ASHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING REPORT

ASHA's Board of Directors (BOD) met virtually on October 16 and 17, 2020. Following are highlights of the Board's discussions.

PRESIDENT’S OPENING REMARKS
President Theresa Rodgers convened the BOD meeting at 10:34 a.m. ET on October 16, 2020, and welcomed the Board members.

She acknowledged the incoming 2021 BOD members who were joining the meeting to observe and learn. She commented that they were welcome to ask questions and participate in discussion.

CEO UPDATE REPORT
In addition to providing the written summary with the pre-meeting materials, Chief Executive Officer Arlene Pietranton shared the following with the BOD:

COVID-19 Resources Overview and Uptake
ASHA’s COVID-19 landing page originally went live on March 9, 2020, to provide members with timely content and updates in a single location. Over 150 new content resources have been created since, along with a global point of entry to the landing page from every page of the ASHA.org website. There are over 30 telepractice-focused resources, including state regulations, reimbursement guidance, and setting-specific information, as well as several video updates—with the videos about advocacy updates being the most frequently viewed.

In April, ASHA conducted three virtual townhalls, and during the spring and summer, there were 16 virtual presentations to meet the evolving needs of members and provide support on an array of COVID-19–related issues.

The highlighting of existing content and creation of critical new content during the pandemic resulted in a spike in member engagement. Almost 267,000 individuals have accessed ASHA’s COVID-19 landing page and its content since March of this year, making it one of the top-performing web pages on ASHA.org. There have been 20 COVID-19–related email communications to members as well.

Dues Renewal
Each year, ASHA staff strive to provide a better experience when members renew their membership and certification, which is particularly true this year when so many people are navigating unprecedented professional and personal challenges.

Members are again encouraged to renew early to avoid the year-end surge. Those who renew by December 4, 2020, will be entered into a drawing for a $225 Amazon gift card. Renewal is also a good time to join a Special Interest Group (SIG) and enjoy access to articles published by all 19 SIGs in the scholarly review journal Perspectives of the ASHA Special Interest Groups and $5 self-studies available for ASHA CEUs. This year’s renewal form is also being used to collect information to determine whether members identify as bilingual service providers.
SIGnature Event(s)
A SIGNificant learning—and CE credit—opportunity is coming November 1. The “SIGnature Series” is a robust collection of live and on-demand continuing education courses from subject matter experts who belong to ASHA’s 19 Special Interest Groups. The courses focus on timely insights and practical takeaways that audiologists and SLPs can use immediately in their work. Many focus on culturally responsive service provision and practicing during COVID-19. Courses will be included in the ASHA Learning Pass for current subscribers and available to all ASHA members and nonmembers for individual purchase; SIG affiliates will receive special pricing during the month of November https://apps.asha.org/eWeb/OLSDynamicPage.aspx?Webcode=olsSIGnature.

Special Interest Groups’ Virtual Open Houses
All are invited to attend any of the ASHA’s Special Interest Groups’ (SIGs) 19 virtual open houses/networking events being held October 19–29. Schedule and log-in or registration information is available at https://www.asha.org/SIG/Virtual-Open-Houses/. Note: Many of the open houses require registration to participate. Once registered, registrants will receive a confirmation email with their unique login for the event.

ASHA’s SIGs provide opportunities for affiliates to exchange professional and scientific information in multiple ways:

• through online communities where affiliates connect, share ideas, and problem-solve;
• via publication of Perspectives of the ASHA Special Interest Groups, the SIGs’ exclusive scholarly review journal that bridges research to practice; and
• by taking part in professional development activities.

The work of each SIG is coordinated by a team of dedicated volunteer leaders and staff who work throughout the year to address professional issues affecting affiliates and members. During the open houses, SIG members will be eager to share their accomplishments and plans and want to hear about members’ ideas, successes, and challenges so that they can continue to create programming that meets members’ needs.

