

Outreach, Advocacy and Community Relations

Outreach efforts have centered on cementing relationships established with affiliate organizations.

To promote our legislative and access priorities, we have reached out to community leaders and policy makers for reform. We've had many conversations, Emails and meetings among HLAA-WA leadership and between HLAA-WA and policy makers. We've publicized, participated and presented at the following community programs.

- **Accessible Travel and Tourism Travel Forum:** Presented by: Northwest Universal Design Council
Co-sponsors: Aging and Disability Services, Seattle Commission for People with Disabilities.
Seattle Human Services Department, Port of Seattle and more. Publicized and promoted event.
Attended program with Judi, Warren and Kimberly, set up outreach table and networked with attendees. Kimberly prepared a presentation which she delivered and participated on the presentation panel. More information here: <http://www.environmentsforall.org/august-15-focus-accessible-travel-tourism/> Video, PowerPoint and Transportation document found in the Meeting Archives: <http://www.environmentsforall.org/about-us/#archives>
- **Financial Inclusion Summit:** Presented by Washington Access Fund: Publicized and promoted the program. Attended and presented on accommodation and access needs with special emphasis targeting varying demographics people with hearing loss. Participated in brainstorming process with stakeholders and attendees. Participated in follow-up survey and communications. Event agenda program video and follow-up findings may be found here: <http://realeconomicimpact.org/pages/seattle->
- **Eldercare Friendly Futures Conference:** Presented by UW School of Nursing de Tornyay and Center for Healthy Aging in partnership with the UW School of Pharmacy and Gerontology
Presenters from affiliate organizations included: UW Cornetta Mosley, student of Dr. Kelly Tremblay, HLAA national trustee, Bob Leroy; Alzheimer's Association, David Lord; Disabilities Rights Washington, Susan Engels; Area Aging Associations. Irene Stewart; Aging and Disability services. Karen represented HLAA-WA by attending and networking at the two-day program.
Program Information: <http://depts.washington.edu/eff/>
- **Senior Health Fair with the Renton Senior Center:** Glenda Philio set up and managed outreach table for the Renton senior community. Networked with attendees and affiliate organizations.
<http://www.rentonreporter.com/news/resource-fair-aims-to-educate-senior-citizens/>
- **Ombudsman Presentation:** With Diana and Warren, wrote a presentation for the Washington State Ombudsman program. Diana Thompson presented in Bellevue and Bev Zarko and I

presented in Renton. Attendees were given HLAA membership and informational materials including copies of the SoundWaves Newsletter and a printed copy of the presentation. The presentation will be available as an online Ombudsman resource. Our goals were to provide an introduction to hearing loss and communication to jump start the education and training needed by state ombudsman. Ombudsman work directly with residents and staff in long-term care facilities need to know how to communicate with and advocate on behalf of people with hearing loss. We have requested the state expand training for state employees and volunteers who work in residence care facilities. We have requested the state make Pocket talkers available for Washington State Ombudsman to communicate with their clients.

<http://www.waombudsman.org/>

- **AARP and AAA candidate forums and public debates:** *How will your Elected Leaders address the Age Wave?* Coordinated member participation in senior forums across the state. Wrote sample letters, sent specific contact info, and urged members to attend and ask for hearing access. Promoted and attended candidate forums. Set up outreach tables and distributed Medicaid Flyers. Everett: Karen, Bellevue: Cheri and Diana, Spokane: Bruce Rafford, Kitsap: Kimberly. <http://www.agingwashington.org/2016/09/30/kitsap-county-2nd-stop-2016-age-wave-candidate-forums/> <https://loopwashington.org/2016/08/29/legislative-action-we-need-you/>
- **Senior Lobby Legislative Reception and Fall Conference:** Publicized, promoted and attended both program. Presented short presentation on hearing loss and the Medicaid push. With Karen and Kimberly, set up and manned very successful outreach table. With Diana, networked with key supporters and affiliate organizations including Disabilities Rights Washington, AARP and PSARA. <http://www.waseniorlobby.org/>
- **Washington Access Fund Awards:** Worked with Warren and WAF staff to create a hearing friendly awards program. With Warren, met with Bell Harbor Convention event planners and AV team. Nominated hearing loss and hearing access advocates for Awards. The Seattle Rep received the Best Practices award! Promoted, publicized and attended the event. Outreach table was set up and manned by Karen, Judi and Warren. Jayesh and Dr. Kelly Tremblay attended the award program. <http://washingtonaccessfund.org/2016-awards-dinner/> <https://loopwashington.org/blog/>

Other Community Relations

Thomas Kaufman, Otojoy – With JoAnna and Jerry Olmstead, met with Thomas from Otojoy while he was in Seattle. Goal is for Thomas to focus on Seattle for his looping and advocacy efforts. He was receptive, but other cities are also in play.

