

NEWSLETTER

Convention is coming! Convention is coming!

We look forward to seeing you in October!



We have an incredible variety of speakers in our **Pre-School/School Age**, **Medical SLP** and **Audiology** convention tracts. Topics address the lifespan: from the effects of toxins in utero to dealing with life in the latter years. There is cutting edge technology and thought-provoking grand rounds. Convention will be held at the brand-new Embassy Suites-Knoxville West. John Williams, TAASLP Lobbyist, is our luncheon speaker and is appealing for your assistance in tackling the **Professional Privilege Tax** (yeah!). After the sessions on Thursday, we will have our **Exhibitor's Reception** and top off the evening with the **College Bowl!**

Thank you to the wonderfully talented people that made Convention possible: Firstly, the Speakers, who gave their time and talent to educate us which will benefit our clients. Secondly, the

Helpers, for your assistance big and small. Thirdly, our VP Communication, Jackie Youde, for the many long hours spent on TAASLP. Thank you Speakers, Jackie Youde, Susan Amberg, Laura Gifford, Trish Kennedy, Julie Anne Crosby, Wanda Webb, Patsy Allen and Danielle Rose-Hardison! Convention is a success because of your efforts!

There will be many more people to thank in the "wrap up." Please take some time at Convention to thank the people who gave up many nights and weekends to pull together our AWESOME convention!

Registration is open! Visit taaslp.org/ TAASLP-Conference for the complete program and register by September 2 for an earlybird discount!

Looking forward to Knoxville!

from the President.

Dear Members,

We are all so excited about our new look and functionality! Our VP Communication, Jackie Youde, worked many hours to pull this all together. Our new website will be updated regularly with local, state and national news and features many new member benefits!

Our VP Convention, Susan Logan, and her convention volunteers have an incredible program planned for the annual meeting. Convention has something for everyone and we look forward to seeing you in Knoxville!

TAASLP is anticipating a very active year in legislation. One of the big issues this year is the **Professional Privilege Tax**. We are gearing up for big efforts and ask that you join us! Contact advocacy@taaslp.org to get involved!

Nominations are open for TAASLP Awards! If you know someone deserving of an award, please visit taaslp.org/awards and submit your nomination by September 15, 2013

Want to get involved in TAASLP Leadership? There are 5 available Executive Council offices opening up! Visit taaslp.org/ec-nominations for details.

TAASLP serves our members: let us know what you want or need from your association!

-Paulette Gentry

TENNESSEE ACADEMY OF AUDIOLOGY

Hello Fellow Audiologists,

It has been quite the year for our profession! On the home front, we now have a President-Elect. Kristina Rigsby, Au.D. will begin her term as President at the end of 2013, and I will gladly retire to Past-President. On the national level, we have seen increasing presence of online hearing aid sales, test cases of over the counter sales (read the August Hearing Journal article about a class action lawsuit from hearing aid dispensers against Walmart!), the continuance of HiHealth Innovations in the hearing care space and most recently the introduction of HR2330 to the US Congress. Our lobbyist, John Williams has written an excellent article that summarizes the opposing views in our profession. I encourage all members to read this article and contact their legislators with their views on this bill.

Another issue at a state level, is the Professional Privilege Tax (PPT). Recent efforts for repeal were not successful. However, these efforts will continue for TN SLPs. Last year, at our convention TAA meeting, it was decided by a show of hands that the members of TAA would not seek to be excluded from the PPT since we have become a doctoring profession. However, if our members do want to now be included in the efforts of TN SLPs in being excluded from the PPT, the TAA board needs to hear about it and we will need help in achieving this goal. The board, as fabulous as we are, cannot do this without the membership. We are a member-driven organization. If any of you feel passionately, that the PPT for audiologists should be repealed, please send me a message through the website, and I will connect you to those that are organizing a Task Force for this effort.

For other national news, the link below is a letter from the current AAA president on the current efforts of the academy on our

behalf. Our future will be interesting! Our next article will highlight an article from either ASHA or ADA.

<http://www.audiology.org/about/leadership/boardofdirectors/Pages/LetMeHearFromYou201306.aspx>



Don't forget to like us on Facebook!

Jewell Baggett-Streblau
President, TAA



TAASLP is beyond excited about our new website and its improved accessibility for our Membership! We have big plans for TAASLP this year and our website is a key component to making them happen.

