



Wake Chapter Newsletter Jan 2021

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Happy New Year

HLAA Wake Chapter wishes everyone a happy New Year. We look forward to an eventual (when it's safe again), return to physical meetings. We miss our friends.


Web Sites:

[Wake Chapter](#)

[HLAA-NC](#)

[HLAA National](#)

Upcoming Virtual Meeting

Date	Topic
<p>HLAA Wake Chapter Virtual Meeting</p> <p>Thursday January 21st 6:45 p.m.</p>	<p>There's been a lot in the news recently about the link between untreated hearing loss and dementia. Our January virtual program by Brittany Larson, Au.D., will cover and answer your questions about this important topic.</p> <p>Hearing Loss and Cognitive Health: Numerous studies have shown a correlation between hearing loss and cognitive decline in older adults. These studies indicate that individuals with untreated hearing loss have a 55% greater risk of developing dementia when compared to those with normal hearing. Hearing loss is the #1 modifiable risk factor for dementia and early intervention yields the best outcome. Screening different cognitive parameters in order to detect potential areas of cognitive decline can allow for earlier intervention.</p> <p>Dr. Brittany Larson is an audiologist from Sarasota, Florida. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders from the University of Florida and went on to obtain her Doctorate of Audiology from the University of Florida. She has worked extensively with hearing aid patients as well as cochlear implant recipients, and is now an audiologist at Cary Audiology Associates.</p>  <p>I'll send a reminder email with the link to the Zoom meeting a couple of days before the meeting. You can sign in as early as 6:45 p.m. The program will start at 7:00 p.m. We hope you can join us. Our meetings are captioned. Don't forget, you can stream the audio to your hearing aids or CI if they support streaming or if they have a telecoil. If you have any questions about how to do that, or about Zoom meetings, email Steve Barber at steve.barber@earthlink.net.</p>

The Future of Assistive Listening Technology

Most of us are familiar with the past and current state of assistive listening technology ... from telecoils through FM and infrared, to Bluetooth. But what's the latest and where is it going?

Standard Bluetooth has been available for a while, but until recently, to stream the audio to our hearing aids and cochlear implants (CIs) required a separate receiver usually on a pendant and Bluetooth is one-to-one pairing. But new technology is making that separate receiver unnecessary, and allowing streamed audio to be received directly by hearing aids and CIs.

- ReSound created a “low energy” LE Bluetooth that's available in their hearing aids (and is licensed to Cochlear Corporation for some CIs) that can stream smartphones, TV transmitters and remote microphones directly, without any separate receiver.
- The Sonova (Phonak) SWORD, which provides direct streaming capability to standard Bluetooth and Roger sources and allows hands-free phone calls, if your smartphone is within range.
- Some Oticon models can stream directly.

Direct streaming is clearly the future, but we're not finished with improvements. There's more to come that can make a huge difference in streaming options for people with hearing loss ... and more importantly for people with normal hearing (and a larger potential market can spark competition that fosters innovation and drives down prices). Here's what to look for:

- Adoption of a single standard that can be licensed to all audio reception devices including headphones, ear buds, hearing aids, and CIs from any manufacturer. Getting past the proprietary fighting among all manufacturers is essential to make direct streaming the norm for everyone.
- Compatible transmitters so cheap that they can be built in to all audio sources (the way closed caption technology was built into TVs in 1993).
- Receivers that will hear the standardized transmitters and are so cheap that they will be built into all serious hearing aids, CIs, headphones, and earbuds.
- Range for all standardized transmitters great enough that even large venues can broadcast audio directly to attendees' hearing devices.
- Latency so short that synchronizing with live visual or media isn't distracting.
- Power demands trivial enough that power isn't a problem for even small receivers like earbuds and hearing aids.
- Automatic pairing of receivers to all in-range transmitters, so users can simply use a remote (or more likely a smart phone) to select what they want to stream.
- Broadcast capabilities to unlimited numbers of users within range.
- House-powered transmitters so cheap that every church, movie theater, play, museum or attraction will be accessible to anyone that attends.
- Hands-free phone calls, as long as your smart phone is within range.

We're not there yet, but I believe it's where we're headed. The biggest challenge is getting manufacturers to give up proprietary solutions and agree on standards. I can't wait to get there.

HLAA National Webinars and Virtual Meetings

HLAA National Virtual Meeting:	Employment Strategies for People with Hearing Loss (Click to Register) Date: Saturday, January 9, 2021 Time: 4:00 p.m. ET Presented by: HLAA District of Columbia Chapter Speakers: Lisa Yuan and Ken Cluskey Finding and maintaining a job with hearing loss.
HLAA National Prerecorded Webinars	Several prerecorded webinars can be viewed at this link: Webinar Schedule and Recordings - Hearing Loss Association of America
HLAA National Virtual Meeting January Calendar	Several live HLAA National virtual meetings or webinars can be planned for at this link: https://www.hearingloss.org/programs-events/calendar/action~month/exact_date~1609477200/request_format~html/

2021 Wake Chapter Scholarship Program Applications are Open

Applications for the 2021 Wake Chapter scholarship are now being accepted through March, and two recipients will be announced in May.

Applicants must reside in Wake County and be seeking acceptance at an accredited university, college or community college. They also must have a moderate hearing loss or more and wear a hearing aid or cochlear implant. Financial need is not a consideration. The \$500 scholarship is a one-time award and will be sent to the recipient when s/he begins classes.

If you know of candidates, please refer them to the [HLAA Wake Chapter Web Site](http://www.ncheatingloss.org/wake.htm) at www.ncheatingloss.org/wake.htm.

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