

THE COMMUNICATOR



WINTER
2018/19

Phil Murphy, Governor

Sheila Oliver, Lt. Governor

Carole Johnson, Commissioner

Ira Hock, Acting Director

DHS Commissioner Johnson Recognizes Audiologists

MONTCLAIR, NJ – New Jersey Human Services Commissioner Carole Johnson on October 15, 2018 recognized and thanked audiologists who have participated in the New Jersey Hearing Aid Project, which provides free refurbished hearing aids to eligible older residents.

Johnson thanked the audiologists from throughout New Jersey during the New Jersey Academy of Audiology's annual conference at Montclair State University.

"This program has been a great success, providing hundreds of refurbished hearing aids to consumers aged 65 years and older with low-incomes," Johnson said. "Our audiologists are crucial to our efforts to assist New Jersey residents who are deaf or hard of hearing, and we could not have accomplished this program's success without their help. I thank them for their participation. We're so excited by the benefits this program brings to our residents, and we're working to build upon that success to help even more people."

Used hearing aids are donated to the program and reconditioned to meet the needs of the consumer. Earlier this year, Johnson announced that the Murphy Administration had boosted the reimbursement for audiologists participating in the program from \$150 to \$300.

"Some older New Jerseyans with hearing loss are not able to afford the cost of a hearing aid," Johnson said. "The Hearing Aid Project is an important program to help meet these needs and while we thank the audiologists who have made this program successful, we also hope to keep expanding it and creating easier access for residents in need of hearing aids."



MSU Audiological Student Clinician Elena Scarano shows Commissioner Johnson one of the program's hearing aids.

married are eligible for the program.

"Not only do hearing aids help people with hearing difficulties, but they can boost social interactions, improve income security

- continued -



Commissioner Johnson addresses the NJ Audiology Conference.

The program was launched by the Department of Human Services' Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Montclair State University and Sertoma/Hearing Charities of America.

The project involves collecting used hearing aids, reconditioning the devices and dispensing them to eligible residents. All used hearing aids are accepted – any age, any brand and any model.

Individuals who are at least 65 years of age, are New Jersey residents and have an income not exceeding \$27,189 if single or \$33,334 if

Commissioner Recognizes Audiologists...continued



MSU professor Maris Appelbaum discusses the Hearing Aid Project with Commissioner Johnson and Deputy Commissioner Neira.

and enhance overall quality of life," said Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira. "This program has been invaluable in so many ways, which is why we thank the audiologists who have participated. Their efforts go a long way to improving the lives of so many residents."

The Department recognized the following audiologists' participation in the program:

- AUDSLP Diagnostics and Rehabilitation Clinic, of Paterson;
- The Center for Audiology and Speech Language Pathology at Montclair State University of Montclair;
- Hackensack Audiology and Hearing Aid Associates of Hackensack;
- The Hearing Group of West Orange;
- New Jersey Hearing Health Center of Brick;
- Speech and Hearing Associates of Bridgewater;
- Sophisticated Hearing Aids of Ho-Ho-Kus;
- Speech and Hearing Associates of Cliffside Park;
- Speech and Hearing Associates of Denville;
- Speech and Hearing Associates of Little Falls;
- Speech and Hearing Associates of Park Ridge;
- Speech and Hearing Associates of Roseland;
- Speech and Hearing Associates of Secaucus;
- Speech and Hearing Associates of Westfield; and
- Dr. Jennifer Srou of Your At Home Hearing Doctor of Jackson

Donate Used Hearing Aids

Free refurbished hearing aids for eligible low-income seniors are available through the Hearing Aid Project initiative by the New Jersey Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH), Montclair State University, and Sertoma/Hearing Charities of America. The project involves collecting used hearing aids, reconditioning the devices and dispensing to eligible New Jersey residents. To donate a used hearing aid to the project, please include your name and address and send in a padded envelope, box or unlabeled prescription container to:



New Jersey Hearing Aid Project

**Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
Montclair State University
1515 Broad Street, Bldg B
Bloomfield, NJ 07003**

If you would like to be involved in coordinating a collection box for used hearing aids please contact DDHH staff Baylie Sappir at 609-588-2648.

For additional information: nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/home/hearingaidproject.html



Did You Know...

Eligible New Jersey residents can get free telecommunication and safety devices such as:

- Amplified Telephone
- CapTel
- Hearing Carry Over(HCO) Telephone
- Smoke Detector
- Baby Cry Alert System
- Artificial Larynx Device (ALD)

For information go to:

<https://nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/equipment/>

DDHH Supports HLAA-NJ Annual Meeting

On Saturday, November 17 the Hearing Loss Association of America-NJ held its annual meeting at the East Brunswick Public Library. DHS Deputy Commissioner Elisa Neira gave opening remarks to the crowd of 65 attendees.

Keynote speaker Frank Barnes III shared an inspiring story about his experiences as a young black man with hearing loss and how he learned to connect with those around him. DDHH staff member Wayne Roorda received a "leadership" award recognizing his many years volunteering for the group.

The Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing participated with an exhibit table alongside several other agencies.



Wayne Roorda (L) receives award for many years of volunteering.



Frank Barnes III



DDHH staff Baylie Sappir offers info at the exhibit table during the HLAA-NJ annual meeting.



United Way Caregivers Coalition

On November 19, DDHH Hard of Hearing Specialist Wayne Roorda presented at the United Way Caregivers Coalition meeting in Belvidere, NJ. His topic was on communication with hard of hearing clients/patients and those providing caregiving services. He explained about the need to screen for hearing loss of both the clients and caregivers to be able to effectively communicate via the telephone. He discussed the DDHH Equipment Distribution Program for amplified and captioned telephones being available. He also gave information about obtaining hearing aids under the NJ Hearing Aid Project.

