ASHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING REPORT

ASHA’s Board of Directors (BOD) met virtually on June 4–5, 2021. Following are highlights of the Board’s discussions.

PRESIDENT’S OPENING REMARKS
President A. Lynn Williams convened the BOD meeting at 10:30 a.m. ET on June 4, 2021 and welcomed Board members. It was noted that the June BOD agenda has a forward-focused theme that will have impacts on numerous short- and long-term ASHA activities.

President Williams shared a quote from Nelson Mandela to set the tone for the meeting. “Action without vision is only passing time. Vision without action is merely daydreaming. But vision with action can change the world.”

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:

Better Hearing and Speech Month
Promoting a theme of “Building Connections,” as of mid-May, Better Hearing and Speech Month outreach had an audience of approximately 125 million (that figure that does not include sharing of ASHA outreach that took place by groups such as The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders and the Hearing Loss Association of America).

ASHA produced a national broadcast media tour featuring Lynn Williams and Valeria Matlock discussing the results of an ASHA Spring poll about the public’s hearing health. As of mid-May, there had been 122 TV and radio airings of their interviews, which were live, taped, and syndicated. ASHA also disseminated a related press release in English and Spanish that was picked up by more than 200 outlets. In the wake of poll results showing public inaction on hearing loss, ASHA launched a bilingual (English/Spanish) Act Now on Hearing public service announcement that is expected to appear on mainstream and cable TV channels through mid-2022.

A wide variety of communication topics across the life span were focal points for BHSM this year. Opportunities and resources in English and Spanish were created and offered to help ASHA members share information about topics at the grassroots level and via their networks. One, Speaking Up for Communication, is a month-long social media campaign that has the capacity to reach millions. As of mid-May, 5,473 ASHA members were participating, the most to date. In the first 3 weeks of the BHSM campaign, social posts reached more than 200,000 people across all of ASHA’s social channels. Additionally, there have been over 10,000 engagements by members and the public in the form of likes, retweets, shares, and comments. On Instagram alone, we have reached more than 17,300 people, proving to be the most popular channel so far.

For further information visit www.asha.org/bhsm.
ASHA Connect
ASHA Connect has evolved! ASHA Schools Connect 2021 will take place online, July 14–26, 2021. It will include more than 30 live and on-demand learning activities. Event experiences can be planned and include a number of new elements such as sample learning plans (based on career stage and interest), a new Coffee and Tea series of conversations and networking, and a new series of mindfulness breaks.

Connect has been reimagined, to focus on the unique needs of SLPs who work in different settings—and the specific populations served. There are also new learning opportunities for SLPs in health care settings and private practice. Two new online conferences are being offered for SLPs in health care in 2021: (1) Maximizing Outcomes in Medically Complex Patients of All Ages, and (2) Empowered SLPs in Health Care: Breaking Barriers and Shaping Solutions. And for SLPs in private-practice settings, two curated learning pathways on telepractice and practice management have been designed and are available in the ASHA Learning Pass.

ASHA Convention
The 2021 Convention planning is fully in motion. Planning was initiated for this year preparing for just about every scenario. At the beginning of the year, there was hope and an assumption there would be a hybrid Convention involving a reduced in-person component paired with a virtual conference, but ASHA was also prepared to shift to fully virtual if needed.

The Call for Papers was opened with options that allowed authors to submit for either an in-person or a pre-recorded presentation. Many adjustments were made, including session formats.

On May 17, Washington DC Mayor Muriel Bowser announced the elimination of social distancing requirements and event venue capacity limits, though mask mandates currently remain in place. The mask mandate has implications for food and drink consumption, and the current requirement is that consumption must be “stationary” if not seated. It is possible that these rules may be lifted prior to Convention. It is also possible that new or different rules could be applied. Cooperation and planning continue based on currently available guidelines.

