



# Happy Holidays! Happy New Year! Welcome 2022!

**Wow, what a year it's been!** That's what Barbara Kelley said in her HLAA National Holiday Card, and we can say the same here in Albany NY.

It's been a long year + of pandemic and meetings on Zoom and staying socially isolated and trying to read lips through masks!

We are **planning a meeting in January** to reframe and refocus HLAA Albany as we begin another year. Would you like to join us? Send an email to to [hearhlaa@yahoo.com](mailto:hearhlaa@yahoo.com) telling us what you'd like to see in the next iteration of HLAA Albany:

- meetings in person?
- more or fewer e-mails?
- social get togethers?
- educational events?
- advocacy?

And tell us what you'd like to do to make that happen. We'd love to have your help!

We will let you know when the meeting is scheduled and whether it will be in person or on Zoom. We could use some new blood in the planning process so please reach out to us.

**And of course, have a wonderful ...  
Holiday Season!**

# IN ALBANY - SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER:

On **October 20, 2021**, the **New York State Assembly** held a **Public Hearing** to examine the availability of employment opportunities for people with disabilities, with a specific focus on the availability of services to assist individuals in accessing employment. HLAA members **Michelle Othon** (Albany), Peter Fackler (Rochester), and Marc Safman (New York City) provided testimony. Michelle's closing portion of her testimony is excerpted below. She spoke beautifully and capably about hearing loss - to see the whole segment on hearing loss:



A video of the hearing can be [viewed online](#). The testimonies are just after the 6:53:00 recorded time.

**Michelle A. Othon** recently completed her career as a **Lead Scientist / Microscopist** at **GE Global Research** in **Niskayuna, NY**. During her tenure she successfully advocated for conference room looping and various other improvements on campus for D/HoH employees. She was a founding member of the **GE People with Disabilities** employee resource group and is a member of the **HLAA Albany Chapter**.

*Michelle Othon: "...My specific hearing loss may be unique to me, but my experiences with it and with accommodation in the workplace is not. When speaking to friends and colleagues with hearing loss on this topic, there is commonality in our stories. To be clear, I'm incredibly grateful for how receptive some of my colleagues, managers and HR reps have been to my condition, and I don't believe that anyone truly intended to be unkind. But my main takeaway is that hearing loss is not only invisible, it is a disability that is so misunderstood that people feel comfortable ridiculing it and they honestly believe that their comments are not hurtful. If I had a more visible disability, I doubt their behavior would be the same. In fact, I've found this to be true. On days that I needed crutches for mobility, I'd have colleagues rushing over to politely open doors for me. While I very much appreciated the assistance, I always wished they would accommodate my hearing loss in a similarly polite fashion.*

*To wrap up...as of last week, I was forced to end my 23 year long career and apply for Long Term Disability. The past nine years have taken an irreversible toll on my body to the point that I can no longer continue, and I am leaving the workforce a full 10 years ahead of when I intended to retire. Part of me wonders if I had access to the appropriate resources early in my return to work, would I still be working now? Possibly. It's a hypothetical question with no definitive answer. But I do know that I am now adding to the statistic of people who ended their career early due to disability. As I reflect on my experiences, I believe that we can do a better job of hiring and retaining people with hearing loss and other disabilities. Our bodies are not necessarily the main factor which prevents our employment. It is the sparseness of resources and actionable support. Until society understands that disability is part of the human experience we will continue to be marginalized in the workplace. We have the opportunity to be part of this culture shift, and I feel hopeful that it will happen.*

*There is a common phrase in the disability community: **Nothing for us, without us**. Thank you for including us in your hearing today. Please continue to do so. And we will continue to show up for you"*

## Look what's coming up! Mark your calendar and register to attend:

Who: Barbara Kelley, Executive Director, HLAA National  
When: January 18, 2022 12:30 pm EST  
What: HLAA National; Hearing Aids and OTC HA's; Going to Tampa for Convention?  
Register [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwuduCqgDkiHdJ5x1-ov\\_BWcfLuzrcztzZh](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwuduCqgDkiHdJ5x1-ov_BWcfLuzrcztzZh)

## NOISE ANYONE?

Gary Schwartz

In October 2021, this article

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/25/opinion/leaf-blowers-california-emissions.html>

appeared in the New York Times under the title "The First Thing We Do, Let's Kill All the Leaf Blowers". The article, which focuses on the pollution produced by 2-cycle engines is worth reading, but in the HLAA context, it is relevant as it also rails against the noise produced by 2-cycle leaf blowers.