NCRA Committee Addresses Use of Automated Speech Recognition Captioning

A new NCRA committee, the Captioning Regulatory Policy Committee, has recently been formed. Its charge is to monitor the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) actions and other actions that affect the closed captioning industry and to respond accordingly. The committee met on Sept. 4, 2018, to address the automatic speech recognition (ASR) issue.

See link for complete article: www.thejcr.com/2018/09/06/ncra-committee-addresses-use-asr-captioning/



DDHH Outreach Events



Senior Social for Atlantic County Residents

Senior residents enjoyed a lovely afternoon on September 20 at the Stockton Seaview Hotel and Golf Club for an event hosted by NJ CapTel. The purpose of this event was to provide residents with local area resources that they might not be aware of. DDHH staff member Baylie Sappir gave a presentation on programs and services geared toward seniors.

Union County 24th Annual Health Fair

On Saturday, September 22 DDHH staff attended the Union County Minority Task Force on Aging 24th Annual Health Fair. While all vendors gave a synopsis of what their organization offers, the takeaway of the event was the Union County Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) speaking on senior housing for the County. There are different kinds of senior housing for Union City all with various costs that are set by the government. One building out of three is for people under 62 with disabilities. For more information on senior housing in Union County click on the following link: ucnj.org/departments/human-services/#aging



Stroll 'N Roll at Verona Park

It was a cool breezy day, for DDHH staff member Baylie Sappir on Sunday September 23, as she attended the Kessler Foundation's 17th Annual Stroll 'N Roll. The Kessler Foundation founded by Dr. Henry H. Kessler in 1947 aims to improve the lives of people with physical and cognitive disabilities. The purpose of the event is to raise money for medical rehabilitation research and to fund disability employment initiatives. More than 600 people were in attendance and a total of \$167,000 was raised.

Active Seniors at Health and Fitness Walk

For the second year in a row DDHH staff member Baylie Sappir attended the health and fitness walk for senior residents in Middlesex County. Roosevelt Park was packed on September 26, as residents from local area senior centers arrived on busses to gather information from participating vendors as well partake in some vigorous fitness activities.



Easter Seals Sponsored a Deaf Connection Day



Pictured is DDHH staff member Jaci Brown at exhibit in Kean College. Hundreds of students and community attended.

Grace's Law 10th Anniversary

Ten years ago the State of New Jersey enacted Grace's Law, also known as HAIL (Hearing Aid Insurance Legislation). Named after Grace Gleba, it mandated that hearing aid coverage for children 15 years old and under. The details can be found on the DDHH brochure link: www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/newsletters/publications/brochures/Grace%27s%20Law%20booklet%200716.pdf.

Additional information can be found at: www.graceslaw.com/Grace's_Law_10th_Anniversary.pdf.





Relay Outreach Opening

NJ Relay and CapTel is seeking an Outreach Specialist to work with New Jersey Relay on a part-time, contractual basis. The goal of New Jersey Relay is to provide accessible telecommunications services for people who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind and the people who have Speech Disabilities. If interested see the link www.advantagexpo.com/candidates/job-search/position/23459.



New Investments in Child Care

New Jersey First Lady Tammy Murphy and New Jersey Department of Human Services Commissioner Carole Johnson recently announced \$38 million in new investments to in child care to help more families find services they need and to advance quality child care.

The new investments will boost child care subsidies that help families with lower incomes to afford child care who are working, in school or in training programs.

The highest rate increase is set for infant care, and money is also being used to create more infant care spots and to improve child care center offerings.

Visit www.childcarenj.gov/ to learn more about applying for child care assistance, where to find child care, licensing data and what makes a quality program.

NJSAVE Helps Older New Jerseyans



NJSave is a new online application that is helping older residents with low-incomes and individuals with disabilities save money on Medicare premiums, prescription costs, and other living expenses.

NJSave allows individuals to use a single online application to check their eligibility for various savings and assistance programs, such as Medicare Savings Programs, which help eligible individuals pay their Medicare premiums and copays; New Jersey's Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (PAAD), which helps save money on prescription drug costs; and the Lifeline Utility Assistance Program. Prior to this, individuals had to fill out a paper eligibility application for each program.

Click [here](#) to get started.

Can College Students Get Food Stamps?

The Murphy Administration is expanding food assistance to career and technical education students at community colleges.

In response to what has been called a hidden crisis on college campuses, the Department of Human Services announced it is expanding food assistance to career and technical education students at community colleges.

National surveys have found that as high as 40 percent of community college students reporting food insecurity, meaning a lack of reliable access to sufficient quantities of affordable, nutritious food.

SNAP is the first line of defense against hunger. Hunger is often a focus this time of year, but it's a year-round problem for far too many people, including students who too often are forced to worry about food instead of their studies. Students learning employable skills in New Jersey's community colleges who meet SNAP income eligibility standards will now have access to this critical food assistance.

For additional info, click [here](#).



DDHH Advisory Council Meeting

Friday, January 25, 2019

9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

East Brunswick Public Library

Guest Speaker - Daniel J. Trolaro, MS, Assistant Executive Director,
and Public Health Specialist, Olu Oyedele, Council on Compulsive Gambling of NJ.
Community is welcome to attend. Sign Language Interpreters, Communication Access
Realtime Translation Services, and Assistive Listening Devices will be provided.

DDHH Office Hours: Monday – Friday: 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

DDHH Office Closed: Tuesday, December 25 – Christmas
Tuesday, January 1 – New Year's Day
Monday, January 21, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Monday, February 18 – President's Day

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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