

# AMERICAN ACADEMY OF AUDIOLOGY

## COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS FY 2009 (July 1, 2008-June 30, 2009)

### **Audit Committee (new)—Chair: Tom Littman**

- Staff is actively preparing for the audit scheduled in August

### **Business Enhancement Strategies & Techniques Committee—Chair: Gyl Kasewurm**

- Published *The BEST Guide to Marketing for Audiologists*.
- Published *The BEST Private Practice Start-Up Kit*.
- Offered Featured Session at AudiologyNOW! 2009 on marketing your private practice.

### **Coding & Reimbursement Committee—Chair: Kady Williams**

- Provided a downloadable manual and an online training seminar for members in order for them to be compliant with the FTC Red Flag and Address Discrepancy Rule by August 1, 2009. (Date was later changed to June 1, 2010).
- Committee Chair, PPAC Chair and staff attended the June 4-6, 2009 CPT meeting.
- Committee Chair, PPAC Chair and staff attended the April 22-26, 2009 RUC meeting. Chairs co-presented the three “bundled” Audiology codes at the RUC with ASHA, AAO and AAN.
- The Director of Reimbursement and the Sr. Director of Government Relations attended the Physician Consortium for Performance Improvement (PCPI) March 19-20, 2009.
- Academy staff attended the RUC meeting January 29-February 1, 2009. Presenters from AAO and ASHA responded to CMS’ review of CPT code 92587 as one of the fastest growing procedures for Medicare patients and were instructed to create a code proposal for the CPT Editorial Panel.
- Academy CPT Editorial Panel representatives attended the CPT Editorial Panel meeting February 5-7, 2009.
- The Academy petitioned for a seat on the CPT Editorial Panel HCPAC in November, 2008 but the HCPAC Chair and Co-Chair requested a postponement until the October CPT meeting in order to research seat selection history.
- National Third-Party Plans. The Committee continues to explore the issues of participation in national third party plans. Committee and GRC Chairs and staff met with attorneys who provided clarification related to HIPAA and potential

state or federal anti-trust violations. The committee forwarded its report to the Board.

- Academy representative presented the Academy's request to obtain the Audiology seat at the RUC HCPAC meeting October 2, 2008. Questions from the HCPAC members were fielded by Committee chair and representatives. The HCPAC voted to allow ASHA to retain its seat for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology as an umbrella organization. CPT codes 92626, 92627, 92625, 92630, 92633 and 92640 were successfully valued for work.
- The first Academy Seat Summit was held October 13-14, 2008 in Reston, VA. in order to plan for the Academy's representation in the CPT RUC and CPT Editorial Panel HCPAC meetings. After much discussion, it was recommended that there be a separate Academy committee formed, the PPAC (Practice Policy Advisory Council), to be comprised of the chairs of the C & R and GRC committees, the two representatives of the CPT RUC and Editorial Panel HCPACs, their alternates and the Academy's President-elect (Board liaison). Three members, identified as future leaders, would be mentored into this committee.
- Academy representatives attended the CPT Editorial Panel meeting held on October 23-25, 2008.. The RUC Five-Year Review Identification Workgroup and the Joint CPT and RUC Workgroup on Bundled Services requested that the profession address codes that were statistically billed together at a perceived high rate. The suggestion of the RUC was that those codes be paired or "blended" into a single code. The Chair of the Workgroup stated that a blended code must be developed for the following CPT codes 92567, 92568, 92569; 92541 and 92542; and 92544 and 92545 by the deadline for submission to the February CPT Editorial Panel meeting. The Academy coordinated a discussion with ASHA, AAO, and AAN representatives. Blended codes were then developed, submitted to the AMA, and will be presented at the February 2009 CPT Editorial Panel meeting.
- Committee Chair contacted Phonak and requested FM assistive listening devices for CPT Editorial Panel members and meeting attendees who were in need. This was the first AMA meeting that had hearing assistive technology available to its attendees. Phonak was acknowledged for this support. Committee member and staff attended ASHA's annual Health Care Economics Committee (HCEC) held on November 19, 2008 during their annual convention. Other organizations represented included ADA, AVAA and the EDHI (NE). Discussion included the RUC's Five-Year Review Identification Workgroup and the issue of blended codes, automated audiometry, and CPT code 92587 being targeted for overbilling.
- The Academy was invited by CMS to participate in a discussion on the use of technicians in Audiology services as related to CMS transmittals 1470 and 84 on November 24, 2008. The Academy was represented by Academy presidents , committee chair and staff. Other participants included CMS staff and ASHA representatives. Discussion centered on the use and definition of technicians, the state of automated audiometry, and CMS's desire and need to create consistency