ASHA will have a hybrid Convention for 2021. There are many different variations of a hybrid Convention, but for ASHA and for an event of its size, there will be a library of pre-recorded sessions—1-hour seminars, 30-minute technical sessions, posters, and a small number of invited Masterclasses. The Virtual Library will be accessible for registrants to access at any time during the open period, including off hours. Recordings of in-person presentations are not being added. Interactive live questions and answers is anticipated only for the poster sessions, and in-person registrants will have access on site as well.

Individual subscribers to the ASHA Learning Pass will get a $100 discount on both the in-person and digital registration. Registrants who pay full price will also be offered a similar discount to subscribe to the Learning Pass.

ASHA hopes to live stream the Opening Session and the Awards Ceremony. There is a plan to allow for acknowledgment and recognition of the 2020 Honorees and Fellows at the Awards
Ceremony, along with the 2021 Awardees, and Immediate Past President Theresa Rodgers will assist in that special activity. Sully Sullenberger is the Annie recipient for 2021 (which we have held over from 2020).

At this time, it is unknown how many will attend in-person or participate digitally. Many things continue to change for potential attendees, and the information continues to evolve. ASHA is committed to designing a great experience for those who are excited to attend and want to be in Washington DC this year.

**Assistant Certification Program**

In December 2020, ASHA’s Assistant Certification Program launched. In the first 5 months, over 325 (paid) applications have been received, including 18 Certified Audiology Assistants (C-AAs), and 175 Certified Speech-Language Pathology Assistants (C-SLPAs). As with the Praxis, the vast majority of applicants/test takers have utilized the online live remote proctored testing option. ASHA remains on track for the projected 750 applicants per year and expects to receive a significant number of applications following May/June graduations.

Four states (Arizona, Maryland, North Carolina, and Tennessee) have already proposed or made changes to their SLPA regulations that align with and/or recognize the C-SLPA. Certification staff have given virtual presentations to NBASLH and to state associations in Arizona, South Dakota, and West Virginia thus far in 2021. The Army, Navy, Coast Guard, and DOD civilian’s Credentialing Opportunities Online (COOL) programs have accepted the Certified Audiology Assistant credential and added it to the list of qualifying programs/professions they will pay for their personnel to obtain. The latest information is available at [www.ashaassistants.org](http://www.ashaassistants.org) or by emailing [assistants@asha.org](mailto:assistants@asha.org).

The ASHA staff working group will be making recommendations to the BOD for future initiatives, programs, and priorities to support assistant stakeholders later this year.

**CAA Consideration of Accreditation of SLPD Programs**

At the end of 2020, the ASHA Board of Directors approved a resolution asking the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) to consider accreditation of the optional post–entry-level SLPD. At its February 2021 meeting, the CAA voted to proceed with considering such accreditation. The CAA has developed an ad hoc subgroup to further examine the issue and to provide a deliverable to the ASHA BOD by December 2021. The subgroup consists of six members including former CAA members and current members. The work of the group is planned in two phases. Phase 1 includes examining the existing data/information, determining any additional data/information needed, and developing a detailed plan with next steps and recommendations to be presented to the full CAA at its July 2021 meeting for review and approval. Phase 2 will consist of implementing the plan and recommendations approved in July.

Phase 1 is underway. The work group met on May 4th and May 24th. Questions about the work of the subgroup can be directed to CAA Chair Jaynee Handelsman or ASHA Director of Accreditation Kimberlee Moore.
Clinical Specialty Certification Grant Program
ASHA’s Clinical Specialty Certification Grant program, which was approved in 2014 and is scheduled to end in 2021, continues to help petitioning groups secure funding to offset the costs of establishing a new Specialty Certification Board (SCB). Petitioning groups formed by ASHA-certified audiologists and/or speech-language pathologists can petition to have their specialty credential officially recognized by ASHA through approval of their application by the Council for Clinical Certification in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (CFCC) and its Committee on Clinical Specialty Certification (CCSC).

Grant requests are reviewed by an ad hoc committee of the CFCC, and grant funding is awarded to a petitioning group or newly established specialty certification board based on meeting the current eligibility criteria and fulfilling the application requirements.