Specialty Certification Grant Program
ASHA’s Specialty Certification Grant program, which was approved in 2014 and scheduled to end in 2021, assists petitioning groups with funding to help offset the costs of establishing a new Specialty Certification Board (SCB). Grant requests are reviewed by an ad hoc committee of the Council for Clinical Certification (CFCC) and grant funding is awarded to a petitioning group or a newly established specialty certification board based on meeting the eligibility criteria and fulfilling the application requirements.

Since 2016, the grant program has awarded funds to three petitioning groups. All three are currently in the process of forming their specialty certification boards, completing a practice analysis study, and creating assessment mechanisms for future certificants. These boards are the American Board of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AB-AAC), American Board of Autism Spectrum Disorders (AB-ASD), and the American Board of Voice and Upper Airway Disorders. All three have indicated that the pandemic has impacted their ability to submit applications for additional funding; however, the Committee on Clinical Specialty Certification
(CCSC of the CFCC) is expecting the AB-AAC and the AB-VUAD to submit applications for additional funding in the final quarter of 2020 or in early 2021.

The CCSC is currently reviewing a Stage I application for a new specialty certification in the area of clinical education and supervision. A decision is expected prior to November 2020. This petitioning group has not yet applied for any grant funding.

**Interstate Compact**

The Audiology & Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC) is gearing up for its second year in state legislatures. In 2020, 12 states introduced bills to adopt the compact and five states enacted the legislation: North Carolina, Oklahoma, Utah, West Virginia, and Wyoming. At the time of this writing, the state of Louisiana is in a special session and is considering the ASLP-IC. A virtual legislative educational summit for legislators, regulatory agencies, and state association leaders from 20 states occurred on October 13–14. We are optimistic that additional states will adopt the ASLP-IC to reach the 10-state threshold for it to become operational in 2021.

**ASHA Voices**

ASHA’s podcast, *ASHA Voices*, is celebrating its first year of production and growth, with 15 hours of interviews, panel discussions, and reporting. The show provides a venue for frank discussion of timely communication sciences and disorders (CSD) issues, shifting professional challenges, and how, in their own voices, CSD professionals are facing and navigating them.

The first episode (published on September 11, 2019) delved into the intersection of CSD and the justice system, focusing on efforts to prevent confrontations between law enforcement and Black youth with cognitive-communication disorders. Recent episodes have featured an audiologist discussing how he reopened his practice after it was shut down by COVID-19, an audio diary of an SLP in home health navigating a COVID-19–altered work day, a conversation with an SLP who confronted New York City’s spring COVID-19 surge in an ICU, and a dive into identity-first versus person-first language related to autism.

Data from podcast-hosting company Libsyn places the show between the top 20% and 10% of the most downloaded podcasts per episode. With over 70,000 downloads from 118 countries, the podcast received 25,803 downloads over its first 6 months of production (September 2019 through February 2020). In the second 6 months (March 2020 through August 2020), it received an additional 37,846 downloads, reflecting a 46.7% increase in downloads.

The two most downloaded episodes are:
1. Ijeoma Oluo Talks Race, Conversation, and Microaggressions (3,329 downloads)

Upcoming episodes will look at educational audiologists and SLPs returning to school, and increased efforts to foster positive self-concept in children with autism in intervention and with their families.
**ASHA Now eNewsletter**

Since its launch in 2019, *ASHA Now* has acquired a stable subscriber base, with 90% of ASHA members and affiliates subscribed. When COVID-19 hit in March, the *ASHA Now* team adjusted its production process to allow for the influx of content ASHA created to help members as their professional and personal lives were affected and click rates and open rates for the e-newsletter skyrocketed. Throughout the summer, *ASHA Now* remained a key communication vehicle for updates while continuing to provide high-quality resources and tools for members. A subscriber survey will be sent out in the near future to gather data about member engagement with *ASHA Now*.

