



Heard in Fort Worth

Hearing Loss Association of America – Fort Worth Chapter
September 2025

September 13 Program

Take the Next Step in Addressing Your Hearing Loss

Presented by Ali Castillo, Cochlear Corporation

Our September and October programs will focus on cochlear implants. You can compare presentations, features, and advantages offered by Cochlear Corporation (September) and Med-El (October). Each manufacturer has improved their products and services. The comparison may help you decide if a cochlear implant may be right for you and which one may be more suitable for your needs.



Our September speaker is Ali Castillo, a Bilingual Engagement Manager with the Cochlear Corporation. Ali says, “My career in bilingual education (English and Spanish) has allowed me the opportunity to engage with diverse groups of all ages and shaped an understanding of how language connects us. I am passionate about guaranteeing that people with hearing loss are supported along their path to better hearing and have the resources needed to make an informed decision. Cochlear has helped to improve the hearing of over 750,000 people worldwide. I would love to help you too. Please reach out to me with any questions you may have.”

HLAA - Fort Worth meets on the second Saturday of each month

in the fellowship hall of Central Christian Church, 3205 Hamilton Avenue, Fort Worth, TX 76107.

Snacks and mingle at 9:30 a.m. and meeting at 10:00. Please join us and bring a friend!

We offer real time captioning and assistive listening systems for communication accessibility.

Captioning is provided courtesy of Cauthen & Associates Court Reporting and CART Services.

Future Programs

October: Med El Corporation Representative Janet Lane

November: Hearing Loss and Veterans Services by David Schible from HLAA Veterans Chapter

December: Holiday Brunch with entertainment

Photo Credit: The photograph of The Fort Worth Herd on our Heard In Fort Worth banner is used by permission of The Fort Worth Herd and its sponsor, the City of Fort Worth Parks and Community Services Department.

Joyce's Jargon

Greetings!

It seems we have escaped a hot summer! What a blessing the cooler temperatures were for summer 2025. Now we head into fall and the Expos for seniors. We enjoy these events for the opportunity to educate the public about hearing loss. Those who might be thinking about treating their hearing loss are encouraged to visit a chapter meeting. Thank you to: Melissa Forsythe, Sharon Huber and Dan White for help with the Healthy Lives Matter event on August 23rd.

There are two more opportunities this fall. To attend one of these events registration information follows. If you would like to help with one of these events, please sign up on a separate sheet at the sign-in table at our September meeting.

1. Empowering Senior Expo @ Will Rogers on Thursday, Oct. 2nd. 8:30-1:30. To register:
<https://www.empoweringseniors.com>

2. Aging Well Arlington @ Esports Stadium, Wednesday, October 14th 9 to 2. To register:
<https://anc.apm.activecommunities.com/arlingtonparks/activity>

See you Saturday, September 13th.

Joyfully,

Joyce Parlin
Chapter President

2025 Chapter Board of Directors

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Heard In Fort Worth

This newsletter is published by the
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The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) is the leading voice of the growing number of people with—and at risk of—hearing loss in the U.S. We advocate to increase access to care and treatment, break down stigmas through education and awareness, and empower people with hearing loss through a nationwide community of support. Our work impacts millions, improving the lives of people with hearing loss, and elevating the importance of hearing health and accessible communication through national legislation and public policy and a network of chapters, state organizations, and grassroots efforts.

Hearing Loss Association of America, 6116 Executive Blvd., Suite 320, Rockville, MD 20852. 301-657-2248

As ADA Turns 35, HLAA Continues Push for Communication Access

On July 26, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) marked 35 years of mandating public accommodations and equal access to people with disabilities in the U.S.

At the time the ADA was being debated, barriers of the physical world were the initial focus. So sensory disabilities like hearing loss were not always front-and-center in public conversations. Curb cuts and wheelchair ramps were visible markers of change—but what about captions, transcripts, hearing loops and American Sign Language (ASL)?

A dedicated group of advocates, including HLAA Founder Howard “Rocky” Stone, recognized this gap and acted, fighting to ensure that people with hearing loss would not be left out. HLAA was instrumental in getting communication access requirements added to this landmark civil rights legislation in 1990.

Today, HLAA’s nationwide community continues to fight for the rights of 50 million Americans with hearing loss. We advocate for expanded accessibility, affordable hearing health care, and treatment options at national and local levels.