There are new Member directories, both private to the Membership and public, which can serve as a referral source in your community. There are Facebook and Twitter links, portals to State information regarding licensure, CEU and employment opportunities. And let's not forget 2013 Convention – registration is open! Convention gives you an opportunity to get a large number of CEUs in a short period of time.

NEW MEMBER BENEFITS

TAASLP Membership provides you some benefits that may not be apparent on the surface. Like ASHA advocates for our profession on the national level, TAASLP does so on the State level. Our legislative efforts are ongoing and have had a huge impact on the services we provide to our Tennessee residents, both children and adults, over the years. One of our big pushes this year, and grassroots efforts are already in motion, is to repeal the Professional Privilege Tax. The PPT affects EVERY licensed SLP and Audiologist in the state of Tennessee, yet only a small portion of them are TAASLP Members. One of the challenges we have is that numbers speak volumes when it comes to influencing political actions. The larger our membership base, the stronger our influence can be. Now, more than ever, we need the help of our Membership to make this happen. Please contact our Legislation

Committee at advocacy@taaslp.org for details on what you can do to help save yourself \$400 a year.

As Members we invite each of you to check the site often, read the email blasts you receive from us, follow us on Twitter and FB and participate in any way you can. Participation can be as simple as providing feedback (solicited or unsolicited), writing a letter to or meeting with your State representative on matters that DIRECTLY impact your profession, or helping out in some way on a Committee. We need you!

twitter.com/taaslp

facebook.com/taaslp

MEMBERS MEET WITH SEN. MCNALLY ABOUT PROFESSIONAL PRIVILEGE TAX



A group of SLP's along with TAASLP Lobbyist John Williams met with Senator Randy McNally on May 3, 2013 to discuss legislation to remove the SLP's from the Professional Privilege Tax. Senator McNally is the Chairman of the Finance Committee and is also a Pharmacist. He too, has to pay the tax and was able to see how SLP's feel it is unfair to be included in this tax. The meeting was very positive. We hope to meet with the Governor on this issue as well. Do you know Gov. Haslam? Help us meet with him! To make the biggest impact, we need YOUR help! Contact advocacy@taaslp.org to get involved!

PROFESSIONAL PRIVILEGE TAX REPEAL UPDATE



Help TAASLP Repeal the Professional Privilege Tax!

As you may know, a bill was introduced this year in the Tennessee General Assembly that would have eliminated the Professional Privilege Tax (PPT) for speech-language pathologists. Danielle Mobley (Cookeville Regional Medical Center) teamed with her legislators and TAASLP lobbyist John Williams to write the bill (Senate Bill 1238/House Bill 1080). The bill was tabled when it appeared that there was not enough momentum to pass the bill. The bill will be considered again by the General Assembly in 2014 and *can* be amended to include audiologists.

It is essential for TAASLP members to meet with our legislators to convince them to co-sponsor and support the bill. Melissa Grater (Oak Ridge) and a group of speech-language pathologists from east Tennessee met with Sen. Randy McNally in Oak Ridge in May to address their concerns about the PPT and had a productive meeting with him. It is not enough to simply send a letter or email to our legislators. We need to meet with our legislators in person.

We are ready to move on this endeavor. We are recruiting professionals (YOU) who are willing to meet with their representatives from the House and Senate to make our case for PPT repeal. We can help you identify your Senator and Representative. We have talking points prepared for your use, but the best appeal will come from personal contact with your legislators and your experiences with the hardship that this tax places upon our professions. We encourage you to meet in groups with your representatives. John Williams will be presenting on this topic at Convention in October, but we hope to have laid much of the groundwork before then. John is also available to go with TAASLP members to these meetings with legislators. He was at the Oak Ridge meeting with Sen. McNally in May.

Time is of the essence. Contact advocacy@taaslp.org to become involved in repealing the PPT!

We look forward to hearing from you!

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Contact advocacy@taaslp.org to repeal the professional privilege tax!

Sign up for TAASLP Task Force or join the Executive Council

Maintain your membership & spread the news about TAASLP activities and member benefits

TAASLP

Attend Convention, network with other professionals and earn CEUs!