Since 2016, the grant program has awarded a total of $126,079 to three petitioning groups. All three of these petitioning groups have been successful in having their applications approved by the CCSC and CFCC and 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), the American Board of Autism Spectrum Disorders (AB-ASD), and the American Board of Voice and Upper Airway Disorders (AB-VUAD). The AB-VUAD submitted applications for phases III-V funding, which were approved by the CCSC in December 2020. The AB-VUAD continues to be in the process of establishing their organization and has not yet submitted a W-9 form, which is required to receive the grants.

In 2021, the CCSC received and approved a Stage 1 application for a new specialty certification in the area of deaf and hard of hearing (DHH). The DHH petitioning group has not made a grant request yet. The CCSC is also expecting a revised application from a petitioning group in the area of clinical instruction and supervision. The clinical instruction and supervision petitioning group has also not yet applied for any grant funding.

Interstate Compact
The second legislative year for the Audiology & Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC) has been a great success. Sixteen states introduced bills to adopt the ASLP-IC and seven bills were passed by their state legislatures: Alabama, Colorado, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, and Nebraska. Bills are still active and expected to pass in several more states. Plans are underway for the annual legislative summit to prepare for the 2022 legislative sessions. Plans are also underway for the inaugural Compact Commission meeting to place the ASLP-IC into operation.

Lessons for Success
In 2021, ASHA’s grant writing workshop, Lessons for Success, which is funded in part by a grant from the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, engaged 34 protégés, 20 program faculty, and 2 alumni attendees. In addition, 14 funding agency representatives participated, enabling protégés to engage in small-group discussions about funding opportunities. A flipped classroom approach was employed to limit virtual participation on each of 3 conference days to 4.5 hours of interactive and engaging sessions while still
delivering all content, one-on-one meetings between protégés and conference faculty, and small group mock grant reviews. Based on program survey results, 90% of the protégés were highly satisfied with the program. Lessons learned from delivering the conference virtually in 2020 and 2021 will be incorporated in future years when conditions permit meeting in person once again.

ASHA Stream
ASHA Stream, ASHA’s new media platform that is currently under development, will provide video content for audiologists and SLPs who are seeking practical and quick video content to help them serve their clients/patients/students. It will also enable ASHA video content to be liberated from YouTube, where members are often subsequently directed to content that is not relevant. ASHA Stream’s goal is to provide a one-stop place for carefully curated, relevant video content that members and consumers find useful, engaging, and helpful in their daily practice. ASHA Stream is due to soft launch later this year, with content curated from existing platforms plus some new videos being developed specifically for ASHA Stream, with a full launch in early 2022.

CAA Program Renewed
The United States Department of Education has officially notified the Council for Academic Accreditation (CAA) that the program has been renewed for another 5 years.

Certification Administration
Application volumes have returned to normal levels following the surge of applications in 2019 prior to the 2020 standards changes and subsequent anticipated drop-off in 2020.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, thus far annual retention of ASHA certificate holders for 2021 remains slightly ahead of previous years. Prior to the end of the grace period on March 31, 195,000 of the 202,000 certificate holders had successfully renewed (96.5%).

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 an update on ASHA’s Strategic Pathway to Excellence. The update had two segments.

The first segment focused on the Strategic Objectives’ Annual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The KPIs are short-term performance metrics that track, monitor, and assess the success of a major objective/focus area for the year. The Strategic Objective Owners each identified one to three KPIs for 2021, and the KPI status at the end of Q1 2021 was reported to the Board.

In the second segment of the update, major accomplishments and changes were reported for Strategic Objectives #1, #2, #3, #5, #6, #7, and #8. 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.

INTEGRATING THE FUTURE OF LEARNING IN THE STRATEGIC PATHWAY
The ASHA BOD has discussed and explored the need to reimagine and reframe all aspects of learning across ASHA’s learning-related programs and the discipline. The intent is to:
• facilitate personalized learning opportunities,
• foster members’ active pursuit of ongoing professional excellence,
• identify and address bias in all its forms, and
• promote diverse, relevant, timely, evidence-based, practice-centered content

Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams, Director of the Office of Business Excellence Rozsa Felix with participation from Vice President for Planning Craig Coleman, facilitated an exercise with the goal of editing the Envisioned Future to integrate outcomes related to the Future of Learning initiative.

