



# AVAA AMPLIFIER

**Quarterly Newsletter of the Association of VA Audiologists**

Winter 2024: **JDVAC 2024 Preview**

**FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:** *Michele Gortemaker, Au.D.*  
AVAA President



I had the opportunity last fall to read some fascinating history on the role of Veterans Administration (VA) and Department of Defense (DOD) in the founding of our profession in James Jerger's Audiology in the USA. This past, present and future idea of Audiology within the realm of VA and DOD is the theme for JDVAC next month. The planning committee was inspired by the early work done by the US Army and Navy during the last two years of World War I and the rich military history in Southern California, where this year's conference is being held. We hope you enjoy the brief history in this opening note, and it inspires you to attend JDVAC 2024 for more in depth information from our keynote speakers.

Before amplification was in the picture, rehabilitation programs were the primary focus for US Army and Navy. Following World War II, wearable hearing aids were a reality and the US Army set up three aural rehabilitation programs. The US Navy also organized a Naval Hospital in Philadelphia. These two programs gave us many early leaders in the profession to include William Hardy, Miriam Pauls, Harriet Haskins, Moe Bergman, Ira Hirsh and Raymond Carhart. Aside from his work on amplification, Carhart invented what we now know as speech audiometry, as a procedure to base decisions about which hearing device should be dispensed to servicemen.

*(Continued on next page)*

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK: *Continued*

Carhart adapted work from the Harvard Psychoacoustics Laboratory into the concepts of Speech Reception Thresholds and PB Max scores, which we still use to this day.

After the end of World War II, in 1946, the three Army Aural Rehabilitation units were closed and hearing rehabilitation continued in a single center, the Army Audiology and Speech Center at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. From 1971–2007 the research program at Walter Reed was directed by Brian Walden and assisted by notable names such as David Hawkins, David Fabry, Marjorie Leek and many others. This research program has made contributions to our basic understanding of hearing processes and the effectiveness of intervention strategies. The Army audiology program has also trained officers who went on to notable careers in their civilian life to include Jerry Northern, David Chandler, Harvey Abrams, Gus Mueller and many more.

While the efforts in Aural Rehabilitation were scaled down by the Army and Navy following World War II, there was a clear need for Veterans Administration to take on the duty for caring for the returning servicemen with hearing disorders. Northfield Canton was appointed as a consultant to establish services for veterans within VA that would continue the treatment provided by military programs. In 1946, an Otolaryngologist, Edward Truex, (who had worked with Carhart at Deshon Hospital) was appointed the first head of the Audiology and Speech Correction Services under VA's Medical Rehabilitation Service. He was succeeded by Aram Glorig, Merle Ansberry, Kenneth O. Johnson (who instituted a comprehensive testing program for Compensation and Pension exams), Bernard Anderman, Henry Spuehler, Alan Boysen, Lucille Beck, Rachel McArdle and most recently M. Sean McClenney. The first VA Audiology Clinic was established at the New York Regional Office in 1946. The clinic's first Chief Audiologist was Moe Bergman, who got his start with the Army during World War II, if you recall. In the next two years VA Audiology clinics opened in Washington, DC and Philadelphia.

As the VA Audiology program grew, we started to see trainees rotating through VA clinics in the 1960s and 1970s. Many of these trainees went on to become leading clinicians and researchers in VA and private sector.

In the late 1950s, VA Audiology clinics put into place a procurement program to provide quality hearing instruments, developed best practices for evaluation and treatment, refined electroacoustic analysis of hearing devices and dispensed these devices to veterans. While the VA and DOD Audiologists were taking this approach, in the private sector the practice was for the clinician to send the patient to a hearing aid dealer for the dispensing of an aid. To this day, the VA continues to be the largest purchaser of hearing aids in the US.



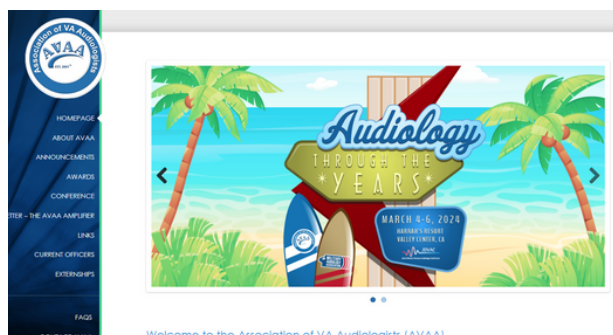


# IT'S TIME FOR THE AVAA MEMBERSHIP DRIVE!

**Pay your 2024 AVAA Membership Dues now and be entered to win PRIZES!**

AVAA Member dues go toward:

- Promoting the needs of audiologists within the VA system
- Building relationships with other local and national professional organizations to represent VA audiologists
- Helping disseminate important information to VA audiologists
- Supporting our great annual conference, JDVAC



**Visit [myAVAA.org](https://myAVAA.org) to pay your member dues!**

*All membership dues paid by 5PM on EST of March 6, 2024 will be entered to win:*

