



## *Winter Newsletter February 2021*



### *Letter from the President*

**Dear Members,**

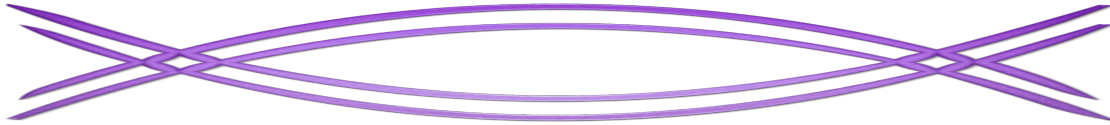
It is such a privilege to begin serving my term as TAASLP President. This past year as President-elect was great preparation for navigating the unexpected! The impact of COVID has taught me so much as an Executive Council member. I have seen the importance of a strong state organization in supporting our professionals and our universities in the area of telepractice. I have realized what an important event the annual TAASLP convention is since we had to make the difficult decision to cancel it this year. I have also been able to meet and work with people across the state who care deeply about the future of our amazing professions, Audiology and Speech Language Pathology.

A huge thanks to our outgoing President **Lindsey Eastland**. She served a term as Vice-President of Communication, followed by an immediate move to TAASLP President for these past two years. She has spent an unbelievable number of hours working for our organization. We were so fortunate to have her "at the helm" during this unprecedented time. Thank you, **Lindsey!**

During the next year, I would love to determine ways to increase membership in TAASLP. The larger the membership, the better our professions can impact our state. I believe social media is one way that we can gain increased membership and exposure in communities throughout Tennessee. Do you have ideas? The membership survey completed during 2020 was so helpful in gaining information from members, and we would love to continue hearing from you!

In January, the Executive Council had our first quarterly meeting. We met with some new and some familiar faces (virtually, of course) and “hit the ground running.” Please check out the Executive Council at <https://taaslp.org/about/leadership/> to learn more about the organizational structure and meet the newest members of the EC Board. Thank you to all of you for your work across the state!

**-Jennifer Wilson, M.A., CCC-SLP, BCS-S**  
TAASLP President 2021 -2023



### *Continued Efforts with Telehealth*

Teletherapy remained a significant area of advocacy for TAASLP as we closed out 2020 and as we began 2021. Advocacy efforts have focused on making sure that Tennessee graduate students in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology were able to utilize teletherapy as a modality to obtain hours for their clinic placements. TAASLP Advocacy also learned more about the ASHA-Interstate Compact by attending a Legislative Summit in October 2020. After attending this summit, TAASLP is even more committed to ensuring that teletherapy is an area of service modality that is secure in Tennessee for Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists. Securing teletherapy will not only help improve our abilities to be part of the ASHA-Interstate Compact but it also continues to help professionals deliver much-needed services to their clients and students across the State. As 2021 continues to unfold, TAASLP will be working with our lobbyists and State Legislators toward teletherapy legislation during this upcoming legislative session. The goal of this upcoming legislation will look toward ensuring our current teletherapy rules are in line with the current Tennessee telehealth statute.

**-Jamie Seek, M.A., CCC-SLP, VP Legislative Affairs**

### *School SLP Legislation is Being Re-Introduced!*

HB0023 is being reintroduced in the House of Representatives by Representative Scott Cepicky. This legislation asks the Tennessee Department of Education to find out information about the needs of school-based SLPs in Tennessee school districts and whether the districts are staffed sufficiently across the State, initially through the use of a survey. This legislation was brought up in the 2020 session; however, it was dropped due to Covid. Finding out this information will provide valuable information as TAASLP works toward caseload and workload support for school-based SLPs in Tennessee.

**-Jamie Seek, M.A., CCC-SLP, VP Legislative Affairs**

## *Convention Update!!!*



Happy 2021! Along with everyone else, we were disappointed that we could not safely hold our 2020 TAASLP/TAA convention in November 2020. However, it is a new year and with the COVID vaccines available for audiologists and speech-language pathologists, the convention chairs for TAASLP/TAAA and the entire EC board for TAASLP and TAA, are excited to be having our annual convention on October 21-22, 2021 at the Cool Springs Marriott in Franklin, TN.

