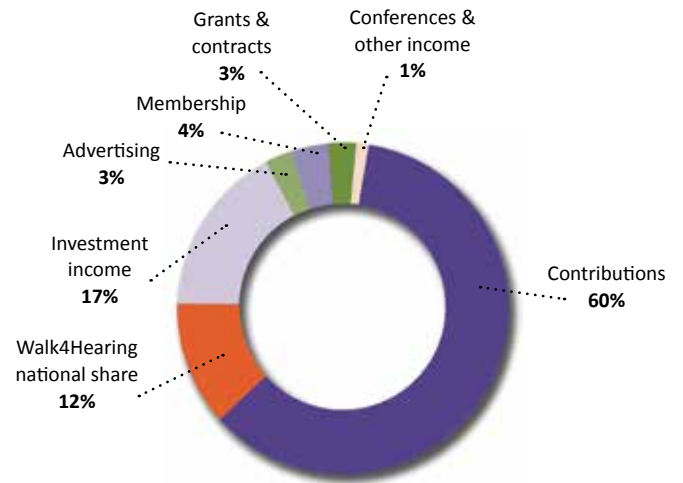
Expenses

Program	1,395,039
Fundraising	256,126
Management and General	163,224

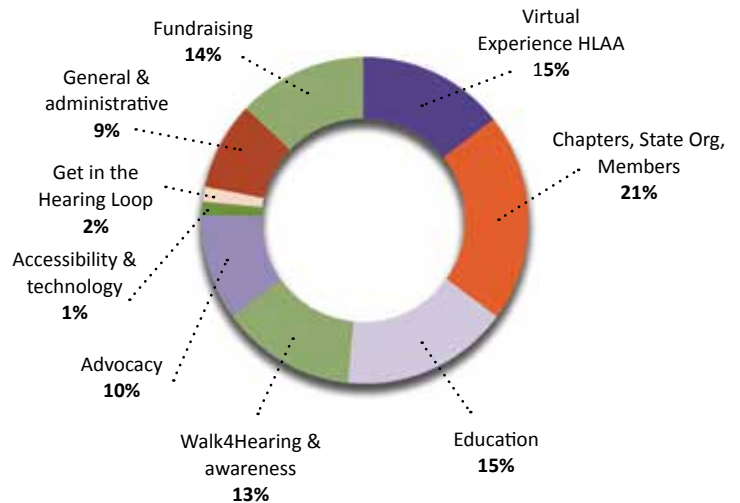
Total expenses	1,814,499
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Change in net assets	1,303,110
Net assets, Aug. 31, 2020	3,430,148
Net assets, Aug. 31, 2021	4,733,258

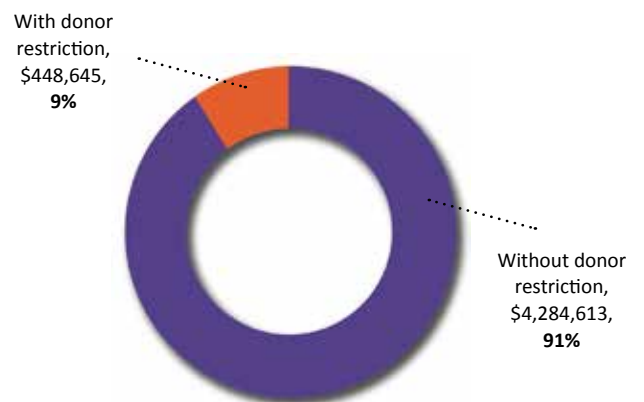
FY 2021 Revenue



FY 2021 Expenses



Net Assets as of Aug. 31, 2021



FOR EVERY \$1 SPENT

- **77¢** goes to programming
- **9¢** goes to operations
- **14¢** goes to fundraising

Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) is a tax-exempt, charitable organization and is eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions under IRS Code 501(c)(3). Complete audited financial statements are available at hearingloss.org

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We're grateful to our members, volunteers, donors and sponsors,
and the support they provide that keeps our work going.

You can become involved.

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Join the Walk4Hearing

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Engage with us on Social Media



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