Donate to Foundation to support Audiology and SLP students

Follow TAASLP on Facebook, Twitter & LinkedIn



TAASLP FOUNDATION FLOWER POWER FUNDRAISER

Help the Foundation Board 'power up' its ability to serve the membership by supporting our upcoming flower bulb sale through Flower Power fundraising. Details will be sent to the membership soon and online ordering will make it easy to participate! Foundation receives 50% of the sales as a donation to the Foundation to help us continue to provide scholarships and assistance to Audiology and SLP students.

BOARD OF COMMUNICATION DISORDERS AND SCIENCES: TELE-PRACTICE, ENDOSCOPY & CF UPDATES

As of July 31, 2013, there are 2,175 licensed SLPs and 367 AuDs in Tennessee.

The Board approved a rule that would allow audiologists and speech-language pathologists to utilize telepractice in the state. The rule is now awaiting review by the Attorney General and a state legislative committee.

The Board will soon be considering a rule that would allow SLPs and AuDs to supervise SLPAs and CFs only after 2 years of experience post-CF. A hearing on this rule will be scheduled this fall.

The deadline is coming up soon to file proof of endoscopy competency (12.31.13). The links for the forms are:

<http://health.state.tn.us/boards/CD/PDFs/PH-4176.pdf> -
Verification of Endoscopy Competency

<http://health.state.tn.us/boards/CD/PDFs/PH-4186.pdf> -
Verification of Ability to Provide Supervision for Performing Endoscopy

This will allow for a notation to be placed on your license documenting this competency.



WEBSITE: FUNCTIONAL & SECURE



In January 2013, the new TAASLP Executive Council made a number of goals for 2013. These goals included 1) overhauling our online presence, 2) creating a functional system for our members to interact with TAASLP, each other and be informed about current events facing our field, and 3) becoming the place for consumers to learn about communication disorders and find a provider.

TAASLP is excited to announce that we are well on our way to accomplishing

these goals! Regularly check taaslp.org to see our progress!

TAASLP is excited about our new look, but even more important is our new functionality. Our new webpage is interactive with our Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn accounts. It features electronic and printable forms with the most secure online information and payment processing system on the market. TAASLP Leadership performed extensive research to make sure you and your information are protected. Ultimately, TAASLP partnered with Memberclicks, the only management system for associations that is Level 1 PCI Compliant. If you are interested in learning more about the security of our TAASLP system, visit www.memberclicks.com/security/.

We need your input!

TAASLP serves our members and persons with communication disorders.

If you have a suggestion, please contact communications@taaslp.org

We look forward to hearing from you!

ATTENTION SCHOOL-BASED SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS



Our Schools Committee, led by Wendy Wilkerson, needs your email address! We are putting together exciting resources and benefits and would like to share them with you! Please email schools@taaslp.org and spread the word!

H.R.2330: GOOD OR BAD FOR AUDIOLOGISTS?

BY JOHN WILLIAMS, J.D.

An unfortunate controversy is raging in the audiology community regarding a bill introduced this year in the U.S. House of Representatives at the request of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). The bill – H.R. 2330 – has drawn fierce opposition from the American Academy of Audiology (AAA) and the Academy of Doctors of Audiology (ADA).

At its most recent meeting, the TAASLP Executive Council discussed this controversy and decided that the best thing to do is to provide accurate information to its members about the legislation and let them decide whether to support or oppose H.R. 2330. I have reviewed the legislation and the “talking points” of the various audiology groups. Hopefully, my article will help TAASLP members “separate the wheat from the chaff” regarding H.R. 2330.

What the Bill Does

H.R. 2330 is entitled the Medicare Audiology Services Enhancement Act. As its title suggests, the purpose of the bill is to broaden the range of audiology services for which audiologists may receive payment when those services are provided to Medicare patients.

Under current law, the term “audiology services” is defined to mean “hearing and balance assessment services” that an audiologist is allowed to perform under state law. (42 U.S.C. § 1395x (II)(3)). H.R. 2330 would expand the definition of “audiology services” to include (in addition to hearing and balance assessment services) the following services:

- 1) auditory treatment services, including auditory processing and auditory rehabilitation treatment;
- 2) vestibular treatment services; and
- 3) intraoperative neurophysiologic monitoring services.

