

LET'S LOOP AMERICA

I write to point you to a new, free, nonprofit resource for people with hearing loss: www.hearingloop.org. As you will see, hearingloop.org makes the case for assistive listening technology that transforms hearing aids into personalized loudspeakers.

To illustrate the feasibility of this technology—which is now commonplace in Britain and Scandinavia—my own town, Holland, Michigan, has become a model community in support of hard of hearing persons. It has installed modern induction loop systems in dozens of its churches, senior citizen centers, public auditoriums, and other venues, as well as in homes (where it can broadcast television and telephone conversation binaurally through one's hearing aids).

The results have been enormously gratifying. Our experience is that very few hard of hearing people elect the hassle and embarrassment of using the portable receivers and headsets that come with all assistive listening systems, including loop systems. Given a hassle-free and invisible assistive listening system, many more people are enjoying improved hearing. Thanks to favorable word of mouth, other public venues across western Michigan are now following suit.

Soon, we hope to take this initiative national as a "Let's Loop America!" campaign.

Other activities may interest you:

- Michigan SHHH has just passed a resolution recommending, "Michigan churches, auditoriums, theaters, courts, airports, and other venues where sound is broadcast install assistive listening systems that broadcast sound directly through hearing aids." To read the entire resolution go to: www.hearingloop.org/shhh/resolution.htm.
- Audiological researcher Mark Ross and I each have articles promoting the concept and its new practical applications in the September, 2002 *Hearing Review* (www.hearingreview.com/issues.asp?issueid=0209).
- *Scientific American* has invited an article that describes my experiences with loop systems in the United Kingdom and now used widely in our Holland, MI community.

Feel free to share this information, and the link to www.hearingloop.org, with your staff and your members and patients. Feel free also to share your comments on our vision of a future where those with hearing loss welcome hearing aids more and more with doubled usefulness.

This comes with thanks for your own good efforts in support of people with hearing loss.

—David G. Myers, Author, Holland, MI, www.davidmyers.org

BRAVO TO "HEAR ME OUT!"

Bravo to Larry Engelmann for his article, "Of, By and For Audiology: Realization of The Academy Mission," (*AT* 14:6, 2002). This was professionally well-written, researched and indeed cleared up many questions. As an AuD student in my fourth year, I completely agree with Engelmann that... "it is time for a change." I appreciate the American Academy of Audiology's dedication to and support of the AuD. Regarding the article, I especially enjoyed reading about the historical events leading to specialty groups separating from the different organizations. I will end this letter by reinforcing and agreeing with Engelmann's clarifying and most honest statement, "Speech correctionists wanted their professional freedom and independence in 1925 and audiologists want their professional independence in 2002." I would be honored to assist in this venture any way I can.

—Michelle Waters, Gallaudet University, Washington, DC

WHITE COAT CEREMONY

As Chair of the Audiology Foundation of America, I would like to commend the Florida Academy of Audiology (FLAA) on the White Coat Ceremony reported in *Audiology Today*, (14:6, 2002). In a similar manner, the AFA honored AuD students with ceremonies at the University of Florida in March 2002, and at Ball State University and the University of Texas at Dallas in August 2002. During these ceremonies, students heard presentations on professional roles and responsibilities and were presented with otoscopes. Oscopes were chosen because of the relevance of the object to the practice of audiology. Seeing the photos of the FLAA ceremony reaffirmed, in my mind, the importance of such ceremonies. Indeed, other healthcare professions have long recognized their value. It is my hope that ceremonies such as these, which launch students into the profession of audiology, will become a tradition at AuD programs across the country.

—Ken Lowder, Chair, Audiology Foundation of America

Audiology Today welcomes letters from readers. The *AT* Editorial Advisory Board offers the following guidelines: All letters are subject to editing for brevity and clarity. Letters should be limited to one subject or theme. Letters should not exceed 175 words. Invective and derogatory comments will not be published.

Send letters to the Editor by email at jnorth1111@aol.com.

CORRECTION: We apologize for the inadvertent error in Larry Engelmann's name in his HEAR ME OUT "essay published page 10 and the Table of Contents on page 4 in the September-October issue of *Audiology Today*. We inadvertently printed the name as Larry Engel in both citations rather than Larry Engelmann.