If you have a topic that you are looking forward to learning more about at convention or if you want to help with convention either with organizing or helping out during the convention, please reach out to our new VP of Convention, Lucas Magee, MS, CCC-SLP at [convention@taaslp.org](mailto:convention@taaslp.org). Be on the look-out closer to convention on our convention website [www.taaslp.org/convention](http://www.taaslp.org/convention) for any COVID-19 guidelines (i.e. masking/social distancing) and any updates for this year's convention, including call for papers (opening 4/30/2021 through 7/16/2021) and registration (opening 8/1/2021).

We are looking forward to seeing everybody in person vs computer screens in October!

*-Kelley Cocoran, AuD, CCC-A-VP Convention  
-Lucas Magee M.S. CCC-SLP VP Convention (Incoming)*

## *ASHA Award Nominations Open!*

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association 2021 Nomination Process is now open! The ASHA Awards Nominations Center opened January 2, 2021 and closes March 31, 2021. Award recipients will be notified in mid-July and honored at the Award Ceremony during the 2021 Annual Convention. For lists of awards, nomination resources and submission packets visit <https://www.asha.org/about/awards/> **Questions?** Contact Marty Moore, ASHA's Board of Directors Manager, at [mamoore@asha.org](mailto:mamoore@asha.org)

## TAASLP Honors

### Dr. Les Hutchinson with Distinguished Service Award

By Rachel Barger, TAASLP Member at Large



TAASLP has the honor of recognizing Les Hutchinson, PhD as the 2020 recipient of the **TAASLP Distinguished Service Award**. Dr. Hutchinson was nominated by TAASLP Members, Andrea Green AuD, Randi Yontz AuD and Whitney Manuel AuD for his outstanding work with HEAR Nashville, a non-profit founded by Dr. Hutchinson in 2010 with a vision to provide financial assistance to low income adults in middle Tennessee who need hearing aids.

After completing his PhD in Clinical Psychology at Vanderbilt University in 1975, Dr. Hutchinson dedicated his career to supporting the improved health of individuals while working as Chief Psychologist for the Tennessee Department of Correction, Executive Director of Luton Community Mental Health Center, Director of Wellness and Health Promotion at Vanderbilt University Medical Center and CEO at the League for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Nashville until his retirement in 2007.

In the twilight of his career, Dr. Hutchinson stated *"I became increasingly aware of how difficult it was for low income adults in*

*particular to obtain hearing aids which could have helped them significantly with education, employment, social and family relationships due to the fact that neither government nor private insurance provided enough coverage for hearing aids."* In his retirement he embarked on his mission to use his 35+years experience in health and wellness along with relationships with agencies across Tennessee to start the non-profit, HEAR Nashville.

HEAR Nashville stands for "Hearing Education and Assistance Resource" and is a collaboration of the Sertoma Club of Nashville, Vanderbilt Bill Wilkerson Center, the Audiology section of the Department of Speech Pathology at Tennessee State University, Bridges, and the Nashville chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America. HEAR Nashville not only provides financial assistance for individuals to obtain hearing aids, but also provides community education about hearing and hearing loss through presentations, health fairs, and publications. HEAR Nashville also depends on grants, donations and gifts from local foundations and is a completely volunteer-run organization that, in 10 years, has served over 1100 individuals throughout middle Tennessee on the path to improved hearing.

In the nomination process, Dr. Hutchinson's colleagues commented about his dedication and passion for helping others, "I could not think of a more deserving individual for this award. Dr. Hutchinson had dedicated his life to helping those with hearing loss and it is my privilege to volunteer beside him. His work has directly impacted so many patients. "

TAASLP applauds you, Dr. Hutchinson, on the impact you have made over your career to improve the quality of life and communication for so many individuals in Tennessee.

To learn more about HEAR Nashville visit [hearnashville.org](http://hearnashville.org)

## *ASHA Recognizes One of Our Own*



TAASLP Member Stephanie Austin M.S. CCC-SLP recently received the Distinguished Early Career Professional (ECP) Certificate from ASHA. This certificate was created to recognize and identify individuals early in their career in audiology and speech language pathologists who are making an impact in the areas of leadership, volunteering, or advocacy at the local, state, and/or national level. After four years in the field, Stephanie is currently serving TAASLP on the Ad Hoc Diversity and Equality Committee and working towards her doctoral degree of speech language pathology.