Similar articles have appeared in Consumer Reports

<https://www.consumerreports.org/video/view/home-garden/outdoor/3547753009001/how-noisy-is-craftsmans-quiet-mower/> and

<https://www.consumerreports.org/video/view/home-garden/outdoor/5398956854001/gasoline--electric-self-propelled-mower-face-off/> and

<https://www.consumerreports.org/tools-power-equipment/quietest-leaf-blowers-and-outdoor-power-gear-a1199170223/>

and AARP publications:

<https://www.aarp.org/home-family/your-home/info-2021/lawn-mower-guide.html>

<https://www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/info-2021/loud-noise.html>

and others

<https://www.gardentoolexpert.com/are-electric-leaf-blowers-quieter-taking-a-look-at-the-decibels/>

This is all very good stuff, but unfortunately, it is episodic, not standard operating procedure. These organizations sometimes report noise level in their reviews, and sometimes (but not always) use the noise level as a criterion in the overall review.

*So, where am I going with all this?*

Rather than just republish articles such as the ones I have cited, why not campaign for reporting and considering noise levels, as appropriate, in all reviews, and factoring in the noise levels in the ratings. Publishers we might target initially are AARP, Consumer Reports, The WireCutter (owned by the NYT), and [soundguys.com](http://soundguys.com), as they are aware of the health issues associated with noise but are inconsistent in making it a product review criterion.

**Normalizing product noise level reporting is good for everyone, independent of hearing status.**

***(From the editor: Clip this piece and send it to your review publication of choice!)***

**FREE to a good home: Electronic wireless sound alert system:**

Serene Innovations CentralAlert CA-360 Clock / Receiver Notification System

For more details see the Diglo website (Formerly Harris Communications)

<https://www.diglo.com/serene-innovations-centralalert-ca360-clock-receiver-notification-system;sku=HC-CA360;s=323;p=HC-CA360>

It sells for \$164. The manual is missing but can be viewed, downloaded and printed from the Diglo website.

This system was used very effectively and is no longer needed.

Contact [kendra.pratt1@gmail.com](mailto:kendra.pratt1@gmail.com)

## AMC MOVIE THEATERS! OPEN CAPTIONS! (From NPR)

The world's largest movie theater chain is adding onscreen captions at hundreds of U.S. locations in an effort to make moviegoing more accessible.

AMC Theatres announced that 240 of its locations — in more than 100 U.S. markets — are adding open captioning to certain showings. The change is aimed at improving the viewing experience for people who have hearing loss and for whom English is not their first language.

"Inclusive programming is core to AMC's strategy, and we're proud to lead the theatrical exhibition industry by making some open caption showtimes available at hundreds of our locations nationwide," Elizabeth Frank, AMC's chief content officer and executive vice president of worldwide programming, said in a statement.

Open captions — similar to subtitles — appear on the screen and cannot be turned off, while closed captioning is displayed on electronic devices that customers must request. The company says the "vast majority" of showtimes will continue to be offered with closed captioning, meaning it will still make assisted listening devices available at all of its locations.

Every AMC market with at least two theaters will also make some open caption showtimes available weekly for all new releases, the company explained. Open captions will also be offered through AMC's private theater rentals program at certain locations.

The poster features a lightbulb graphic on the left containing the HLAA logo (Hearing Loss Association of America, New York State Association) and the text "RECHARGE RECONNECT REIMAGINE". Below the logo is a QR code with a "SCAN ME" button. The background shows a scenic view of the Adirondack Mountains. A photo of Justin Osmond, the keynote speaker, is on the right. Text on the poster includes: "RECHARGE and immerse yourself in The Adirondack Mountains", "RECONNECT with old and new friends", "REIMAGINE and explore emerging technologies for better hearing", "Keynote Speaker Justin Osmond", "NEW YORK STATE ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 16-18, 2022", "HISTORIC QUEENSBURY HOTEL IN GLENS FALLS, N.Y.", and "MAILTO: NYSASG2022@GMAIL.COM".

