

**American Academy of Audiology
Board of Directors Virtual Meeting
January 21, 2025**

Member Summary

President: Patricia Gaffney, AuD, MPH

President-elect: Dave Zapala, PhD, AuD

Immediate Past President: Bopanna Ballachanda, PhD

Board Members:

Term Ending '25: Ursula Findlen, PhD, Kaitlyn Kennedy, AuD, Lachelle Lazarus, AuD

Term Ending '26: Kwame Curtis, AuD, Wafaa Kaf, MBBCh, MSc, PhD, Meagan Bachmann, AuD

Term Ending '27: Brenna Carroll, AuD, Maria Pomponio, AuD, Greta Stamper, AuD, PhD

Ex-Officio: Lindee Alvarez, SAA Liaison; Patrick Gallagher, MBA, Executive Director

Guests: Devin McCaslin, PhD

Staff: Anne Poodiack, Rachael Sifuentes, Kitty Werner, Joanne Zurcher

- The board approved the minutes of the December 2024 board meeting.
- Devin McCaslin, Clinical Professor and Medical Director of Otorhinolaryngology-HNS and a member of the e-Health and Artificial Intelligence Initiative of the University of Michigan, presented to the board about artificial intelligence (AI) and applications for audiology practice, particularly relevant to diagnostics.
- The board reviewed and approved the recommendations of a task force for the Distinguished Fellow rubric. The Distinguished Fellow distinction will recognize members who have made consistent contributions over time and meet criteria for areas of excellence. The only members who will automatically have the opportunity for the Distinguished Fellow distinction will be past presidents and founders of the Academy. The board charged the task force to continue work identifying the evaluation process and frequency of the application cycle.
- Joanne Zurcher, VP of Government Relations & Policy, updated the board on the efforts to reintroduce the Medicare Audiology Access Improvement Act in the new Congress and to renew the collaborative agreement with the ADA and ASHA. The board reviewed and reaffirmed support for the main tenets of the legislation as a long-term strategy to influence reimbursement for audiologists. The board requested ongoing member education about the strategy and specifically what the bill will accomplish.
- The board reviewed and approved the Advocacy Council's advocacy agenda for 2025. The agenda includes an increased emphasis on offering practice management resources to help members increase reimbursement and payment for their services.
- The Clinical & Scientific Excellence Council report included topics and speakers for a new 3-conference proposal for the Audiology Research Conference beyond 2025. The board approved the next ARC grant cycle program plan.
- The board reviewed a progress report from the Accreditation Council for Audiology Education (ACAE) on program expansion and delineated additional information needed in future reporting in advance of the next budget cycle.
- The Membership Engagement Council report included membership demographic data over the last 10 years that shows that one-quarter of the membership is in private practice and many more work within ENT offices. The board discussed that the data dispute the perception that the Academy is academic by nature.