within its regulations. CMS stated that they intend to keep both transmittals. However they see a need to bring consistency to their regulations (between Medicare Part A & B), and need to better define “technicians.”

- Academy has alerted members to coding and reimbursement updates such as the revised ABN (CMS-R-131), ICD-10 codes and NPI/EIN matches for IRS submissions via AT Extra and website postings
- Academy submitted a comment letter to CMS for the 2009 Proposed Medicare Physician Fee Schedule
- Academy submitted a comment letter to CMS for the 2009 Proposed Hospital Outpatient Prospective Payment System (OPPS) and Ambulatory Surgery Centers (ASC)

### **Education Committee—Chair: Christine Yoshinaga-Itano**

Academic Education Subcommittee Chair: Todd Ricketts

Clinical Education Subcommittee Chair: Maureen Valente

Student Services Subcommittee Chair: Carol Cokely

- Worked closely with the Education Summit Task Force to plan the Education Summit, held in January 2009:
  - Assisted in the development, dissemination and analyzation of a pre-conference survey relating to academic models and best practices that exist amongst the current academic audiology AuD programs.
  - Summit Attendance: 65 AuD Programs represented, 172 total participants.
  - Assisted in the development of the Summit agenda and presenter line up.
  - Sent feedback to the Summit Task Force related to Clinical Ed Issues.
  - Explored educational models from other disciplines (Clinical Ed & Academy Ed Subs).
  - Wrote an article that appeared in *Audiology Today* summarizing the survey results (Yoshinaga-Itano).
  - Wrote an article that appeared in *Audiology Today* summarizing the Summit
  - Presented AuD survey results at AudiologyNOW! (Valente, Ricketts and Summit Task Force members).
  - Contributed to discussions regarding next steps based on the Summit outcomes and how the Committee interfaces with all other key aspects of the educational transformation process.
- Other Accomplishments:
  - Promoted and fine tuned the Externship Registry (Clinical Ed Sub)
  - Explored clinical education models utilized by other disciplines (Clinical Ed Sub)
  - Reviewed web seminar on precepting and provided input in developing a web seminar series on precepting (Clinical Ed Sub)
  - Served on Academy Student Organization Task Force (Student Svs Sub)
  - Chair participated in a joint teleconference with the International Committee (Ed Comm)

- Formed Sub-subcommittee to assist with the continued promotion/improvement of the site registry (Clinical Ed Sub)
- Developed a goal to move forward with Best Practices document: this will be one outcome of Summit (Clinical Ed Sub)
- Continued discussion about usage of Externship Registry, consequences if not used according to intent, and constructive changes to implement after this year's externs have been placed (Clinical Ed Sub)
- Maureen Valente accepted Kris English's invitation to serve/continue serving as co-chair of the Education Committee with Christine Yoshinaga-Itano through June of 2010. Erica Friedland was invited to serve as the chair of the Clinical Education Subcommittee.
- Worked on a survey to programs about dual degree AuD/PhD programs and looking at best practices for dual degree programs. (Academic Ed Sub)
- Assisted staff with the formulation of a regular education column in *Audiology Today*

**Ethical Practices Committee—Chair: Gloria Garner**

- Book of Precedents Revision: Approximately 95% complete.
- Revision of Guidelines for Financial Relationships with Manufacturers is 95% complete.
- Ethics Focus Group presentation given at AudiologyNOW! 2009.
- Responded to numerous inquiries for assistance from members.

