



**Arkansas
Speech-Language-Hearing
Association**

COMMUNICATION CONNECTION

A quarterly publication of the Arkansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association

Vol. 21, Issue 1



President's Message

Aleecia Starkey, MSP, CCC-SLP, CBIS

Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure for 2021 to serve as the President of the Arkansas Speech-Language and Hearing Association. I served as president approximately ten years ago and one thing I can say for sure is that things have changed in the last ten years (I am surmising, it is not just because I have gotten ten years older that I am saying that!)

Currently, your ArkSHA board is following legislation, searching for multiple ways to have meaningful in-service learning opportunities during this pandemic, and looking at impactful ways to serve our members. The legislature has proposed bills that would have a bearing on how we obtain our licenses, ways we could be censured, attempts to tell professionals who should be treated for speech-language or hearing disorders based not on the need for treatment but based on how the person thought, dressed, or worshiped. ArkSHA is working hard to help prevent legislation that denies Speech-language pathologists and audiologists from having outside entities tell us how to provide treatment to our patients, students, or clients. The ArkSHA board is also looking out for legislation that would enhance our ability to serve our patients, students, or clients.

We are wanting to find ways to touch base with membership in an efficient manner when there is important information that needs to be disseminated quickly and accurately. This is such an exciting time to be able to share information!

As I stated in my first sentence, I am immensely proud and honored to serve as your president this year. I want to take this opportunity to wish each of you a safe, healthy, and prosperous 2021. Please do not hesitate to contact me, if there is any way that ArkSHA or I may serve you. My email address is aleeciarstarkey@sbcglobal.net.

2021 ArkSHA Board of Directors

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Connect with ArkSHA on Social Media!



Be sure to use #ArkSHA when connecting with us!

Check out our website, www.arksha.org, where we will continue to make updates.

ArkSHA Advocacy in Action

communicate voice lead defend courage support passion
power strength education members change policy history
connection move good

Below is a brief list of legislative items your ArkSHA Government Relations Committee and Lobbyists have been hard at work on.

Be sure to visit the 2021 AR Legislative Session section of the website to view a more detailed list of advocacy efforts.

WATCHING	SUPPORT	OPPOSED
<p>HB1553 The Earn and Learn Act</p>	<p>HB1545 Update the Arkansas Code Regarding Language Associate with Autism Spectrum Disorders</p>	<p>HB1546 Phase Out the Soft Drink Tax</p>
<p>HB1179 To Add an Additional Permanent Disqualifying Offense on Criminal Background Checks for Professions and Occupations</p>	<p>HB1502 Require that Clear Face Masks be Worn by Certain Persons if Interacting with an Individual who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing During Certain Disaster Emergencies</p>	<p>HB1465 Require Licensing Entities to Consider the Good Moral Character of an Individual Before Issuing a License to an Individual</p>
<p>HB1180 To Specify A Process Of Review Of Rules Regarding Scope Of Practice Of Healthcare Professionals</p>	<p>HB1003 To Amend and update The Laws Regarding Individuals who are Deaf or Hearing. To ensure respectful language is used</p>	<p>HB1316 To Phase Out The Soft Drink Tax; To Reduce The Soft Drink Tax; And To Provide For The Expiration Of The Arkansas Soft Drink Tax Act</p>

SAVE THE DATE



ArkSHA

CONVENTION 2021

Reaching Out

Connecting with your Caseload.

October 13-15

We are currently planning to hold our 2021 Annual Convention in person at the Embassy Suites in Little Rock on October 13-15! We hope that you will consider joining us.

The Convention Committee is planning the convention around the ideas of diversity & inclusion, collaborating with colleagues, and connecting with lower-incidence populations on caseloads.

Check the website at www.arksha.org/conventions for the most up-to-date information.

EXHIBITORS REGISTER HERE

2021 ANNUAL CONVENTION

CALL FOR PAPERS

SUBMIT YOUR PRESENTATION BY APRIL 30

Selected presentations will present on Friday, October 15.

ArkSHA Honors & Awards

Spotlight a colleague/mentor/professional by nominating them!

ArkSHA Poster Ambassador

Whom have you helped to make significant gains in therapy?

Nominate an individual that has inspired you as a professional!

Deadline July 15

Honors & Awards Nominations

*submit nomination online at www.arksha.org or
email arksha@arksha.org*

Deadline July 15

Poster Ambassador

*submit nomination online at www.arksha.org or
email arksha@arksha.org*

Medicare Advocacy Update

Medicare Audiologist Access and Services Act (MAASA) of 2021
H.R. 1587

The Medicare Audiologist Access and Services Act (MAASA) of 2021 will

enhance the Medicare benefit by providing critical direct access to both diagnostic and therapeutic services provided by audiologists. The current Medicare reimbursement policy still requires seniors to obtain a physician order before seeing their audiologist. In addition, because audiologists are inappropriately classified as suppliers instead of practitioners within the Medicare system, they are not able to provide treatment services that are covered by Medicare. This legislation brings Medicare policy in line with evidence-based practices. It also allows seniors with Medicare Part B to have the same access to audiology care provided to veterans, federal employees, and Medicare Advantage beneficiaries. The legislation would also reclassify audiologists as practitioners, which is consistent with the way Medicare recognizes other non-physician providers, such as clinical psychologists, clinical social workers, and advanced practice registered nurses. Classification as practitioners under Medicare would enable audiologists to furnish services through telehealth, ensuring continuity of hearing health care in the time of public health emergencies such as COVID-19.

