

# Looking Back and Looking Forward

## The Hopes and Dreams of a New Year!

By Doris Gordon

**I**t is the start of a new year, and it is natural to reflect on the successes and challenges of the past year (see ACAE Corner in AT, November/December 2014.) It also is a time of hope and possibility—an uplifting period to affirm our long-term goals and look to new challenges.

This year at ACAE, we reflect on people who have been on the ACAE Board of Directors, our members who have recently joined the board, the new initiatives for the future, the ACAE approval of its 2014 Proposed Standards, and the future opportunity to interact with many academic programs.

The completion of 2014 meant wishing a fond farewell to wonderful board members who were pioneers for ACAE but remain leaders in the profession: Angela Loavenbruck, Catherine V. Palmer, PhD and Scott Griffiths, PhD. We will miss these individuals very much, but are comfortable knowing they will continue to contribute to the development of our education programs.

At the same time, ACAE appointed three exceptional audiology leaders to its board, and the board looks forward to having them share their unique viewpoints and expertise. They include James (Jay) W. Hall III, PhD; Erica Friedland, AuD; and Hui Shing Andy Lau, AuD. I took the opportunity of asking if

they would share their perspectives on initiatives for audiology education in the future. They immediately agreed, and here is what they said. You can see why we are excited to have them on board!

### James (Jay) W. Hall III, PhD

As a new ACAE board member, I naturally have a perspective on initiatives for audiology education. Here are six ideas to consider:

- For many reasons, the graduation rate for AuD students is not keeping up with the demand for audiologists. There should be a concerted effort to increase the average number of graduates per program, with a goal of boosting class size to 25 students or more.
- Increased application of simulation technology in audiology education is a necessary ingredient in the effort to increase class size. The Academy and industry need to partner in the creation of validated simulation technology for development of clinical skills for AuD students.
- Clinical research is the foundation of evidence-based practice. We desperately need more support for PhD-level education within audiology, rather than

relying on other disciplines (e.g., neuroscience, psychology) to conduct auditory research.

- Many graduates of AuD programs will enter the workforce either as independent practitioners or clinic administrators in hospital settings. Courses in health-care administration and practice management should be in the doctor of audiology curricula at all universities.
- The ACAE and audiology educational programs in the United States should collaborate and consult with international audiologists and institutions, with an interest in quality education of audiologists, especially those in developing countries.
- Last, but certainly not least, I want to see an accelerated and steady increase in the number of AuD programs that are ACAE approved, with an initial goal of ACAE accreditation for least 90 percent of the consensus top-20 programs in the United States.

### Erica Friedland, AuD

As one of the newest ACAE Board members, my initiatives for the future focus on assisting audiology programs in realizing their

independence and participating in the next exciting chapter of audiology education, such as:

- Owning audiology education and making sure it is a stand-alone course of study that is managed by audiologists.
- Ensuring all educational programs are training students to the highest standards, not dictating methods but encouraging outcomes and recognizing there are many means to an end.
- Assuring students that they are being trained to become the most advanced and knowledgeable clinicians and that their programs are held to the highest standard.
- Ensuring we are the hearing and vestibular health-care practitioners, who focus on the advanced biomedical/engineering knowledge, skills, and technology paths of the future.
- Engaging students more fully with faculty in the development of their curriculum and assisting incoming students with mentoring and professional issues critical to audiology.

### Hui Shing Andy Lau, AuD


What I would like to see regarding positive initiatives in audiology education in the near future are the following:

- A unifying set of standards for audiology education that secures our profession as the experts in the care and management of the inner ear and its related diseases.
- A doctoral education experience that is deliberative, enlightening, and encouraging in nature, so much so that it is constantly urging both students and teachers alike to explore, expand, and express the wealth of our knowledge.
- A profession/vocation that students aspire to, from as early as their high school days. I want the field of audiology to be something every career counselor would promote to their promising students.
- And most important, an education that imbues a sense of nostalgia and a sense of duty, so as to inspire its students and teachers alike to give back and pay it forward.

These thoughtful comments explain why we are looking forward to having an energized and challenging year.

During 2015, the ACAE Board of Directors will also vote on its proposed and revised educational standards. After this action occurs, there will be a grace period of approximately one year before the new standards will go into effect.

Simultaneously, ACAE looks forward to working with approximately ten programs that are either undergoing the ACAE process or will be starting it within the next year. Working with programs is not only important but is also gratifying for those in the ACAE community. It reinforces ACAE's whole purpose of being.

This year will be a significant one for ACAE. All of us hope it will be a momentous one for you, too. 

**Happy New Year!**

*Doris Gordon, MS/MPH, is the executive director of ACAE. Contributions from James (Jay) W. Hall, Erica Friedland, and Hui Shing Andy Lau.*