**\*\$50 Amazon gift card  
\*1 year AudiologyOnline membership**



## WE STILL NEED PHOTOS!

*Do you have Audiology and/or JDVAC photos from the past?*

*If so, we want to use them in our slideshow at JDVAC 2024!*

*Please send photos to Ilana Glick ([ilana.glick@va.gov](mailto:ilana.glick@va.gov))*



# JDVAC 2024 :



*Heading to JDVAC 2024? We've got you covered! JDVAC 2024 Conference Chair, **Elizabeth Gdula** shares some info about what to expect at our conference this year!*

Come join us at **Harrah's Resort of Southern California**. Located in Valley Center, California, you'll enjoy the beautiful views of mountains and rolling hills. Like the outdoors? In your downtime, you can enjoy the area's many outdoor activities to include, hiking, horseback riding, golfing, and more. Nearby attractions are the Palomar Observatory, Palomar State Park, JC Golf, Bates Nut Farm, and 20 miles from the San Diego Zoo.



Don't feel like leaving the grounds? Here are five things to do at Harrah's Resort:

- Step into the fire at Hell's Kitchen
- Quench your thirst at the Swim-up
- Try your luck at the tables
- Catch an encore at the Events Center
- Pamper yourself at The Spa at Harrah's.

*Go all-in on fun! We can't wait to see you!*

**REGISTER NOW**



<http://www.kdpartnersinc.net/jdvac.php>

Follow us on social media for more JDVAC 2024 info:



@ Joint Defense Veterans Audiology Conference



@jdvaconference



## LOOKING FOR A JDVAC SNEAK PEEK?

**Dr. Michele Gortemaker**, our AVAA President, has put together a FANTASTIC “sneak peek” of JDVAC 2024.

JDVAC Educational Committee is excited to see everyone in person again at this year’s conference in Southern California. The team, led by **Elizabeth Gdula** (Conference Chair), **Jessica Preston** (AVAA Past President & JDVAA President), and **Erin Artz** (MAA President & JDVAA Vice President) has been hard at work assembling keynote speakers to align with this year’s conference theme: **Audiology Through The Years**. I hope the president’s message you just read helps you understand the theme and what you can look forward to as we explore the impact of DOD and VA on the growth of our profession in the past, present and future.

On Monday morning, we have the distinct pleasure of hearing from a panel of DOD and VA Audiologists, past and present. This panel includes: **John Allen, Col (Ret), USAF**; **Harvey Abrams, PhD**; **Dick Danielson, COL (Ret), USA**; **Amy Blank, COL, USA**; **Kathy Gates, COL (Ret), USA**. This panel will provide information about the rich history the contributions made by DOD and VA, and their contributions to research, education, technology and healthcare services for the profession of Audiology.

Following this opening keynote, **Robert M. Traynor, LTC, MS, USAR, (Ret)** will take the podium and continue the discussion of the impact the contributions have made across the profession and in his own career. Dr. Traynor will also present future implications for our profession and the need to evolve and adapt with changes in research and technology.

Monday afternoon, we have a presentation from VA Audiologists and our DOD partners at Hearing Centers for Excellence. **Ilana Glick, AuD**, **Jessica Preston, AuD**, and **Kaitlin Thoden, AuD** will present on the usage of ANNIE to improve outcomes for our veteran patients using amplification or implantables. We wrap up the day with a joint session presented by **Trina Morrisette and Stacy Leonard** from HCE discussing the Joint Hearing Loss and Auditory System Injury Registry (JHASIR) and interfaces with various electronic health record components at HCE.





## JDVAC 2024 SNEAK PEEK - CONTINUED

Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, we open with important sessions about Ethics and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI). These topics are important for our day to day practice, and these presentations will satisfy requirements for licensure and certifications. **Kristal M Riska, AuD, PhD** will present Tuesday in her session titled *Ethics in Audiology* and **Shade Avery Kirjava, AuD ABA-C** will present *A Transgender Healthcare Primer for Clinical Audiologists* on Wednesday morning.

Tuesday will also bring a joint session from **Lindsey Jorgensen AuD, PhD** on the use of verification measures with additional hands on opportunities in the afternoon. We will also hear from our motivational speaker, **Tiffany J. R. Morgan, Col (Ret)**, in her session *Random Acts of Kindness*.

As always, we will have time Tuesday for poster sessions, which will be located in/near the vendor hall. We have 20 posters this year from VA, DOD and our vendor partners. You will also find that many of our vendor partners will have CEU opportunities at their booths Monday and Tuesday this year. Please spend the time to learn about their companies and products and earn some extra CEU as a bonus. I cannot emphasize enough how important their participation is to the livelihood of this conference. Simply putting on the event is not feasible without their support and the low cost of registration (relative to other conferences) is not possible without their continued support. The exhibitors committee will be providing further incentive for vendor engagement with games and prizes.