The ADA’s anniversary isn’t just a date on the calendar—it’s a reminder that inclusion must include communication access. Accessibility and equity is something our community fights for 365 days a year. HLAA is **proud of our history** in shaping this legislation, among others—and we’re committed to making sure its promise is fulfilled. **Join Us in Honoring—and Continuing—the Work.**

Support Ally’s Act, H.R. 4606

Ally’s Act was inspired by the story of Ally, a young girl born without a right ear or ear canal, who was denied insurance for a medically necessary bone-anchored hearing aid (BAHA). Many people with congenital conditions like microtia and aural atresia, or who experience sudden hearing loss from illness or trauma, are denied coverage for specialized implantable devices by private insurers. Without access, children risk delayed speech and language development, poor academic performance and social isolation, while adults face cognitive decline, depression and unemployment. Introduced by Representative Joe Neguse (D-CO), Ally’s Act (H.R. 4606) is a bipartisan bill to ensure that about 500,000 impacted Americans receive essential hearing health care treatment and lead full, productive lives—reducing the long-term societal costs of untreated hearing loss.

Tell Congress to Require Coverage for Medically Necessary Hearing Devices

Go to <https://www.hearingloss.org/advocacy-resources/action-alerts/allys-act-for-hearing-health-coverage/>

Upcoming HLAA Webinar:



Wednesday, September 17, Noon – 1:30 p.m. ET
Register at: [hearingloss.org/hospital-safety](https://www.hearingloss.org/hospital-safety)

HLAA Voices: Share Your Story *Testimonials Wanted!*

HLAA would love to highlight your voices and experiences within the HLAA community. Submit a short, empowering story (up to 300 words) about your experience with an HLAA Chapter and living well with hearing loss.

Please include:

- 2-3 photos of yourself
- Full name
- Chapter name
- How long you’ve been involved

Send to: chapters@hearingloss.org

August 9 Program Summary

HLAA 2025 Convention Report

Presented by Joyce Parlin, HLAA - Fort Worth Chapter President
Summarized by Darlene Liesner from the meeting transcript provided by
Carrie Gibson of Cauthen & Associates Court Reporting and CART Services



Chapter President Joyce Parlin enthusiastically recounted her trip to the HLAA 2025 Annual Convention. Held in Indianapolis, June 11-14, 2025, the Convention included more than thirty workshops, a Research Symposium, a motivational speech by a former NBA player with hearing loss, social events, HLAA awards, a hearing health and technology expo in the exhibit hall, and more. The event had captions, hearing loops, sign language interpretation, and opportunities to experience Auracast™ Broadcast Audio.

The HLAA website has a new Chapter Portal. Go to hearingloss.org. Click on “Chapter Login” and register. The portal is a one-stop resource hub for chapter leaders and members.

Chapters have different ways of organizing. Some have a board of directors. Some have a steering committee. Some have an advisory council. Advisory council members may not have hearing loss but may interact with people who do. For example, a representative from the TCU speech and hearing department, from UNT Health, or from the Callier Center for Communication Disorders might serve as an advisor to HLAA Fort Worth. Some chapters have a movie theater representative on their councils.

An Oklahoma City Chapter member went to restaurants and found a proprietor for lunch for every meeting. It's a good way for restaurants to understand about people with hearing loss and for the Chapter to explain to the restaurant how the restaurant can help their patrons who have a hearing loss.

The Phoenix Chapter has a pre-meeting dedicated to helping their senior members understand technology. H.O.P.E. stands for Hearing Other People's Experiences. Someone just diagnosed with hearing loss may need to talk about their frustration. It's a separate meeting for people to share their experience, concerns, and questions.

Each dollar that comes in should support HLAA's mission to educate, advocate, and network. The Chapter Board needs to report to their members how donations are being spent. The Chapter should thank sponsors, advertisers, and donors. Some chapters use a GoFundMe page for a specific need. One chapter goes to places, asks for gift cards, and then gives them as gifts or uses them as an auction item. Some companies match employee donations. HLAA Fort Worth's newsletter includes a disclaimer for advertisers. Our chapter cannot promote one audiology practice or other business over another.

At “Speaking from the Heart,” a session on navigating the emotional impacts of hearing loss, the speaker cited Dr. Alan Wolfelt, a noted grief counselor. We must grieve our hearing loss. We have a hidden disability. People do not know unless we are open about it. We need to tell our hearing loss story and adapt to changing relationships since the onset of our hearing loss.

The “Understanding the 2025 Hearing Health Landscape” seminar reviewed hearing health market survey findings. There are 238 over-the-counter device companies including hearing aids. Over-the-counter hearing aids have not taken off as anticipated. There are one hundred hearing aid manufacturers. The device satisfaction rate is 70%. Sixty-seven percent of cochlear and hearing aid wearers wear them every day. Sixty percent said

they should have gotten them sooner. People are motivated to get hearing aids by family members and by hearing test results. They are not motivated by fear tactics, bad marketing, or price.