This bill was introduced in the House and legislators are developing a companion bill in the Senate. Make your voice heard by completing the short form linked here [Send a Message \(asha.org\)](#) to tell your members of Congress the importance of improving Medicare beneficiary access to audiology services.

Learn more about H.R. 1587 by visiting clicking here:[Comprehensive Audiology Services Under Medicare \(asha.org\)](#)

Donate to ArkSHA

Betty Bass Graduate Student Scholarship

Renamed in memory of Betty Bass in October 2017, the **Betty Bass Graduate Student Scholarship** is given to individuals enrolled in a Communication Sciences and Disorders graduate program in the state of Arkansas.

Donations from our members allow us to offer this each year. This is separate from the ArkSHA Charitable Fund.

[Donate to Scholarship Fund](#)

ArkSHA Charitable Fund

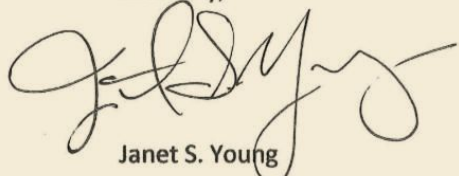
In December of 2019, the ArkSHA board started the 'ArkSHA Charitable Fund' with the Arkansas Community Foundation to provide our members and supporters with a tax-deductible way to support ArkSHA's initiatives. This will allow ArkSHA to provide funds for educational/research purposes to a selected 501(c)3 as requested and the board sees fit.

[Donate to Charitable Fund](#)

Dear ArkSHA Scholarship Committee:

I would like to extend my appreciation for selecting me as the 2020 Betty Bass Scholarship recipient. With this scholarship I can focus on my studies rather than be consumed with financial burdens and for this I am extremely grateful to you all. It means so much to me. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,



Janet S. Young



2021 Scholarship Donors

Cynthia Johnson
Diana Pearson
Sharon Ross
Donna Smiley

[DONATE
NOW](#)

Serve Your Association!

ArkSHA is currently accepting nominations for the Board of Directors:

- President-Elect
- Treasurer
- VP-Elect for Continuing Education
- VP for Audiology & Hearing Services



Email nomination or statement of interest to arksha@arksha.org by July 15.

Member of the Moment

Professional

[Brenda Gibson, MS, CCC-SLP](#)

For 26 years Brenda Gibson has served students with communication disorders at McRae Elementary in Searcy, Arkansas. Her devotion to the children and their families at McRae has undoubtedly been a blessing. In addition to the hundreds of children she has served in her career Mrs. Gibson has also served her



profession through the supervision of 84 Harding University student clinicians. Her willingness to mentor future professionals is a selfless investment for our field. The significant impact Mrs. Gibson has made on our profession, as well as the clients she has served, support this acknowledgment of her lifelong contributions.

Student



Lacey Roberts

-Graduate student at Harding University

Lacey Roberts is a second-year graduate student at Harding University and will graduate this May. Lacey is a graduate of the University of Arizona and chose Harding for its small cohort size and supportive learning environment. During her time at Harding, Lacey has excelled in both the classroom and clinical settings. Upon graduation, Lacey will move to Springdale, AR, where she has already accepted a position with Cassady Children's Center. Lacey is especially eager to provide treatment to children with feeding disorders and their families. Her long-term goals include pursuing a doctoral degree to teach at the graduate level. Arkansans should be proud to have Lacey join our state and profession.



Nominate Today!

Want to nominate a student or professional member of the moment?

Select the image to the side to be taken to the nomination form.



Nominate Today!

INTRODUCING
ArkSHA's Gift-to-Grad

PROGRAM

GRADUATE STUDENTS THAT HAVE BEEN A MEMBER OF ARKSHA FOR 2 YEARS WILL RECEIVE THEIR FIRST YEAR AS AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF ARKSHA FOR **FREE**. STUDENTS CURRENTLY IN THEIR 2ND YEAR OF GRADUATE SCHOOL WILL BE GRANDFATHERED IN & ONLY REQUIRE 1 YEAR OF MEMBERSHIP PRIOR TO JOINING AS AN ACTIVE MEMBER.

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ArkSHA

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UA
UAMS**

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~~\$99~~ **\$89**

Promo Code: **ARKSHA**

Join Now



ArkSHA Mission Statement

Connecting, learning and communicating with audiologists, speech-language pathologists, future professionals and consumers through:

- Advocacy
- Education
- Mentoring
- Networking
- Resources

Connect with us

