



Wake Chapter Newsletter Apr 2021


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Upcoming Wake Chapter Virtual Meeting

Date	Topic
<p>HLAA Wake Chapter Virtual Meeting</p> <p>Thursday May 20th 6:45 p.m.</p>	<p>The virtual program for May 20th will be Rebekah Matta, AuD and Anna Benson, AuD of Duke Otolaryngology of Raleigh presenting "Connectivity Options and Assistive Listening Devices."</p>  <p>If you receive our Wake Newsletters, you'll also receive an invitation by email a couple of days before the meeting that includes the link that will let you join any time after 6:45 p.m. on the 20th of May.</p> <p>Mark your calendar and join this meeting if you can. If you know others that might be interested, feel free to forward this information to them. Everyone is welcome.</p>

HLAA Wake Chapter Announces 2021 Scholarship Recipients

Three outstanding Wake County high school seniors with hearing loss are being recognized with college scholarships through the Hearing Loss Association of America Wake Chapter Scholarship Program.


In its second year, the program provides \$500 scholarships to select students residing in Wake County who plan to attend an accredited university, college or community college.

The 2021 scholarship recipients are:

- Ani Khachadourian of Cary, a student at Panther Creek High School
- Parker Shoun of Raleigh, who attends Millbrook High School
- Rhyne Thornton of Fuquay-Varina, a student at Southern Wake Academy

We will include profiles on the scholarship recipients in our next chapter newsletter.

Other Virtual Meetings and Webinars Available to All

<p>HLAA National Prerecorded Webinars and Virtual Meetings.</p>	<p>Several prerecorded webinars can be viewed at this link: Webinar Schedule and Recordings - Hearing Loss Association of America</p> <p>You can register for several upcoming live national virtual meetings at this link: This is the February calendar, but you can choose other months. HLAA Virtual Meetings - Hearing Loss Association of America</p>
<p>Asheville Chapter</p> <p>Virtual Meeting</p> <p>Thursday</p> <p>April 22nd, 2021</p> <p>6:30-7:45 p.m.</p>	<p>The Asheville Chapter will host a virtual meeting with Dr. Lauren Hadden from The Hearing Center in Asheville in April. She will discuss a range of topics including the training and services provided by OTC hearing aid providers and by audiologists; the differences between OTC hearing aids and hearing aids programmed by an audiologist that matches a person's hearing loss; and a variety of devices that can enhance the use of hearing aids.</p> <p>If you're interested in attending, please email deborahareynolds@gmail.com.</p>
<p>Greensboro Hearing Loss Support Group</p> <p>Virtual Meeting</p> <p>Tuesday</p> <p>May 25th, 2021</p> <p>7- 8:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Beth Cross, MSW, LCSWA, a Deaf Services Clinician, will guide a discussion and support session. Beth has been moderately deaf her whole life resulting from a virus when she was three years old. She was raised by parents who believed in speech only and always yearned to be a part of the Deaf world. At the beginning of her college career at NTID/RIT she began immersing herself in sign language and was losing 3-5 decibels of hearing a year. Less than five years later, Beth had lost 30 decibels within three months which left her profoundly deaf. She was devastated; however, she began utilizing resources to regain her independence and persevere. Please join us as Beth Cross leads a hearing loss discussion and support session.</p> <p>For more details and to request a link to join the meeting, CLICK HERE.</p> 

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Improving Communication When Wearing a Face Mask

In North Carolina, 1.2 million adults have hearing loss. There's a good chance that you interact with someone with hearing loss during the course of everyday activities. As the state observes Hearing Loss Awareness Month in May and pandemic-related protocols remain in place, keep in mind that face masks make communication exceedingly difficult for people with hearing loss.

In our pandemic world, we're often speaking to each other from safe distances and through Plexiglas barriers while wearing voice-muffling masks. Many people with hearing loss rely on lip-reading and facial expressions to help pick up words and phrases they may otherwise miss in a conversation. In addition to muffling voices, masks eliminate visual clues that people with hearing loss use to communicate.

What can you do when wearing a mask to improve chances that what you say is actually being understood? Keep in mind that these tips apply to conversations with **most** people, not just those with hearing loss.

Be attentive

If the person you are talking to has a hard time understanding you, rephrase the sentence instead of just repeating it.

Be patient

Face masks make lip reading impossible and muffle sound. Therefore, be patient with the person you are talking to.

Use other forms of communication

Communicate using pen and paper, use your mobile or tablet audio recorder, or use a virtual assistant.

Be mindful of distance

As the distance between two people increases, the sound level drops, and visual signals are harder to decipher.

Be visible

Make sure you face the person you are talking to. Avoid talking as you walk away from the person or turning your face in a different direction.

