



MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR UPCOMING HLAA WCO MEETINGS!
People of all ages and all types of hearing loss are welcome!
All meetings are free to members and non-members, including family and friends.
Meetings are the first Saturday of the month, 10:30 – 12:30
(No meeting in June, July or August)
Center for Independence, 740 Gunnison Avenue, Grand Junction
Contact Amy Beckett: HLAAWCO@gmail.com or 970-241-2592

**Western Colorado Chapter
Hearing Loss Association of America
Free Monthly Meeting
Saturday, February 1, 2020**

Jill Davis, Peer Services Program Coordinator

This program will be a focused discussion about improving communication with family and friends through managing expectations. Ms. Davis has written several blog articles and we will use three of these to guide our comments and questions. While the articles are not necessarily related to hearing loss, there are many points about perspective that can help people feel more in control of various situations. Family members and communication partners are welcome to attend.

The blogs can be found at these links:

[Can We Talk?](#)
[Good from Bad](#)
[Blocking Out the Sun](#)

Jill Davis is a Peer Services Program Coordinator for Mind Springs Health. She has been with the agency for 5 years and has worked in both outpatient and crisis settings. Her lived experience includes navigating anxiety, depression as well as having a history of supporting her children successfully manage the challenges of selective mutism and autism. Jill enjoys writing blog articles relating to mental wellness from a peer's vantage point.

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10:30 am - 12:30pm
Center for Independence
740 Gunnison Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81501**

**For questions or further information contact:
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More about the Hearing Loss Association of America: www.hearingloss.org
More about the Western Colorado Chapter: www.hearinglosswco.org
More about the Center for Independence: www.cfigj.org

Upcoming Meetings

March 7: John Anderson is an individual with hearing loss and will share information about how he uses various technology to make his home life accessible to accommodate his hearing and vision loss. He will have some of the devices available for demonstration.

April 4: Todd Hallberg, Engagement Manager, Cochlear Americas, will give us an update on cochlear implants

May 2: Program planning is underway.

Special Announcements

The Colorado Walk4Hearing has ended for 2020. This event had been in place since about 2007, and the National Office has decided to end the walk in Colorado to allow another location to host a walk. This event provided the bulk of the Chapter's operating funds. We will seek out other grants or gifts.

We are no longer mailing the newsletter via postal mail due to the steep costs. Please be sure to check your email for upcoming news and announcements. You can also find information about the Western Colorado chapter at our website and Facebook page.

<https://hearinglosswco.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/HLAAWCO/>

The Chapter Leader, Amy Beckett, is stepping down after the May 2020 meeting. If you are interested in taking on some of the responsibilities of running the chapter, please contact Amy at: HLAAWCO@gmail.com or 970-241-2592.

Going forward, meetings can be very simple. Sometimes the best part of the meetings is being able to chat with other people before and after the meetings. Rather than having a program, the entire meeting can be an opportunity to talk to other people with hearing loss. The leadership at the Center for Independence has said they can continue to provide the space for the meetings.

Please be sure to keep your membership current. The Chapter does not collect dues, but instead encourages people to join at the national level. The Chapter receives a portion of the membership dues for everyone that joins in our geographic area. For more information about the benefits of membership: <https://www.hearingloss.org/make-an-impact/become-a-memberrenew/>

The national convention is June 18 - 21, 2020 in New Orleans! Educational workshops and a broad mix of innovative, informative HLAA2020 exhibitors await you—along with the city's French Quarter and its famous streets, a captivating assortment of museums, and the allure of “only-in-New Orleans” live music. Hearing loops and CART/Captioning will be in use in all workshops and plenary sessions. Early-bird registration is open. Discounted rates are now available through Monday, March 2, 2020.

Hearing Loss Association of America Partners with American Girl® to Increase Education and Awareness of Hearing Loss



American Girl Donates \$25,000 to Support Hearing Loss Association of America in Honor of its 2020 Girl of the Year™, Joss Kendrick

BETHESDA, MD, December 31, 2019: Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), the nation’s leading nonprofit organization representing people with hearing loss, is proud to partner with American Girl, the inspiring world of dolls and a subsidiary of Mattel. HLAA and American Girl are teaming up in honor of the company’s **2020 Girl of the Year, Joss Kendrick**, to increase education and awareness of hearing loss.



Joss was born with hearing loss and wears a hearing aid in her right ear.

[Learn more about Joss and her story.](#)

Launching today, Joss—a fierce athlete with a passion for surfing and competitive cheer and has hearing loss and wears a hearing aid—joins American Girl’s lineup of inspirational characters who impart meaningful life lessons to help girls learn and grow with confidence. Whether she’s on her surfboard or in the gym, Joss shows girls the importance of trying new things, pushing past stereotypes, and being a good team player.

American Girl is donating \$25,000 to support HLAA's educational programs. American Girl is also supporting the organization's 2020 Walk4Hearing with a donation of Joss dolls. And, from January 1, 2020, through the end of the year, the company will collect donations for HLAA at americangirl.com and at American Girl stores nationwide.

“What could be more exciting than to have an American Girl character be a role model for girls with hearing loss?” said HLAA Executive Director Barbara Kelley. “HLAA is proud to partner with American Girl to help girls know that, like Joss, they can be and do anything—an empowering message for girls with or without hearing loss. I hope girls who read **Joss's inspiring story** will help create awareness about hearing loss among their friends and family.”

Celebrating its 15th year, HLAA's Walk4Hearing brings families together in 20 cities across the U.S. to encourage hearing health and hearing protection. With more than 48 million Americans living with hearing loss, the Walk4Hearing is a call to action for everyone to do something about hearing loss. American Girl's support will shine a light on these efforts, with donations funding HLAA's educational initiatives that inform families about essential resources and technologies and help people with hearing loss pursue life to the fullest.

House Passes Bill for Medicare Coverage of Hearing Aids

On December 13, 2019, in a historic achievement, the House of Representatives voted to expand Medicare to cover hearing aids and related hearing health care services. By a vote of 230-192, the House approved HR 3, a bill that allows the federal government to negotiate prescription drug prices and uses the savings from lower drug prices to cover the costs of hearing, dental and vision health services.

While the House action is a significant step forward, much work remains to be done before Medicare coverage of hearing aids becomes a reality. HR 3 now goes to the Senate where there is opposition to negotiating drug prices. Many Senators are exploring other ways to lower the cost of prescription drugs. Whether these alternatives will also include hearing aid coverage under Medicare remains to be seen.

While prospects for final action on HR 3 remain uncertain, this week's House vote is a milestone achievement on an issue that has been an HLAA top priority for many years. HLAA was among the earliest and most vocal supporters of Medicare coverage for hearing aids, and worked closely with key Members of Congress this year to include the language in the prescription drug negotiation bill. As the issue moves forward, HLAA staff will continue working with Congress, Medicare experts, other hearing health care organizations.

When Congress created Medicare in 1965, it expressly excluded hearing aids. More than 50 years later, HLAA is setting the stage to correct that oversight.

Do you have a story to tell?

The chapter is always looking for speakers, web content, and newsletter articles. If you want to share your story about living with hearing loss, please contact us at our email or website: www.hearinglossWCO.org or HLAAWCO@gmail.com