**Assistant Certification**

In November 2017, the ASHA BOD passed a resolution approving a 3-year plan to develop certification programs for audiology assistants and speech-language pathology assistants (SLPAs). The assistant certification programs are on track to begin accepting applications in December 2020. The latest information is available at [www.ashaassistants.org](http://www.ashaassistants.org) or by emailing assistants@asha.org. The following key steps have been completed or remain on track to be completed:

- The audiology assistant and SLPA certification standards were approved in April and are on the assistants website and at [www.asha.org/certification](http://www.asha.org/certification).
- The passing scores on the examination were approved by the Council for Clinical Certification in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CFCC) in May.
- The four forms of the examination were successfully loaded into Prometric’s testing system and the registration process that will be available once we are officially accepting applications has been approved.
- The online education modules for audiology assistants and SLPAs that are required (or equivalent) of candidates who were not educated to practice as an assistant were available in late July. Based on the number of individuals purchasing/completing the modules, we believe a projection of 750 applicants per year is accurate or conservative.
- In July, Todd Philbrick (Director, Certification) and Lisa Wolf (Manager, Assistant Certification Program) hosted a live tweet session to answer questions.
- Certification handbooks were added to the assistants website.

A forthcoming report from a staff working group (co-led by Jeffrey Regan, Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy, and Todd Philbrick, Director, Certification) will provide recommendations for consideration to develop or enhance ASHA programs in order to effectively support the value and recognition of certified assistants. The staff working group has completed their work to the extent possible and are now awaiting the upcoming Scope of Practice for Audiology Assistants and updated Scope of Practice for SLP Assistants to inform their final recommendations.

**Future of Learning**

As of this writing, the learning systems consultant we have engaged (Tagorus) has completed 12 of the 16–18 operational interviews scheduled across the programs of ASHA’s learning ecosystem, with the remaining scheduled to occur in the first half of October. Tagorus is scheduling interviews with selected representatives from the 500+ other CSD CE providers, and with key state regulatory boards/agencies regarding the state regulatory environment related to licensure and CE laws for the professions of audiology and speech-language pathology.
National Office Turnover and positions on hold
For the past 10 years, ASHA’s turnover has consistently been less than half of the average in the DC Metropolitan area. During COVID-19, we are continuing to make a “Must Hire/Hold” decision for every position that becomes vacant, with about one-third of vacant positions on “Hold” at this time as an additional cost-savings measure.

Certification Administration
The number of applications is down significantly from 2019, as was expected because of the surge of applications in 2019 in advance of the 2020 standards changes. When the 2019 and 2020 applications numbers are combined, they already exceed the application numbers from 2014 and 2015 (the year of and year after the last SLP standards change) by 20%. Audiology applications are very close to 2019, which was the highest year since the doctoral degree became a requirement. As a result of the surge of 2019 graduates who recently completed their CFs, we anticipate exceeding the 10,000 certifications awarded in 2019.

Annual retention of certificate holders remains very high at 98.25% (96% for CCC-As and 98.5% for CCC-SLPs).

Q&A SESSION
The below topics were posted prior to the BOD meeting for review by each BOD member, with the opportunity to provide feedback or have questions answered during the BOD meeting

NSSLHA Update
National Advisor for the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) Kia N. Johnson provided recent updates related to the NSSLHA Strategic Plan, Stand Against Racism, and COVID-19 response.

- National NSSLHA’s Stand Against Racism: National NSSLHA is committed to providing students with resources to assist in dismantling systemic and institutional racism within communication sciences and disorders (CSD) programs. More information can be found on the NSSLHA Stop the Silence webpage.

- Overview of NSSLHA’s Strategic Plan: Earlier this year, the Executive Council approved National NSSLHA’s 2020-2022 Strategic Plan. To create additional pathways for multicultural engagement, the first National NSSLHA Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Action (IDEA) work group convened in October 2020. This work group will support continued efforts to provide students with timely and relevant content related to cultural humility, diversity, and inclusion.