**Government Relations Committee—Chair: Erin Miller**

- The Academy's advocacy efforts resulted in 108 co-sponsors signed on to the Medicare Hearing Health Care Enhancement Act of 2007 (H.R. 1665). This number is a 100% increase in the total number of co-sponsors from the previous 109<sup>th</sup> Congress. The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Alliance (DHHA) endorsed this legislation.
- The Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act of 2009 cleared the House Energy and Commerce Committee one day after its introduction. The Academy engaged in a grassroots campaign to encourage Academy members to contact their Representatives through the Legislative Action Center. The Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Act of 2009 (H.R. 1246) passed the House of Representatives in early April. A Senate version of this bill has not yet been introduced.
- The Academy's advocacy efforts resulted in a change to the categorization of audiologists in the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) manual. Audiologists are now in a separate category under the SOC group classification Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners.
- The Government Relations Committee successfully hosted an Advocacy Summit at AudiologyNOW! Dallas 2009. Participants included individuals from California, New York, Texas, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio, Virginia, North Carolina, Massachusetts, and Illinois. This event was designed to train audiologists on how to become "key contacts" and reach out to their members of Congress in their home states.

- The 21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act (H.R. 2187), otherwise known as the School Modernization bill containing provisions for classroom acoustics, passed the House of Representatives. This legislation includes classroom noise and acoustics provisions, allowing federal grants to be used in districts to make modifications to reduce or eliminate human exposure to classroom and environmental noise. The House bill authorizes \$6.4 billion for school renovation and modernization projects for fiscal year 2010 and ensures that school districts quickly receive funds for projects that improve schools' teaching and learning climates, health and safety, and energy efficiency. A Senate companion has not yet been introduced.
- The Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit Act (H.R. 1646) currently has 83 co-sponsors in the House of Representatives. The Hearing Aid Tax Credit Coalition is working to build support for the House bill and the Senate bill (S. 1019). The Hearing Industries Association (HIA) hosted its Hearing on the Hill event on May 13, 2009. The Academy participated in this event, bringing members of Congress and advocacy groups together to discuss this important legislation.
- Academy staff has set-up customized daily e-mails detailing state legislation for members of the State Leaders Network and other interested individuals. Staff promoted this service at the 2009 State Leader's Workshop.
- California and Oregon recently presented amendments within their state licensure laws to eliminate the need for audiologists to hold a separate license to dispense hearing aids. The GRC created a policy resolution on this issue.. The Academy sent letters of support to both states and hopes to assist other states in their initiatives in eliminating the dual licensure requirement. Academy staff published a follow-up article for the July/August AudiologyToday regarding single licensure status.
- The Government Relations Committee created a public policy resolution on pediatric audiology. This resolution demonstrates that audiologists are the most qualified individuals to fit hearing aids for children.
- The Academy signed on in support of the Hearing Loss Association of America's "Petition to Mandate Captioned Telephone Relay Service and Approve IP Captioned Telephone Service" at the advice of the Government Relations Committee. The FCC has not moved on the original petition insofar as it relates to mandating Captioned Telephone Relay Service (CTS). This petition urges the Federal Communication Commission to immediately mandate CTS.
- The Academy sent a letter to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regarding their guidance on over-the-counter (OTC) hearing aids. The FDA has not regulated Personal Sound Amplification Products, unlike their stance on hearing aids and bone conduction devices, which are categorized as Category I and II respectively. They are looking for public comment in changing this policy.
- The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Alliance (DHHA) sent a letter to Nancy Min DeParle, President and Director of the White House Office of Health Reform. This letter introduces the alliance and includes a request to meet with Director DeParle to discuss healthcare reform.
- The Academy signed-on to a letter initiated by the Patients' Access to Responsible Care Alliance (PARCA). This letter, sent to the Senate Finance

Committee and Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, mirrors a similar letter sent to the Obama Administration to ensure anti-discrimination language be included in healthcare reform legislation.

- The Academy sent a letter in support of a number of resolutions proposed by the American Medical Association's House of Delegates (AMA HOD). The resolutions would impact audiologists and the patients they serve. The resolutions included support for interpretive services, promoting head protection while playing soccer, and a number relating to reimbursement and practice management.
- The Academy joined a number of groups in signing on to a letter in support of H.R. 2891, the Access to Frontline Health Care Act of 2009. This bill, introduced by Congressman Bruce Braley (D-IA) and Congressman Zach Space (D-OH), offers student loan forgiveness for "frontline care service providers." The bill specifically references audiologists under the program.