While broadening the range of audiology services covered under Medicare, H.R. 2330 would also add the following language to this section of the statute: “pursuant to an order or referral by a physician.” The inclusion of this language would mean that Medicare payment would not be made to an audiologist unless a physician had referred the patient to the audiologist for the provision of those services. Under the current statute, the provision of “hearing and balance assessment services” (which are considered “diagnostic tests”) by an audiologist is not paid for by Medicare unless the “diagnostic test” has been ordered for that patient by a physician. So H.R. 2330’s inclusion of this language in the statute would not alter the current requirement for a physician order for diagnostic testing by an audiologist, but it would introduce this language into the statute for all services provided by audiologists.

H.R. 2330 would also make Medicare payment to an audiologist contingent on the following requirement: “in the case of outpatient audiology services, (i) such services are or were required because the individual needed the specialized services of a physician or qualified audiologist to furnish such audiology services, (ii) a plan of care for furnishing such services has been established by the physician or qualified audiologist and is submitted to and periodically reviewed by the referring or ordering physician, and (iii) such services are or were furnished while the individual is or was under the care of a physician.” This language is not in the current statute. It is intended to mandate more extensive involvement by a physician in the treatment of every Medicare patient who is evaluated or treated by an audiologist.

The Position of ASHA

ASHA supports H.R. 2330 because it would allow audiologists to be paid by Medicare for the full range of services provided by audiologists (not just diagnostic services). ASHA does not object to the bill’s requirement of increased physician

involvement because ASHA believes a physician-approved plan of care for a patient will be necessary under anticipated future payment systems that take into account patient outcomes, quality and efficiency. ASHA also believes that coordination of care by a team of providers (including physicians) is the future of health care.

Because H.R. 2330 would require a physician referral to an audiologist in all cases before Medicare pays for that audiologist’s services, the American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS) is supporting the bill.

In sum, ASHA supports H.R. 2330 because it would enable audiologists to be paid by Medicare for providing both diagnostic and treatment services.

The Position of AAA & ADA

AAA opposes H.R. 2330 because it would not allow Medicare patients to have direct access to audiologists. In fact, H.R. 2330 would increase the level of physician oversight of audiologists by requiring Medicare patients to be referred to an audiologist by a physician in all cases and by requiring every Medicare patient seen by an audiologist to have a plan of care certified by a physician.

ADA bases its opposition to H.R. 2330 on the lack of a “direct access” provision, as well as the failure of the bill to allow audiologists to receive Medicare payment for the performance of tinnitus rehabilitation and cerumen removal.

Both groups contend that the increased physician oversight required by H.R. 2330 would make the provision of care more time intensive and more expensive, would create more paperwork, and would reduce patient access to audiologists.

For more information, visit taaslp.org/helpful-resources and look for H.R. 2330

STUDENT CORNER



VANDERBILT NSSLHA

This has been a busy year for Vanderbilt NSSLHA. The organization has been active in its support of the Vanderbilt Hospital and University campuses but also going beyond the university boundaries to have a positive effect on the larger community by assisting Nashville agencies serving those in need.

During 2012-13, NSSLHA members volunteered at the Dogtopia charity dog wash which benefitted veterans who need service dogs. They served as ambassadors to the 2013 Health Occupations Students of America Conference promoting the discipline of Communication Sciences and Disorders to those students who attended the conference in addition to providing hearing screenings and leading discussions on careers in speech-language pathology and audiology. Members volunteered at Hope Lodge, a supportive housing environment for out-of-town patients receiving cancer treatments, by providing breakfast and leading games and social events for those staying there. The NSSLHA students also participated as a group in the Run/Walk for Veterans 5K, in Virtual Advocacy Days, in preparing meals at the Ronald McDonald House, in hosting the Down Syndrome Association Holiday Party, and assisting Room in the Inn with its program for housing and feeding the homeless during the winter months.

Activities with a departmental focus included assisting with housekeeping and other activities associated with the recent CAA site visit and preparing orientation and welcome packets for the incoming graduate students.

The chapter conducted a number of fundraising activities for the American

Speech-Language-Hearing Association Foundation (ASHF). These included a Trivia Night, the NSSLHA Café which provided breakfast for schools conference attendees, and a raffle. Because of the amount of money raised—over \$1000!-- for the ASHF and for its other activities, the chapter received Gold Status recognition from national NSSLHA.

