

# A Year in Review

By James “Jay” W. Hall III

**A**s 2018 winds down and we reflect on our business this year, the Accreditation Commission for Audiology Education (ACAE) is optimistic. We are confident in the quality of doctor of audiology (AuD) educational programs and the ability of the profession to meet critical challenges for clinical education. We are hopeful about the expansion of ACAE’s reach to more AuD programs through our standards and accreditation services. We are positive about how the new organizational structure within ACAE, as well as the larger Academy Enterprise, will continue to propel us forward to a bright future.



## New Strategies to Old Problems

In the July/August 2018 issue of *Audiology Today*, we reported on the third annual Clinical Education Forum that ACAE co-offered with the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CAPCSD). The discussions at the forum highlighted the pervasive problems faced by AuD programs and the ongoing effort to maximize clinical experiences for AuD students. This pattern of challenges as showcased in our first three forums underscores the need to move toward implementation of practical strategies in the next forum at AAA 2019 in Columbus, Ohio. As I wrote previously, “step by step, strategy by strategy, we can make a difference.”

The new organizational structure within the Academy Enterprise offers a new strategy for cross-communication

and optimal use of resources to address ongoing problems, including clinical education. The ACAE has a seat on the Academic and Professional Standards Council, which includes representation from the American Board of Audiology (ABA), the Academic Programs Committee, and the Professional Education and Certificate Programs Committee. This structure facilitates dialogue about common professional issues and the exchange of ideas for collaboration. We anticipate that the council will be quite useful for advancing action items and strategies that may come out of the next Clinical Education Forum.

## New Programs

Earlier this year, ACAE welcomed a new fully accredited program—University of the Pacific. The University of the Pacific opened an accelerated, three-year AuD program under the direction of department chair Dr. Rupa Balachandran. It is the first AuD program to open in Northern California. The ACAE granted the program a 10-year accreditation in April 2018.

ACAE also is pleased to report an interest by several new programs for the Developing Status recognition. Developing Status is the entry point to ACAE accreditation for AuD programs and is available to academic institutions that have new AuD programs and have not yet begun admitting students. Attaining Developing Status allows an AuD program to accept an initial class of students and indicates that ACAE anticipates that the program has the potential to achieve compliance with the ACAE’s Accreditation Standards for the Doctor of Audiology (AuD) Program within three to five years. In fall 2017, ACAE awarded Developing Status to California State University, Los Angeles.

Achieving Developing Status and/or full accreditation within ACAE involves extensive program review. This review process has a strong consultative element, with an end goal of assuring a high-quality AuD educational program. More information about the process and ACAE is available in our accreditation manual for AuD Programs.

## New Faces

This past year involved some notable changes for ACAE’s office administration. With more than 15 years of significant contributions to the development of ACAE, Doris Gordon officially retired in December 2017. Losing an executive director, particularly one who served as

the stable force and institutional history for the organization, is a significant challenge. Truthfully, those of us who volunteer as leaders within the American Academy of Audiology Enterprise always hope that something like this does not occur during our tenure. Nevertheless, the ACAE board had to face the inevitable and accept that Doris needed to move on to the next stage in her life. Doris still provides some consultative services for us, for which we are grateful, but she will gradually sunset our work together.

From loss often comes a new beginning. Doris's departure provided ACAE the opportunity to enlist the management services of the Academy for the administration of ACAE operations. The Academy has strong leadership under Tanya Tolpegin, CAE, and we are fortunate to benefit from her keen business acumen and her assignment of capable staff to support our forward momentum. While Doris was still here, Meggan Olek and Kitty Werner worked closely with her to assume necessary staff services. Doris's mentorship and guidance assured a smooth and steady transition into 2018.


As the past year evolved, we said goodbye



to Meggan, who left for a new opportunity. We also introduced a new face to the ACAE team. In August, **Andrew Stafford** joined the Academy as the director of professional standards and credentialing. Bringing his extensive experience in cer-

tification and accreditation within the interior design industry, Andrew has the qualification to support both ACAE and ABA operations. This dual role will be particularly helpful to facilitate collaborative work with the ABA on issues of shared interest, such as licensure requirements. The ACAE is grateful that the Academy has secured this level of staff leadership for supporting the board and the AuD educational programs accredited by ACAE. Andrew will contribute importantly to ACAE initiatives in 2019 and beyond. <sup>AT</sup>

*James "Jay" W. Hall III, is chair of the Accreditation Commission for Audiology Education.*



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