- COVID-19 Response: To address the immediate needs of students—particularly graduate student clinicians and Clinical Fellows, National NSSLHA developed a number of student-specific resources, including a NSSLHA COVID-19 webpage, live chats, and blog posts on guidance for meeting certification standards.
• **Student Advocacy Day:** 8,600+ Take Action letters were submitted and 2,800+ student advocates were engaged. NSSLHA looks forward to working with NSSLHA chapters, members, and nonmembers during Virtual Advocacy Day in March 2021.

• **Update on 2020 Membership Counts:** On August 31, NSSLHA’s 2020 membership year closed with a total of 11,693 National NSSLHA members.

**Audiology Subcommittee Report**
The audiology BOD subcommittee met via Zoom on Tuesday, September 15, 2020. Sharon Sandridge served as the facilitator of this meeting.

• **Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CAPCSD) results from AuD externship group survey:** The results of the CAPCSD survey from the audiology externship group were reviewed by Julie Honaker, liaison to CAPCSD. The survey was sent to all audiology members from ASHA, the American Academy of Audiology (AAA), and the Academy of Doctors of Audiology (ADA) in July 2020. There were 882 respondents. A majority of the respondents were in favor of a centralized application process (75% strongly agreed or agreed; 8% disagreed) and standardized acceptance date (82% strongly agreed or agreed; 6% disagreed). Next steps may include surveying students by the Student Academy of Audiology (SAA) or NSSHLA. A proposed timeline has not yet been identified. CAPCSD is serving as the neutral host for the survey.

• **Ad Hoc Committee on Scope of Practice for Audiology Assistants:** The ad hoc committee had a very productive kick-off meeting on September 24, 2020, via Zoom, facilitated by Professional Testing Inc. The committee began developing the audiology assistants scope of practice document. There are two additional meeting dates scheduled in October.

**Speech-Language Pathology Subcommittee Report**
The speech-language pathology subcommittee meeting was held on September 9, 2020, with Vice President for Academic Affairs in Speech-Language Pathology Elizabeth Crais facilitating. The topic of discussion was COVID-19 and the changes it has had on practice and programs.

• It was discussed that telepractice will stay and continue to grow. Current telepractice strategies have been made stronger and virtual therapy sessions will now be a part of treatment plans, particularly in regard to working with clients and families in rural areas, and in naturalistic environments in establishing more functional and pragmatic goals and outcomes for clients.

• In the academic realm, university professors and practitioners are rethinking their educational models and teaching differently by teaching via flipped classrooms, utilizing new software, varying course assessments, and being creative with online learning. The new online models may be well-suited to the needs of
nontraditional students who may not have otherwise been able to participate in programs, allowing for more individuals to attend classes and finish their degrees. More university programs are training students to be better equipped in the area of telepractice as a part of their current curriculum.

- Former barriers such as inclement weather and missed sessions/classes can now be reduced through virtual learning options. New competency-based learning models and the continued development of simulations would highly benefit training programs. It was noted that while the ability to use Zoom has enhanced most learning and the ability to conduct business virtually, there are still large numbers of individuals without Internet access, and this continues to create inequities in the areas of learning and service delivery. Conversations are now happening with state agencies and lawmakers to allow for better access that may come more quickly than it would have if the pandemic had not happened.

- While many aspects of the profession have adapted to online environments, it was recognized that there still needs to be the personal touch and seeing, working, and interacting with people face to face.

InTouch Forms
In Touch Forms received from members since the last BOD meeting were shared with the BOD prior to the BOD meeting, and Chief Staff Officer for Communications Lisa Cole provided a summary of the messages.

STRATEGIC PATHWAY UPDATE
Vice President for Planning Craig Coleman was joined by the Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams and Director of the Office of Business Excellence Rozsa Felix to present highlights from the update on ASHA’s Strategic Pathway to Excellence.