The Board determined that a new Strategic Objective will be added to the Strategic Pathway to Excellence to address the transformative work of the future of learning initiative.

FINANCIAL REVIEW
Vice President for Finance Ann (Bernadette) Mayfield-Clarke presented the first quarter financial report through March 2021. Total revenue is $16,660,335 and total expenses are $12,416,167, with net revenue (revenue minus expense) of $4,244,168. This is higher than the 2020 net revenue by $1,436,255, and on target for ASHA’s 2021 operating budget.

COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES’ APPOINTMENTS
For several years, the BOD has been working intentionally to increase the diversity of committees, boards, and councils with regard to dimensions such as age, profession, gender, employment setting, and underrepresented racial/ethnic backgrounds. President-Elect Judy Rich and Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams reviewed with BOD members their commitment to increase diversity in the Committee on Committees nomination and appointment process.

The BOD’s agreements and data related to dimensions of diversity including profession, age, years of affiliation with ASHA, gender, race/ethnicity, setting, position/role, and participation in ASHA’s Minority Student Leadership Program, Leadership Development Program, and/or NSSLHA Council were reviewed. The BOD members considered this information as they reviewed the proposed nominees and made appointments with terms to start in 2022 for 21 of the Association’s committees and boards. Once finalized, these appointments will be approved by the BOD and members selected for these positions will be notified. The resulting changes in the overall demographic composition of ASHA’s committees and boards will be reviewed at the October 2021 BOD meeting.

BOD EDUCATION: MICROAGGRESSIONS
Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams facilitated a workshop for BOD members and CSOs to heighten their awareness and offer practice identifying microaggressions and their impact. The workshop used ASHA’s Micro Course series as a foundation and offered situations and scenarios similar to actual occurrences at ASHA events and activities as a basis for discussion. Over the course of the year, two additional workshops will address experiencing and witnessing microaggressions, and how to address them from a leadership perspective. The overall objective is to help BOD members encourage and model effective interactions when microaggressions occur in Association-related functions.
GENERATIVE DISCUSSION: EMPOWERING THE NEW WORKFORCE
ASHA’s BOD typically engages in generative discussions at each BOD meeting that are intended to engage Board members in deliberations that inform their decision-making and help to define issues and frame challenges. At this meeting, Chief Staff Officer for Multicultural Affairs Vicki Deal-Williams facilitated a generative discussion related to empowering the new workforce. The Board discussed projected trends related to the changing workforce, the impact of the pandemic, and the effects of ensuing economic conditions on the communication sciences and disorders workforce and ASHA members’ workplaces, as well as expectations for the Association related to the future of work.

Q&A SESSION
The following 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.

InTouch Forms
InTouch 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.

NSSLHA Update
National Advisor for the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) Kia N. Johnson provided updates on NSSLHA governance, activities, and upcoming programs for students.

- In spring 2021, National NSSLHA engaged with more than 1,000 students through virtual events including the National NSSLHA Office Hours, Speed Networking, Raw Conversations, and Instagram Sweepstakes. Additional information about upcoming virtual events can be found at https://www.nsslha.org/programs/virtual-events/.

- Each year, chapters work toward earning National NSSLHA Chapter Honors. To earn these awards, chapters are encouraged to engage in legislative advocacy, increase CSD awareness, and support the NSSLHA Grad Scholarship fund through the ASHFoundation. This year 137 chapters earned Gold, Silver, and Bronze Chapter Honors. These chapters...
  - increased awareness of CSD on local college campuses and communities across the country (mostly virtually),
  - supported ASHA’s legislative advocacy efforts by sending more than 8,500 Take Action letters,
  - supported provision of scholarships to students in CSD programs by contributing more than $24,000 to the Graduate NSSLHA Scholarship through the ASHFoundation, and
  - supported CSD-related organizations by donating more than $64,000 and approximately 20,000 hours of time.
• National NSSLHA continues to make steady progress on implementation of their 2020–2022 Strategic Plan. Student representatives from National NSSLHA attended the virtual American Academy of Audiology Conference and the virtual National Black Association for Speech-Language & Hearing (NBASLH) Convention to further support initiatives related to collaboration and growth. In addition, National NSSLHA “Passed the Mic” to NBASLH for Black History Month in February on the NSSLHA Blog and for a social media takeover.