Be clear and distinct

Speak loudly, but do not shout. Focus on speaking slowly and clearly, but do not exaggerate your words. Use plain language.

Ensure that you have been understood

Check understanding by asking the person to repeat information back.

Eliminate background noise

Reduce ambient noise or move the conversation to a quiet place if possible.

Tips courtesy of the Ida Institute, a nonprofit organization devoted to helping people around the globe better manage hearing loss

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If hearing through face masks is still tough with these suggestions, don't forget speech to text apps on your smartphone or tablet can help. Just open the app and it can transcribe what people say. Perfect? Not really, but these applications maybe good enough to get you through some difficult hearing situations.

Android → Live Transcribe
Apple → Otter AI

FCC Releases Hearing Aid Compatibility Report and Order

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released a Report and Order to update the FCC's wireless hearing aid compatibility requirements to ensure that the FCC's rules reflect the latest technical developments and standards, and to continue on the path to making 100% of wireless handsets hearing aid-compatible. To see the entire document or for general information about hearing aid compatibility, [CLICK HERE](#).

Scholarship Opportunity for Audiology Students – Apply by May 31!

Three new scholarships for audiology students are now being offered. The American Academy of Audiology Foundation's "Improving the Conversation Scholarship," is sponsored by CapTel from T-Mobile. The goal is to support a thriving, diverse audiology profession.

There are three \$5,000 sponsorships, all for graduate students studying in Audiology!

Each scholarship winner will be selected and awarded by American Academy of Audiology Foundation. The application deadline is May 31, 2021! Visit [this link](#) for more information.

At-Home COVID-19 Test Option is Now Available

Getting tested for COVID-19 is about protecting yourself and your loved ones. To ensure everyone has access to COVID-19 testing, the NC Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with the NC-based Pixel by Labcorp®, has launched a pilot program to provide 35,000 no-cost, at-home COVID-19 testing kits for North Carolinians who face difficulties traveling to testing sites.

North Carolinians that are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or DeafBlind and have difficulty getting to COVID-19 testing sites are eligible for this program, which involves four simple steps:

- Step 1: Request a collection kit. Go to www.pixel.labcorp.com/nc and follow the instructions to request your at-home collection kit. Pixel will then send you a testing kit.
- Step 2: Register your kit and collect your sample. Carefully follow the instructions included in your collection kit.
- Step 3: Mail your sample back to the lab. Use the prepaid shipping envelope included in your collection kit to mail your sample back to the lab.
- Step 4: Check your results. Using your secure Pixel by Labcorp® account you made in Step 1, check your test results. The results will typically be available 1-2 days after the sample arrives at the lab.

To learn more about the at-home COVID-19 testing pilot program, and other populations that can be served, please see the [ASL and captioned video](#).

Other News from DSDHH

For information from the Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Raleigh Regional Center, click on the links, below.

- [DSDHH Newsletter](#)
 - [Raleigh Regional Events of Interest](#)
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Caption Availability on Zoom

Zoom has always had a way to have captions, but unlike other platforms like Google Meet, you had to have a paid account and have a meeting attendee (most likely a professional, paid caption service) before you could get captions for your Zoom virtual meetings. HLAA Wake Chapter is lucky, because the Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DSDHH) provides professional captions for several of our meetings each year.

Professionally transcribed captions are still the best way to get accurate captions for your Zoom meetings, but now Zoom also offers Artificial Intelligence (AI) captions created by software, if the meeting host has a paid Zoom account ...or if Zoom grants a request from a host who needs captions because of hearing loss or deafness. If you are an attendee of other Zoom meetings (perhaps for your church, or some other organization), you can forward the instructions, below, to the host to help them arrange free AI captions for future meetings:

- 1) As signed-in Host for your paid account, select the Close Caption option (and select Save Captions if you want) about 2/3 the way down their huge list of options and save the settings. If you are not using a paid account, you need to [contact Zoom](#) and apply for free AI captions because your attendees need captions because of hearing loss or deafness.
- 2) Any meeting you then schedule will allow you to select to have captions. When you start the meeting use the CC at the bottom of your page ... If you want the AI Captions, choose Live Transcript – Enable Auto Transcription.
- 3) That should initiate captions and allow attendees to see captions at the bottom of their screen
- 4) That should work on any paid account ... or on free accounts, if Zoom has approved your request.
- 5) Of course, AI software captions can't get everything correctly transcribed, but generally do much better than you'd expect.
- 6) Your attendees can turn on or off captions (maybe called subtitles or Live Transcription) using the CC button on their screen, and using the ^ to the right of the CC button, they can select the size of the captions.

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