# CART

Communications Access Realtime Translation

Realtime speech-to-text translations – the spoken word scrolling onto a screen, laptop, or tablet – from speech to text!

*For more information contact:*

**Renee D. Leguire, Certified Realtime Reporter**  
[courtreporters@nycap.rr.com](mailto:courtreporters@nycap.rr.com) or [thesteno@gmail.com](mailto:thesteno@gmail.com)  
(518) 371-4143 or (800) 787-3376

Stefan Fosco Au.D  
Doctor of Audiology

Erin Walborn Au.D  
Doctor of Audiology

Karen DeJoy Au.D  
Doctor of Audiology

**Main Office**  
2 Empire Drive, Ste 204  
Rensselaer, NY 12144

**Hudson**  
351 Fairview Avenue, Ste 350  
Hudson, NY 12534

Phone: 518.283.6111  
Fax: 518.283.6161



**Audiologic Solutions**

HEARING AND WELLNESS CENTER

[www.audiologicsolutions.net](http://www.audiologicsolutions.net)



Patrick Bergmann, AuD  
Doctor of Audiology



## Capital Region Hearing

Hearing Test Hearing Aids

9 West Sand Lake Road  
Wynantskill, NY 12198

(518) 326-1742  
[info@capitalregionhearing.com](mailto:info@capitalregionhearing.com)

Upstate  
Hearing  
Loops

[www.upstatehearingloops.com](http://www.upstatehearingloops.com)

PO Box 34

Hamilton, New York, 13346

315-941-0238

[upstatehearingloops@gmail.com](mailto:upstatehearingloops@gmail.com)

**NOTT STREET OFFICE**  
"Your Office Away From Home"

Copies / Fax  
FedEx/UPS  
Color Copies  
Digital to Paper  
Office Supplies

Monday-Friday 8:30-6  
Saturday 10-3

2215 Nott Street  
Niskayuna, NY 12309  
518.382.2663



518.629.0889

ALBANY

14 Columbia Circle Drive, Suite 202

518.708.8648

CASTLETON

81 Miller Road, Suite 700

518.430.4003

SARATOGA SPRINGS

414 Maple Avenue, Suite 800

- Doctors of Audiology
- 3 Convenient Locations
- Digital Hearing Aid Technology
- Premier Lyric Provider
- Experienced & Caring Staff
- Most insurances accepted

**Dr. Laura Brodsky  
Dr. Lilith Brodsky**

*Board Certified Doctors of Audiology*

- *Comprehensive Hearing Healthcare*
  - *Advanced Technology Hearing Instruments*
- THE AUDIOLOGY CENTER**

783-3110, EX. 3004

ACCEPTING ALL MAJOR INSURANCES

Delmar Health Center      Capital Region Health Park  
250 Delaware Avenue      711 Troy-Sch'dy Road  
Delmar                              Latham (just off N'way Ex 6)



MAIN OFFICE: 123 EVERETT ROAD  
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12205

SATELLITE: 1785 ROUTE 9  
CLIFTON PARK, NEW YORK 12065

**518.701.2085**

[www.albanyentandallergy.com](http://www.albanyentandallergy.com)

**ENT & Allergy Care  
for Adults & Children**

Lucia Setton MD  
Lawrence S. Kaufman MD  
Stebhan Kukur MD  
Nina Perkins MD  
Robert L. Antkowiak MD  
John Gaylin MD  
Robert Engle MD  
Jessica Riccio MD  
Robert J. Haglan MD

Podiatric ENT  
Nose & Sinus Dysfunction Center  
& Laser Therapy & Treatment  
Facial Plastic Surgery  
Snoring & Sleep Disturbance  
Voice, Speech & Swallowing  
Hearing Loss, Dizziness & Balance  
Head & Neck Surgery  
Nasal Bone Surgery  
Thyroid & Parathyroid Surgery  
CT Scan Imaging Services