#### **Honors Committee—Chair: Brenda Ryals**

- The Committee submitted two motions to the Board for approval: **Motion:** to approve that nominations in all categories, except Distinguished Achievement, be changed so that nominations have a three-year lifespan; **Motion:** to approve complimentary registration for AN! to individuals receiving the Jerger, Lybarger, International, Humanitarian, and Distinguished Achievement Awards.
- The 2009 Academy Honorees were acknowledged at the Honors & Awards Banquet in Dallas, TX at AN! 2009.
  - Jerger Career Award for Research in Audiology – Sandra Gordon-Salant
  - Samuel F. Lybarger Award for Achievements in Industry – David Preves
  - Humanitarian Award – Aysen Erdil
  - International Award in Hearing – Stig Arlinger
  - Distinguished Achievement in Audiology Award – Ross Roeser, David Fabry, and Robert Keith

#### **International Committee—Chairs: Elaine Saunders and Carolyn Gaiero**

- The committee nominated and provided supporting letters for the International Award in Hearing, including the winning nomination for Stig Arlinger.
- The committee investigated the requirements for issuance of a Visa for attendance at AudiologyNOW!
- Initiated an inquiry about the transition and use of ICD 10 codes abroad to assist in the US's upcoming implementation and use of these codes.
- Coordinating with the Global TF on Humanitarian affairs

#### **Membership Committee—Chair: Rebekah Cunningham**

- Welcoming Subcommittee. This subcommittee has welcomed more than 1700 new members
- Future Leaders Subcommittee. Developed the foundation, structure and draft program for the 1st inaugural conference.
- Member Assistance Program (MAP) subcommittee. Completed review of applications, assistance provided to every applicant

- Membership Department. At 2008 year end membership was 10,684 (.1% growth)

**Political Advisory Committee (PAC)—Chair: Richard Gans**

- Over 90 contributors have contributed \$312 to be part of the 312 Club and their names have been added to a plaque, which will be prominently displayed in the Capitol Hill Office. There is still an opportunity for more contributors to be added to the plaque.
- PAC had approximately 500 contributors and raised approximately \$61,435.32.

**Practice Policy Advisory Committee (PPAC)—Chair: Paul Pessis**

- New committee in formation resulting from the Seat Summit (see C&R Committee)
- Chair attended multiple RUC and CPT meetings.

**Professional Development Committee: Chair—Steve Ackley**

- Appointed a new Committee Chair, Vicki Dionne, as of July 1, 2009, to fill Steve Ackley's seat as he stepped down as Chair before completing his term
- Developed and posted wording for the CE Providers web page dealing with courses that offer varying hours.
- Updated the wording of the CE Algorithm to state the CE activity has to be related to audiology.
- Marketed the Preceptor Web Seminar Series to membership, specifically CA members who have a new licensing requirement.
- Marketed the Medical Errors Web Seminar to membership, specifically Florida members who have a licensing requirement.
- Offered two eAudiology Discount packages during 2009 online renewals
- Approved and processed 2789 CE Provider courses during 2008.
- Approved 272 2009 CE Provider courses during the time period of January 1, 2009 to June 30, 2009.
- Continually identified, developed, and scheduled eAudiology Web seminars 6 to 8 months in advance
  - **August 20, 2008**  
Migraine in Vestibular Patients: A Clinical Update (.2 CEUs)  
Presented by: Richard E. Gans, Ph.D., FAAA
  - **October 2, 2008**  
Precepting Today's Students – The Readiness Process (.1 CEU)  
Presented by: Sharon A Lesner, PhD and Craig W. Newman, PhD
  - **October 16, 2008**  
Precepting Today's Students – The Learning/Teaching Process (.1 CEU)  
Presented by: Sharon A. Lesner, PhD
  - **November 6, 2008**  
Precepting Today's Students – The Evaluation Process (.2 CEUs)  
Presented by: Sharon A. Sandridge, PhD
  - **November 12, 2008**