HLAA-CA Cal Expo – Attended the Hearing Expo presented by the California State Association spearheaded by super hearing loss advocate Zina Jawadi. Networked with CA leaders and advocates to

better understand the specifics of implementing a public expo. <http://www.hearinglossca.org/hearing-loss-tech-expo-2016>

Recently Looped Theaters- Taproot, Meydenbauer Theatre, Village Issaquah and Seattle Children's are among our latest cultural arts venues to install loops. Ongoing dialogue to enhance and perfect the experience for patrons. Upcoming announcements and publicity to come.

<https://loopwashington.org/home/upcoming-events/>

Communications and Advocacy Marketing Collateral

Medicaid Fact Sheet: With Diana, Warren and Peg Ogle (graphic designer) created Medicaid Fact Sheet. Emailed digital versions to supporting organizations for distribution. Distributed print copies at candidate forums and the Senior Lobby fall conference.

Letters to Governor Inslee – With Warren and Diana, wrote a letter to Governor Inslee that was sent by our Madam President, Karen to urge Inslee to include adult hearing aids under Medicaid in his budget.

Letter to collaborators – Drafted a letter to collaborating organizations to urge support for adult Medicaid hearing aid provision.

Sample letter to Legislators-Created, a sample letter that individual can send to their legislators in requesting support for Medicaid for hearing aids for adults. Letter was distributed at the Senior Lobby Fall Conference.

Call for stories – we put out the call for a personal story about someone struggling to communicate due to the lack of Medicaid coverage. We found a very moving and powerful story from a woman named Ronda. Will draw on this for future advocacy.

Social Media

Don't miss: http://www.agewisekingcounty.org/ill_pubs_articles/advocating-accessibility-technology-friend/

Continued growth in Twitter followers, retweets, influence. 806 tweets, 627 followers, 667 following. Tweets include joining #axschat weekly chats about disability access, #hearingloss #commaccess, events, news, RTs.

Some loss in Facebook impact possibly due to algorithm changes, but this is improving. 312 likes. Looped and OC events, movies, performances promoted nearly every day. Also shared are advocacy opportunities, looped locations, general hearing loss news, hearing access news, and other relevant stories.

Social media continues to be a good venue for raising awareness of accessible events, networking and advocacy opportunities. <https://www.facebook.com/LoopSeattle/> and <https://loopwashington.org/home/upcoming-events/>

Save the date: RSVP Event to add to your Calendar! Tuesday Nov. 15 ,2-4 pm Seattle Municipal Tower Power of Inclusion: Universal Design in the Landscape presented by **Karen Braitmayer** and Debra Guenther. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RSVP-ThePowerOfInclusionUniversalDesignInLandscape>

Legislative Report by Diana Thompson

1. In June of 2016 HLAA-WA gave a power point presentation to the Joint Legislative Executive Committee on Aging and Disability. It is likely that the committee will recommend to the legislature and governor that Hearing aid coverage for adult hearing aids be restored. This is an important recommendation. We have been working hard to accomplish this. Many conversations, Emails and meetings among HLAA-WA both internal and external have taken place to advance this discussion. governor Inslee were drafted.

2. Representative Joan McBride will be introducing a bill to restore former Medicaid coverage of adult hearing aids. The provisions are expected to be:

a) Persons 21 and older will be eligible for one hearing aid paid for by the State if their hearing in their better ear averages -45 decibels or worse. (This provision was in effect through the end of 2010)

b) Persons 21 and older who have tried hearing aids for 6 months are eligible for a 2nd hearing aid if one has tried to adapt with one hearing for 6 months, has an average decibel loss is -45 or more in each ear AND One of more of the following is documented:

a) Inability to hear has caused difficulty with job performance

b) Inability to hear has caused difficulty in functioning in the school environment

c) Client is legally blind

(This was in effect through the end of 2010)

3) Persons 21 and older with hearing -56 or greater in each ear will be eligible for 2 hearing aids

4) Coverage of replacement parts for cochlear/BAHA implants if one is 21 or older (We are checking to see if this is presently covered, but don't think so.) This was covered in the past.

The language is not final.

5) Representative McBride will look for co-sponsors of her bill and a person to introduce the bill in the Senate.

6. Whether the bill passes will in large part depend on the budget of the State. The State is under Court order to fully fund education for children in K-12 so money is tight. The Budget of the state will depend on whether or not the state will raise taxes or introduce new taxes. The budget and taxes depend in part on who is elected governor and what political party is in the majority in the Senate and in the House.