Maggie West Berg Ph.D.  
Dana Schmitt Ph.D.  
Robyn DeBartolo Ph.D.  
Michelle Blizum Ph.D.  
Audrey James Ph.D.  
Lanna Spivey Ph.D.  
Tara Hines Ph.D.  
Imanah Masoumeh Ph.D.  
Susan East MD CCC-SLP  
Thomas Foss AuD  
Marilyn Peters AuD  
Terri McWhorter AuD  
Dana Miller AuD  
Irene Deyou AuD  
Courtney Landwehr AuD  
Mara Rogerson AuD  
Arica Doody AuD

HEAR NEWS is a news-letter of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) Albany Chapter. We are a not-for-profit self-help group for individuals who are deaf, have hearing loss and/or impairments. Any mention of opinions, products or services does not mean endorsement, nor does the lack of mention mean lack of endorsement.

Address all correspondence to:

HEAR News  
% HLAA PO Box 9445  
Schenectady NY 12309  
or e-mail us at

[HEARHLAA@YAHOO.COM](mailto:HEARHLAA@YAHOO.COM)

Website:

<https://hearinglossalbany.wordpress.com>

Planning Committee:

- Barbara Carlson
- Philip Coppola
- Margie Litwin
- Janet Mattox
- Pat Mirza, Treasurer
- MaryKate Owens, President, Editor
- Ellen Rupert
- Gary Schwartz
- Rosemarie Tobin
- Debra Trees, Au.D. Professional Advisor
- Donna Wayner, Ph.D, Founder & Professional Advisor

We welcome your input! Please send notes, articles and inquiries to the attention of the Editor at the PO Box or e-mail address above.

Please become a member of HLAA Albany Chapter; see the form on the final page of the newsletter.

And Go NATIONAL Join the Hearing Loss Association of America HLAA

[inquiry@hearingloss.org](mailto:inquiry@hearingloss.org)  
[www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)



**DEBRA TREES  
AUDIOLOGY ASSOCIATES**  
Cardinal Hearing Care

Phone: 518-944-4810  
10 McKown Road  
One Pinnacle Place-Suite 200  
Albany, NY 12203

[www.DebraTreesAudiology.com](http://www.DebraTreesAudiology.com)

*Debra Trees*  
AUDIOLOGY  
Where Kindness Matters

## INFORMATION YOU CAN USE

(Note: See <https://hearinglossalbany.wordpress.com> for more details)

- Albany Law School Civil Rights & Disabilities Law Clinic — [www.albanylaw.edu](http://www.albanylaw.edu)
- American Tinnitus Association — [www.ata.org](http://www.ata.org)
- Career & College Advice for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Students — [www.affordablecollegesonline.org/college-resource-center/deaf-student-college-career-advice](http://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/college-resource-center/deaf-student-college-career-advice)
- Hands and Voices — [www.handsandvoices.org](http://www.handsandvoices.org)
- Hearing Like Me — [www.hearinglikeme.com](http://www.hearinglikeme.com)
- Hearing Loss Association of America — [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org)
- Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center — <https://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/>
- National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes — [nationaldeafcenter.org](http://nationaldeafcenter.org)
- Office of the NYS Attorney General, Civil Rights Division — [www.ag.ny.gov](http://www.ag.ny.gov)
- Young Adults - [www.hearingloss.org/content/young-adults-and-hearing-loss](http://www.hearingloss.org/content/young-adults-and-hearing-loss)

Lion's Hearing Devices Loan-Out Centers — try out devices before you buy them!

- Center for Better Hearing, 318 Ridge St., Glens Falls, NY 12801 (518) 798-4800
- HearUSA, 258 Hoosick St., Troy, NY 12180 (518) 272-7323
- Madison & Saratoga Hearing Ctr, 14 Columbia Circle Drive, Suite 202, Albany, NY 12203 (518) 629-0889
- Madison & Saratoga Hearing Ctr, 414 Maple Ave, Suite 800, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 (518) 430-4003
- Madison & Saratoga Hearing Ctr, 81 Miller Road, Suite 700, Castleton, NY 12033 (518) 708-8648
- Resource Center for Independent Living, 347 W. Main St., Amsterdam, NY 12010 (518) 842-3561
- Resource Center for Independent Living, 401 East German St., Herkimer, NY 13350 (315)866-7245

## Patronize These Accessible Venues!

And...if you know of other venues, please share them with us!