The update had two segments, the first focused on the review of the Q3 2020 status of the Strategic Objectives’ Annual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The KPIs are short-term performance metrics that track, monitor, and assess the success of initiatives for the year. Up to three KPIs have been identified for 2020 for each strategic objective; their status at the end of Q3 2020 was reported to the Board, along with changes to the KPIs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the second segment of the update, major accomplishments were reported for the strategic objectives. This segment included information regarding specific changes because of the COVID-19 pandemic (such as cancelled and/or postponed activities). Additional information about the work underway and a more detailed description of all accomplishments to date can be found on ASHA.org: Strategic Pathway to Excellence: Strategic Objective Highlights, which is updated biannually.

CONFIRMING THE RELEVANCE OF THE STRATEGIC PATHWAY
The long-term outcomes for the Strategic Pathway to Excellence necessitate routine checks to ensure that the progress and direction of the Pathway is consistent with the Association’s desired
outcomes, along with ongoing evaluations to determine the extent to which any course corrections are needed to ensure the transformational outcomes are achieved.

Vice President for Planning Craig Coleman, Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams, and Director of the Office of Business Excellence (OBE) Rozsa Felix facilitated the Strategic Pathway refresh activities.

The focus for the October BOD meeting was on Strategic Objectives #4 (Enhance Service Delivery Across the Continuum of Care to Increase Value and Access to Services), and #7 (Enhance International Engagement). Prior to the meeting, the BOD members reviewed feedback collected from the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Advisory Councils and SIG Coordinating Committees on the two strategic objective initiatives and participated in an information session with those strategic objective owners to discuss general themes and concerns from the stakeholder feedback. Progress on each of the three strategic objectives was rated as “on track” and potential enhancements were discussed. BOD members recommended potential areas of focus and suggested initiatives for consideration for each of the two strategic objectives.

**EXPANDING STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #6**
Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams presented an overview of the proposed strategic initiatives for Strategic Objective #6, which is being expanded to include diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within the Association and the discipline. Possible initiatives related to academic programs addressing DEI, increasing ASHA members’ accountability for addressing culture and language in service delivery, increasing the diversity of the membership, identifying and addressing financial barriers to careers in CSD, educating allies, and establishing a culturally responsive teaching repository were outlined. The BOD provided feedback on potential strategic outcomes and performance measures, which will be finalized for BOD approval. Also, options for addressing DEI within the other seven strategic objectives were highlighted to get BOD members’ input.

**ASHFOUNDATION ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOD**
A report from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation (ASHFoundation) was presented by ASHFoundation President Patricia Prelock, who was joined by ASHFoundation Executive Director Nancy Minghetti.

The presentation provided a broad overview of facts and data related to the ASHFoundation's mission and programs. Included in the presentation were highlights of the year in review, with comments on the impact of fundraising in a remote world and the anticipated challenges and opportunities going forward. Dr. Prelock emphasized how ASHA's annual support is instrumental, makes an important difference in achieving the ASHFoundation's mission, and builds capacity for growth in the future. The presentation concluded by expressing sincere gratitude to the ASHA BOD for ASHA’s annual support to the ASHFoundation, emphasizing the impact made possible through ASHA's support.

The BOD noted its appreciation of the ASHFoundation contributions but indicated that because of the reallocation of financial resources due to the pandemic, ASHA would not be able to make an additional contribution in 2020. However, it was also noted that in the past ASHA has been
able to make proactive contributions to the ASHFoundation that should provide a needed buffer in the current circumstances.

BYLAWS CHANGE RESOLUTIONS
Four bylaws change resolutions are being considered by the Board in three different areas:

1. BOD 20-2020 (Change Vice President for Government Relations and Public Policy title). The name change to “Vice President for Government Affairs and Public Policy”—specifically, changing the wording from “Relations” to “Affairs”—reflects more accurately the nature of engagement with lawmakers, regulators, and policymakers, within both the federal government and state governments. The name of the Government Affairs and Public Policy Board was officially changed in 2019 (BOD 11-2019). The BOD approved the resolution to change the name to the Vice President for Government Affairs and Public Policy.