## *Diversity & Equality Update*



**TAASLP Ad Hoc Diversity & Equality Committee**  
*Rachel Barger, Stephanie Austin, Drew McFadyen, Angela Moore, Kate Rattner*

We did it! Books of H.O.P.E. (Helping Others Promote Equality) Book Drive was a huge success thanks to support of members and friends of the organization. We collected 151 books to be distributed statewide to Head Start classrooms and agencies that support local children entering the foster care system. These books will inspire young readers and above all promote respect and equality for children in Tennessee.

Our next venture as a committee is to develop a presentation to promote the professions of Audiology and Speech Language Pathology to college aged students and subsequently develop a mentorship program to retain students from diverse backgrounds in the field. If you would be interested in having a student visit your worksite or help serve as a mentor to a student interested in the field, please reach out to [mal@taalsp.org](mailto:mal@taalsp.org).

## *Perks of TAASLP Membership*

- Receive important state and national legislative updates and “advocacy action requests”
- Fund Lobbyists efforts to advocate for our professions
- Receive discounts on annual convention/continuing education pricing
- Help identify and solve problems affecting our fields of practice
- Find out about networking and leadership development opportunities
- Stay up to date on local job postings, research notifications, and continuing education opportunities
- Access the TAASLP newsletter, membership directory, and other materials



## *Public Schools Update*

It is the beginning of a new OLD year. School SLPs have been riding a roller coaster since last March. Across the state, districts are moving from virtual to hybrid to in-person education and back and forth. There are so many adjectives that describe school SLPs. Resilient, flexible, dedicated, professional, compassionate, and/or caring come to mind. Please know you are not walking this journey alone. There is support at the local, state, and national level. Here are a few.

ASHA has several resources to support school SLPs providing telepractice. The LEADER LIVE has numerous articles.

[https://leader.pubs.asha.org/topic/leader\\_DO\\_tag/leader\\_podcast?target=do-topic&sortBy=do-DateFiled](https://leader.pubs.asha.org/topic/leader_DO_tag/leader_podcast?target=do-topic&sortBy=do-DateFiled)

ASHA is making CEUs available to members. SLP Summit runs thru January 31st.

ASHA CEU's are being offered for free, via the Learning Pass, if you are experiencing a hardship.

<https://www.asha.org/Professional-Development/ASHA-Learning-Pass-Hardship-Access>

Special Interest Group SIG 18, telepractice, is also making available resources.

<https://pubs.asha.org/special-collections/telepracticeresources> Sig 18

Yes, there is research supporting telepractice.

I also wanted to share with you the schools priorities from the 2021 ASHA Public Policy Agenda.

# 2021 ASHA Public Policy Agenda

## SCHOOL PRIORITIES

- ❖ **Advocate** for public policies that promote equitable access to school-based audiology and speech-language pathology services, multiple models of service delivery, and telepractice technology.
- ❖ **Advocate** for public policies that support school-based audiologists and speech-language pathologists in acquiring materials, technology, and training to deliver services effectively and equitably across multiple models of service delivery.
- ❖ **Advocate** that school-based audiologists and speech-language pathologists receive competitive wages that align with other licensed professionals who have comparable academic preparation, clinical training, and/or certification.
- ❖ **Advocate** for public policies that promote manageable workloads to optimize student outcomes, and support both clinical excellence and ethical practice.
- ❖ **Advocate** for effective funding to support the assessment, treatment, and management of speech, language, cognitive, hearing, balance, voice, and feeding/swallowing disorders.

If you are interested in joining the Public Schools Committee, please feel free to contact me at [paulette.gentry@mnps.org](mailto:paulette.gentry@mnps.org)

Please continue to be safe and healthy.

Paulette Gentry  
TAASLP Public Schools Chair  
[paulette.gentry@mnps.org](mailto:paulette.gentry@mnps.org)

## *TAASLP has a New Office!!!*

TAASLP has a new management company to assist with membership and administrative duties. If you have any questions about your membership please reach out to Amy Breedlove.

### **TAASLP Chapter Administrator**

Amy Breedlove

Phone: 629-255-0870

Address: 1483 N. Mt. Juliet Rd, # 175

Mt. Juliet, TN 37122

[info@taaslp.org](mailto:info@taaslp.org)

Need to join or renew your membership? Click [here to reach the membership portal.](#)

*Be sure to follow us on all social media platforms*

**Facebook**

**TAASLP (@taaslp)**

**<https://mobile.twitter.com/TAASLP>**