Under the leadership of co-presidents, Sara Almaguer and Davina Simantob, plans are already moving ahead for new projects for 2013-2014, and the chapter looks forward to welcoming the 2013 entering students to the graduate programs and to the organization.

VANDERBILT SAA

This year at Vanderbilt, our SAA chapter has been involved with and accomplished many things. We have participated in philanthropy events including the Special Olympics in both Nashville and Atlanta. At the Nashville event we collaborated with the Eastern Tennessee State University SAA chapter where we performed hearing screenings for over 100 athletes and coaches who attended. In Atlanta we were also able to screen athletes, further increasing awareness of audiology and the impact of hearing healthcare.

While the Special Olympics and hearing screenings were a major effort, we also contributed time and effort to a Walk for Autism Speaks and made trips to the local food bank. We were present at this year's Health Occupations Students of America Conference for students interested in health fields. At the conference, and with the help of the Vanderbilt NSSLHA chapter, we held an information session about the fields of Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology, worked an information table as well as performed hearing screenings to attendees. Our chapter has also been involved with supporting and promoting current audiology legislation supporting direct access to audiology services and the hearing aid tax credit. We have sent letters to and visited with Tennessee state representatives. In the coming year, we plan to continue our efforts by being active members throughout the community of Nashville and state of Tennessee.

TENNESSEE AUDIOLOGY & SLP STUDENT GROUPS

TAASLP wants to hear from you!

Please send articles with updates, activities and photos to:
communications@taaslp.org

We look forward to featuring ALL University student groups in our newsletters!

TAASLP *Student Delegate*

TAASLP IS OPENING A NEW POSITION ON THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR A STUDENT DELEGATE

THE STUDENT DELEGATE WILL REPRESENT COMMUNICATION DISORDERS STUDENTS STATEWIDE, COORDINATE NEWSLETTER ARTICLES AND PROVIDE VALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS TO TAASLP

THIS NEW ROLE IS RIPE WITH OPPORTUNITY FOR LEADERSHIP, NETWORKING AND THE ABILITY TO MAKE A CHANGE

INTERESTED? BECOME A TAASLP STUDENT MEMBER (\$15) AND COMPLETE THE NOMINATION FORM OPENING AUG 28

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Executive Council Offices

TAASLP Executive Board is issuing a call for nominations for Executive Council Offices! In order to be eligible, an individual must hold current membership in TAASLP and have been a member of TAASLP for the two years prior to the election. Please help the EC identify qualified candidates for the following positions:

President-Elect

Vice President for Communication

Vice President for Membership

Vice President for Convention & Continuing Education

Member-at-Large

Student Delegate

Details: taaslp.org/ec-nominations

Nominations open August 28 and must be completed by September 15

Awards

Do you know someone meritorious of recognition as an outstanding professional in the field of audiology or speech-language pathology? This is the time of year to take advantage of this opportunity to submit a colleague's name for consideration for one of these awards:

The Distinguished Service Award

Honors of the Association

The Public Schools Incentive Award

Lifetime Achievement Award

Details: taaslp.org/awards

Nominations open August 28 and must be completed by September 15

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



TAASLP is excited to announce our new "Member Spotlight!" Each quarter, one of our members will be featured in the TAASLP newsletter. If you would like to nominate someone, please email membership@taaslp.org and include the nominee's picture and a 250 word essay detailing why the member deserves the spotlight! We look forward to hearing from you!

Calendar

28 August 2013

Nominations open for TAASLP Awards and Executive Office Positions

2 September 2013

Early bird registration closes for Convention

15 September 2013

Deadline for nominations for TAASLP Awards and Executive Office Positions

3-4 October 2013

TAASLP-TAA Joint Annual Convention at the Embassy Suites in Knoxville West

See you in Knoxville!

Contributors

PAULETTE GENTRY

SUSAN LOGAN

SUSAN AMBERG

JULIE ANNE CROSBY

BARB JACOBSON

JOHN WILLIAMS

JACKIE YOUDE

JEWELL BAGGETT STREHLAU

LAURA GIFFORD

MELISSA GRATER

WENDY WILKERSON

DANIELLE MOBLEY

SUE HALE

VANDERBILT NSSLHA

BRITTANY ALEX