2. BOD 21-2020 and BOD 22-2020 (Revise 8.1 and 8.3 to include assistants certification references). Bylaws sections 8.1 and 8.3 were amended to include references to the Assistants Certification Program, certified assistants, and the Assistants Code of Conduct. This will allow the Council for Clinical Certification in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology to include the Assistants Certification Program and certified assistants within their program and standards-setting responsibilities, and allow the Board of Ethics to include the Assistants Certification Program and certified assistants within their policies and procedures and their adjudication responsibilities. The BOD approved resolutions BOD 21-2020 & BOD 22-2020 to revise section 8.1 and 8.3 of the bylaws to reference the assistants program.

3. BOD 23-2020 (Add International Affiliates’ eligibility to receive Honors) The Committee on Honors decided that because Honors recognizes distinguished contributions to the discipline, International Affiliates should be eligible to receive Honors. Precedent was set in 2012 when the ASHA bylaws were amended to include eligibility for International Affiliates to receive Fellowship (BOD 15-2012). The BOD approved resolution BOD 23-2020 to add International Affiliates’ eligibility to receive Honors.

FINANCIAL REVIEW
Vice President for Finance Mel Cohen presented the August 2020 financial report. Total revenue was $39,048,425 and total expenses were $34,345,675, with a net revenue (revenue over expenses) of $4,702,750, which is lower than last year, due primarily to activities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the 2021 proposed budget was presented, which had been previously reviewed in detail and subsequently recommended for approval by the Financial Planning Board (FPB) during its September 2020 meeting. The 2021 budget reflects a total revenue of $64,933,839, total expenses of $64,910,767, and net income (revenue minus expenses) of $23,072.

Mel Cohen also provided FPB reports. The FPB recommended that the BOD approve funding strategic objective projects totaling $392,722 from the Special Opportunities Fund, as well as a one-time change to the Special Opportunities Fund criteria to fund the Value of the CCCs campaign for 2 additional years.
The BOD approved the 2021 budget and the one-time change for two additional years of funding from the Special Opportunities fund for the Value of the CCCs campaign. The BOD also reviewed ASHA’s 2019 Form 990.

2021 PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA
Vice President for Government Affairs and Public Policy Katheryn L. Boada and Director of Government Affairs and Public Policy Jeffrey P. Regan presented the proposed 2021 Public Policy Agenda (PPA). They reminded the BOD that the PPA is developed annually by the Government Affairs and Public Policy Board (GAPPB) and serves as the foundational guide for advocacy efforts undertaken by the Association. The 2021 PPA is based principally on a biennial membership survey, GAPPB discussion, and GAPPB consultation with ASHA’s committees, boards, Special Interest Groups (SIGs), and staff. The 2021 PPA identifies advocacy priorities within the areas of health care issues, schools issues, professional practice and workforce issues, and patient, client, and student issues.

The BOD approved the resolution to adopt the 2021 PPA.

COC DIVERSITY METRICS
Since 2015, the BOD has been working to increase the diversity of committees, boards, and councils with regard to dimensions such as age, years of affiliation, profession, gender, employment setting, race/ethnicity, and other key considerations. Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams updated the BOD on their progress toward diversity metrics for 2020 Committee on Committee (CoC) appointments. Progress was noted across a number of dimensions toward the BOD’s goals. The BOD reviewed their goals and discussed areas for continued focus.

BOD 26-2020: APPROVE THE ADDITION OF A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE ASHA SIGs TO THE ASHA BOD
The Board of SIG Coordinators (BSIGC) submitted resolution BOD 26–2020 requesting that the BOD approve the addition of a representative from the ASHA SIGs to the ASHA BOD. The resolution notes that in order to fully integrate the ASHA SIGs into the Association financially and programmatically, a representative of the SIGs should be included as a member of the BOD. BSIGC Chair Melissa Jakubowitz and Director of Special Interest Groups Michelle Ferketic joined the meeting, provided information, and answered BOD questions prior to voting opening on the resolution. The resolution was not approved by the BOD.

The meeting was adjourned on October 17 at 2:00 p.m. ET.