• National NSSLHA offers 122 unique student leadership opportunities. This includes 12 positions on the National NSSLHA Executive Council; 104 Student State Officer (SSO) positions; and 6 member positions on the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Action Workgroup. The call for applications closed in May. Terms for National NSSLHA’s EC will begin July 1, and terms for SSOs and the IDEA workgroup will begin September 1.

MAASA Town Hall
On May 26, 2021, a Town Hall was held as a collaborative event by ASHA, AAA, and ADA to inform audiologists about the Medicare Audiology Access and Services Act (MAASA) and to encourage all of our members to contact their Congressional representatives for their support of this bill. Angela Shoup, President of AAA; Victor Bray, President of ADA; and Sharon Sandridge, Vice President for Audiology Practice have been working together as a unified front to promote this critical legislation.

Search for ASHA’s Next CEO
Information is posted on the ASHA website The Search for ASHA’s Next CEO that includes the announcement of ASHA CEO Arlene Pietranton’s plans to retire at the end of 2021, the CEO search timeline, and information about the executive search firm Spencer Stuart that has been retained to assist the Board of Directors in conducting this search. The web page will be updated as warranted with notices of updates via the ASHA NOW e-newsletter.

Audiology Subcommittee Report
The BOD Audiology Subcommittee met virtually on February 11, March 11, April 8, and May 13, 2021, prior to the June BOD meeting with Board Member At Large in Audiology Charles Bishop facilitating. The following topics were discussed:

• the Audiology Clinical Education Network;
• the ASHA Audiology Assistants Scope of Practice Survey;
• ASHA’s Audiology Assistant Certification Program;
• the Aligned Sense of Purpose (ASOP) Initiative;
• updates regarding collaborative work of volunteer leaders from ASHA, AAA, and ADA;
• ASHA, AAA, and ADA plans to hold a town hall on May 26th (scheduled for 7:30 p.m. ET);
• an update on the U.S. FDA’s agenda for the next 6 months (regulations on OTC hearing aids are not included in that agenda); and
• the Hearing Loss Association of America’s Externally-Led Patient-Focused Drug Development (PFDD) meeting (May 25), which focused on capturing the stories of individuals and their families living with hearing loss.
Speech-Language Pathology Subcommittee Report

The BOD Speech-Language Pathology Subcommittee met February 4, March 4, and May 6 prior to the BOD meeting with Board Member At Large in Speech-Language Pathology Barbara Goodson facilitating. Items addressed were as follows:

- ASHA resources or entities focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), including by the Clinical Research, Implementation Science, and Evidence-Based Practice (CRISP) Committee; the newly published book from the Multicultural Issues Board, *Exploring Cultural Responsiveness: Guided Scenarios for Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) Professionals*; the ASHA Micro Courses Series featuring Noma Anderson on the topic of microaggressions; and a discrimination resource document prepared by the Board of Ethics that will accompany a future Issues in Ethics Statement on discrimination;
- the Committee of Ambassadors’ Virtual Capitol Hill Day March 23;
- the impact of new academic programs in communication sciences and disorders on existing academic programs;
- the CAA addressing BOD Resolution 31-2020, regarding establishing an accreditation program for the optional clinical doctoral programs in speech-language pathology;
- competency-based education (CBE) and a discussion with the Continuing Education Board (CEB);
- the renaming of the ASHA Public Service Award to the Federal Public Servant Award;
- the ASHA Virtual Advocacy Day on May 12; and
- the 2021 ASHA Elections, with a reminder to vote and to remind members to do so as well.

The Board of Directors meeting was adjourned on June 5 at 3:50 p.m. ET.