- AMC Loews ([amctheatres.com](http://amctheatres.com)) — Rotterdam — Captioning
- Barrington Stage ([Barringtonstage.org](http://Barringtonstage.org)) —first six rows of Main Stage are looped
- Bowtie Cinemas ([bowtiecinemas.com](http://bowtiecinemas.com)) —Schenectady, Saratoga, Wilton —“cup holder” Captioning
- Capital Repertory Theatre ([capitalrep.org](http://capitalrep.org)) — Loop
- Christ Community Reformed Church, Clifton Park (<https://www.ccrcc-CPNY.org>) — Loop
- Christ Our Light Catholic Church, ([christourlightchurch.org](http://christourlightchurch.org)) Loudonville, NY — FM System
- Crandall Public Library (Glens Falls) Christine L. McDonald Community Room (<https://www.crandalllibrary.org>)
- Delmar Reformed Church ([drchurch.org](http://drchurch.org)) — Loop
- First Presbyterian Church ([firstpresalbany.org](http://firstpresalbany.org)) 362 State Street, Albany—perimeter Loop on the right side of the sanctuary
- Gloversville Public Library's Carnegie Meeting Room (<http://gloversvillelibrary.org>)
- Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, ([www.gslcl.org](http://www.gslcl.org)) 510 Albany Shaker Rd, Loudonville, 12211— Loop
- Loudonville Community Church ([www.lcchurch.org](http://www.lcchurch.org)) — FM Receivers
- Our Lady, Queen of Peace Catholic Church, Princetown Rd, Schenectady ([www.olqprotterdam.org](http://www.olqprotterdam.org)) — Loop
- Proctors Theater — Loop in the Main Stage and the Addy
- Regal Cinemas ([regmovies.com](http://regmovies.com)) —Clifton Park, Crossgates, Colonie Center, East Greenbush, Wilton Mall and Aviation Mail — Captioning and Captioned Glasses
- Schenectady Light Opera Company, Schenectady, NY—FM Assistive Listening System
- Spectrum 8 ([landmarktheatres.com](http://landmarktheatres.com)) — Infrared and CCR-100 Captioning
- St. Mary's Catholic Church, Hamilton, NY— Loop
- St. Mary's Crescent Catholic Church Clifton Park ([www.stmaryscrescent.com](http://www.stmaryscrescent.com)) — FM System
- Unitarian Universalist Society of Schenectady ([uuschenectady.org](http://uuschenectady.org)) — Loop
- Universal Preservation Hall (<https://universalpreservationhall.org>) Saratoga Springs, NY loop
- Wood Theater (<https://woodtheater.org>) 207 Glen Street, Glens Falls, NY 12801, loop

HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA ALBANY CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION

The Hearing Loss Association of America Albany Chapter operates on a calendar year from January to December. Registration is due in January of each year.

TRY US OUT - opt in for a trial of the newsletter for three issues! CUT OUT AND MAIL IN FORM WITH PAYMENT!

\*\*\*\*\*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please check your choices below:

Please make checks payable to HLAA Albany Chapter  
PO Box 9445 Sch'dy NY 12309

Individual: \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

Professional Associate \_\_\_\_\_

I would prefer to receive the newsletter by e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Family: \$20 \_\_\_\_\_

\$100 or \$175.

I would prefer to receive the newsletter by mail \_\_\_\_\_

Trial: \_\_\_\_\_ (3 free issues)

Questions?: e-mail [hearhlaa@yahoo.com](mailto:hearhlaa@yahoo.com) or see our website at <https://hearinglossalbany.wordpress.com>

Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

And also, Go NATIONAL: Join the Hearing Loss Association of America HLAA <https://www.hearingloss.org/>



**news**

**Hearing Loss Association of America  
Albany Chapter  
PO Box 9445 Schenectady NY 12309-0445**

**Email: [hearhlaa@yahoo.com](mailto:hearhlaa@yahoo.com)  
and our website is:  
<https://hearinglossalbany.wordpress.com>**

We're on  
Face-  
book  
LIKE Us!



We're on  
Twitter!



@HLAA\_AlbanYNY

Dec 2021