Keynote speaker Lance Allred shared “The Principles of Perseverance.” As the first player in the National Basketball Association with hearing loss, Lance relayed anecdotes and lessons from coaches and mentors that helped create his culture of grit. **Lance’s principles:** Quit focusing on yourself. Go out and focus on somebody else. Persevere. Adapt. Be accountable to yourself. Set goals. Demonstrate integrity. Have compassion and acceptance of what has happened. Be kind.

At the Research Symposium, a panel of top researchers explored the “Stigma of Hearing Loss.” Some negative or unfair beliefs are that people with hearing loss are “less than.” They are old, unfriendly, or not as intelligent. Is the public’s perception of hearing loss improving over time? Some people try to hide their hearing aids. Do I have a perceived stigma? Do I anticipate that somebody is going to have a negative attitude about my hearing?

Joyce brought some new HLAA flyers for people to take: “Signs, Symptoms and Steps.” “Do You Know Someone Who Has Hearing Loss?” “Communication Tips.” She welcomed audience comments. Next year’s HLAA Convention will be in Louisville, KY, June 10-12.

Read HLAA’s official coverage of the 2025 Convention as published in the summer issue of HLAA’s HEARING LIFE magazine. It can be found on the HLAA website here:

<https://www.hearingloss.org/resources/hearing-life-magazine-summer-2025/#flipbook-summer-2025/23/>

Columbia University Seeks Hard of Hearing Medical Study Participants

Two ENT medical students at Columbia, under the supervision of Dr. Anil Lalwan, are working on projects investigating listening experiences of people with cochlear implants and/or hearing aids.

They are looking specifically at how hearing devices affect people’s enjoyment of music and perception of speech quality. The ultimate goal of these projects is to inform device manufacturers of areas for improvement. These studies consist of about 30-minute surveys that can be taken at home. No headphones or special equipment are required.

Hearing Aid & Music Enjoyment Study, with Zoe Marshall, is exploring the impact of hearing aids on the experience of listening to music. She needs people with bilateral hearing aids. “The survey will ask you to answer a few demographic questions, then will have you listen to eighteen short music clips (~20 seconds each) that have each been altered in some way. You will be asked to rate these clips based on pleasantness, naturalness, and musicality.” If interested, contact Zoe at zm2320@cumc.columbia.edu.

Cochlear Implant & Speech Recognition Study, with Ramzi Elased, is recruiting adults who have either (a) **cochlear implants in both ears for at least 3 months** or (b) **one cochlear implant and one hearing aid, both used for at least 3 months**. The study is entirely online, takes about 30-40 min to complete, and involves listening to short speech clips and answering questions about how they sound to you. The goal of this study is to understand your opinions on specific qualities of speech, such as how mechanical, bassy, or robotic it is, so that we can better understand areas for improvement of cochlear implants. If interested in participating, contact Ramzi at rke2111@cumc.columbia.edu.

Get Paid to Take a Survey on Hard of Hearing Healthcare Experiences

2axend, a Deaf-owned strategic consulting and training firm is conducting a survey to better understand and improve healthcare access for the Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing, and Late-Deafened (DHH) communities. The study seeks to gather crucial insights that will help identify challenges, highlight successes, and ultimately drive improvements in healthcare accessibility and quality for this community. Participants in the survey will receive a \$10 incentive for their time. Here’s the link: <https://2axend.com/healthcare-survey/>.

Introducing David Tuite, New HH Technology Specialist for DFW Area

David Tuite is the COO and Co-Founder of Access Vine, which contracts with the Texas Health and Human Services & Texas Workforce Commission to provide Technology Specialist services. With bilateral cochlear implants, David has a personal understanding of the challenges faced by people with hearing loss. Email david@accessvine.co or call 281-896-5331 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

Support your Fort Worth chapter

We will acknowledge your donations in each issue of the newsletter.

The list is updated monthly.

Platinum = \$400+; **Gold** = \$200 to \$399; **Silver** = \$100 to \$199;

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All contributions are tax-deductible.

Hearing Loss Association of America - Fort Worth Chapter

2024 CHAPTER DONATION FORM

Make checks payable to: **HLAA - Fort Worth Chapter**

Bring donations to the monthly meeting or mail to:

HLAA - Fort Worth, PO Box 1310, Euless TX 76039.

Please take special notice of our mailing address.

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