- Coding 101(.2 CEUs)  
Presented by: Debra Abel, AuD
- **December 11, 2008**  
Avoiding Medical Errors in Audiology (.2 CEUs)  
Presented by: David A. Fabry, PhD, Nathan Schau, AuD and Hillary Snapp, AuD
- **January 21, 2009**  
Hearing Aids & Cell Phones – Can You Hear Me Now? (.1CEU)  
Presenter by Melissa Pacey Mahaffey, AuD
- **January 30, 2009**  
Evolution of Audiology (.1 CEU)  
Presented by James Jerger, PhD.
- **May 20, 2009**  
Introduction to ICD-10-CM (.2 CEUs)  
Presented by: Kyle C. Dennis, Ph.D.
- **September 9, 2009**  
Music and Hearing Aids (.2 CEUs)  
Presented by Marshall Chasin, AuD., M.Sc., Reg. CASLPO
- **October 7, 2009**  
Pediatric Vestibular Assessments (.1 CEU)  
Presented by Darcy Strong, AuD
- **November 12, 2009**  
Wideband Energy Reflectance Measurements of the Middle Ear  
Presented by Patrick Feeney, PhD
- **December 9, 2009**  
Infection Control and Hearing Healthcare  
Presented by: Joseph A. Vespe, MS, MBA
- **August 12, 2009 and August 19, 2009**  
An Analysis of Fee-For-Service Models in an Audiology Practice  
(Two-part Seminar - Tier 1) (.4 CEUs)  
Presented by Erin L. Miller, AuD and John A. Coverstone, AuD
- **January 13, 2010**  
Recent Advances in Understanding Conductive Hearing Loss  
Presented by John J. Rosowski, PhD
- **February 3, 2010 and February 10, 2010**  
Ethics and Research (Two-part Seminar - Tier 1)  
Presented by Angela Shoup, PhD and Aparna Rao, PhD
- **March 10, 2010**  
Global Audiology: Humanitarian Audiology for Beginners  
Presented by Bopanna Ballachanda, PhD, Tomi Browne, AuD, and Jackie L. Clark, PhD
- **April 13, 2010**  
Will be two sessions live from AudiologyNOW
- **May 2010**  
The Internet Pharmacy - Looking for Drug Information in All the Right and Wrong Places



Presented by Robert M. DiSogra, AuD

- **July 2010**  
Hearing Aid Reality Check  
Presented by Shilpi Banerjee, PhD

**Professional Standards & Practices Committee – Chair: Cheryl DeConde Johnson**

- Produced 10 key core professional values (along with descriptive statements) embodied by Academy Membership
- Analyzed member input via a survey and a listserv to help in the formation of the values
- Aligned the values with the Academy “Pillars” (Advocacy, Education, Leadership, Public Awareness and Research)

Other:

- Assigned a committee member to represent the Academy on the Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI) standards joint work group with the Audiology Quality Consortium, a ten-member group facilitated by ASHA.
- Reviewed OATAs Standards of Practice to assist in the determination of next steps
- Revised Academy Practice Guidelines & Position Statements; recommended new documents on Adult Hearing Assistance Technology and Joint Statement of Use of Audio-Techs (with AAOO))

**Program Committee (AudiologyNOW! 2009)—Chair: M. Samantha Lewis**

- Dallas, Texas April 1-4, 2009
- Keynote Speaker: Cam Marston
- Attendance: 6156
- Exhibitors: 2711/ 115,698 SF
- Sponsors: 17
- Time to prepare and execute: 16 Months

**Public Relations Committee—Chair: Clarke Cox**

- Finalized new recruitment PowerPoint and brochure as handout at High School Science Fairs
- Finalized new noise brochure
- Exhibited Academy materials to promote various aspects of the Academy at NAAHP (Chicago), Am. Academy of Family Physicians (San Diego), AARP (Washington, D.C.), and American Academy of Pediatrics (Boston).
- Developing plan to utilize “celebrity” spokespersons/endorsements to promote audiology for 2010 or 2011.
- Recruitment Subcommittee
  - Developing a formal plan to involve high school student science fair projects in audiology/hearing-related areas at AudiologyNOW! every year.
  - Develop tools for each state to use state and national science fairs to introduce the profession of audiology to students in grades 7-12.

- Produce materials to be used by physicians. Successfully hosted the two winning Science Fair students and their families at AudiologyNOW! (AN!)2009 in Dallas, TX. Students came to AN! on Saturday, April 4, 2009 and toured the expo hall, took photos with members of the AAAF Board, and the Academy Board, and got a tour of Academy Central.
- Physician Outreach Subcommittee
  - The committee has completed a thorough systematic review of physician informational needs regarding early hearing detection and intervention programs in addition to screening for elderly hearing loss and balance disorders which will be used to develop the above mentioned materials
- Audiology Awareness Month Subcommittee
  - Direct mail piece sent out to members promoting the first ever Audiology Awareness Month and National Protect Your Hearing Month. Announcements have been published in Audiology Today.
  - Posters, consumer friendly fact sheets, e-advertising, and downloadable press releases were created and made available at [www.audiology.org](http://www.audiology.org) as resources for member use to promote Audiology Awareness Month and National Protect Your Hearing Month.
  - Local activities included
    - 7 newspapers across the nation picked up the press release
    - 20 different initiative stories were e-mailed into the Academy offices
    - A Congressional Resolution was submitted to congress to declare October as National Audiology Awareness Month and National Protect Your Hearing Month.
  - Preparing new resources for Audiology Awareness Month/Protect Your Hearing Month 2010, to include podcasts and PSAs, customized message on hold, downloadable PowerPoint presentations for education, and more.

**Publications Committee—Chair: Michael Valente**

- The committee completed review and provided final approval for technical accuracy of several information pieces for the consumer Web site.
- These pieces included HAT-ALDs, noise exposure, cochlear implants, hearing aids, and dizziness.

**Research Committee—Chair: Beth Prieve**

- Determined name change of the Research Awards Program to Research Grants program to better reflect the fact that the research/work is to be done and has not already been accomplished. Official name: Research Grants in Hearing and Balance - in effect 2009-2010.
- Determined that the committee will continue to review the ARO travel awards
- Evaluated and selected ARO travel award submissions
- Reviewed Academy Member survey with regard to the Academy Research Conference (ARC) 2010 topic. Selected Aging as the focus for ARC 10. Larry Humes was selected as Chair.

- Evaluated 16 research grant applications and selected 3 New Investigators, 1 Student Investigator and 2 Summer Fellowship awardees.
- Created document based on the planning process for ARC (includes roles, duties and timeline)
- Re-worded ARO Travel Award flyer to state that the student could not accept an ARO and AAA award for the same poster.
- Created an earlier timeline for selection of future research grants to ease in the process
- ARC 2009 – Otoacoustic Emissions
  - Brenda Lonsbury Martin (Chair) and the ARC Planning Committee planned all aspects of the first annual Academy Research Conference. It was successful with 111 attendees.
  - Received student scholarship support from Widex
  - Submitted an article on OAEs to Audiology Today (Brenda Lonsbury Martin)
- ARC 2010—Aging
  - Larry Humes was briefed by Beth Prieve to begin the process of planning ARC and selecting a committee
  - Selected presenters; finalized title: In with the Old: New Research on Aging and Hearing Health
  - Marketed at AudiologyNOW! 2009 (and at ARC 2009)

**State Network Committee—Chairs: John Coverstone**

- Assisted audiologists forming academies in New York, New Jersey, and Virginia (all now incorporated)
- Organized and conducted 9<sup>th</sup> Annual State Leaders Workshop and Luncheon, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009
- Selected 2009 Active Advocate of the Year Award Winners:
  - Kady Williams
  - Jody Winzelberg
- Published two semi annual issues of State Leaders newsletter
- Supported government relations staff in surveys regarding regulatory, policy, and clinical practice issues.

**Strategic Documents Committee—Chair: Patricia Kricos**

- Published Clinical Practice Guidelines: Remote Microphone Hearing Assistance Technologies (HAT) for Children and Youth Birth to 21 Years.
- Published HAT DVD.

**SAA Advisory Committee – Jackson Roush**

- Recruitment of chair and committee members
- Transfer of responsibility from SAA Task Force to SAA Advisory Committee
- Transitional meetings at AudiologyNOW! 2009