Tuesday afternoon has a variety of field presentation offerings in the areas of vestibular evaluations, management of patients with severe hearing loss, cochlear implants, hearing protection, and acoustic trauma. **M. Patrick Feeney, PhD** will present his research on Wideband Acoustic Immittance (WAI) and its clinical applications. Dr. Feeney will discuss WAI absorbance tympanometry findings in auditory disorders commonly seen in the clinic as well as WAI for acoustic reflex thresholds compared to 226 Hz acoustic reflex results.

**Patricia Gabbidon, AuD** will present on the diagnosis criteria for Persistent Postural Perceptual Dizziness (PPPD) and Functional Gait Disorders (FGD) and the importance of an interdisciplinary team in the clinical management of these patients. **Robin Pinto, AuD and Stephanie Beauregard, PT, MPT** will be leading a session on the care and management of patients with mTBI with dizziness/imbalance symptoms.



## JDVAC 2024 SNEAK PEEK - CONTINUED

Wednesday morning we continue our presentations on clinical care with a keynote from **René H. Gifford, PhD** in bilateral cochlear implantation and bimodal hearing. She will present findings on speech perception, spatial hearing and language outcomes in adults and children using bimodal hearing and bilateral cochlear implantation and provide data to help guide clinical recommendations. Dr. Gifford will also present after lunch in a track titled *Evidence-Based Cochlear Implant Programming*, where she will discuss stimulation levels and behavioral methods by which these can be obtained.

Wednesday afternoon will again have a variety of tracks including tinnitus management, telehealth, clinic management, disability exams, and a variety of educational offerings from our vendor partners. **Dr. Fatima T. Husain** will present findings from her lab for patients with tinnitus related to audiological assessments, survey measures, brain imaging and computational modeling. Dr. Hussain is an auditory cognitive neuroscientist who has partnered with HCE and studied tinnitus and hearing loss in active-duty service members and veterans in the past several years and will discuss the relationship between tinnitus and PTSD.

Our final joint session of the conference is presented by **Kevin Quitmeyer** from the VA Denver Acquisitions & Logistics Center (DALC). This session will complement the conference's theme of Audiology Through The Years. DALC has been a staple in our health care delivery model in Audiology for decades, allowing projects/processes such as the hearing repository, device ordering, management of patient and clinic supplies and facilitating repairs for our veteran patients, just to name a few.

If you are still reading, I am impressed! This is a lot, and to that point, it is a lot of time and effort put in by JDVAC volunteers (outside their tour of duty) to plan this conference to benefit out VA and DOD Audiology colleagues. I can't express my gratitude enough to Elizabeth Gdula (Conference Chair) for leading the effort this year and Ilana Glick (Conference Co-Chair) as she has shadowed and prepares to take the lead next year. The team organizing the event for 2024 is below. Each role is important and the need for volunteers always exists. Look for more information on how you can participate during the conference and when the call for volunteers comes out again later this year.

**JDVAA Executive Board:** Jessica Preston, Erin Artz

**Conference Chairs:** Elizabeth Gdula, Ilana Glick

**CEU:** Mary Kelly Bone, Elicia Pillion, Aneda Baker

**Field Presentations:** Kaylee Davenport, Tina Penman

**Posters:** Ashley Long, ILT Daniel Johnson

**Exhibitors:** Emily James, Lindsay Shears

**Registration/App:** Charissa Hicks, Patricia Gabbidon, Elizabeth Elkins

**Social:** Ashley Zambetti, Stacey Sturgulewski

**Student Volunteer:** JR McCoy, Emily Cotton, Megan Duke

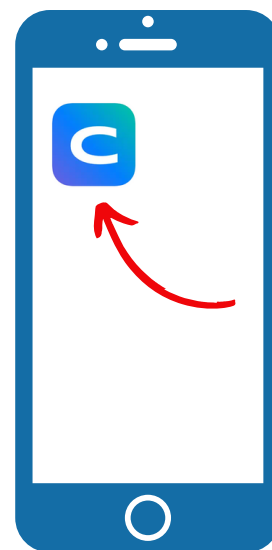


# **READY...SET...JDVAC!**

**Charissa Hicks, Patricia Gabbidon & Elizabeth Elkins**, our JDVAC 2024 App & Registration Chairs, want attendees to be prepared when they arrive at the conference. Here is some great information so you can be electronically connected during JDVAC 2024:

As you complete your JDVAC 2024 registration, please ensure that you are registering with an email address that you will have access to during the conference. You will be sent confirmation codes via email that will allow you to log in to the application, **CVENT**, with your mobile devices. You will need access to the app during your entire time at the conference. CVENT will provide you with important JDVAC 2024 information, including presentation schedules, surveys for CEUs, and vendor information.

**If you typically register with your work email, you may want to use your personal email address instead if you will not have access to your work email inbox during the conference.**



**Use the App Store or Google Play Store to find the CVENT Events app. The CVENT Events app logo should like this:**



To access the JDVAC 2024 event page, you will need to download the **CVENT app**. Once downloaded, search for “**Joint Defense VA Audiology Conference 2024.**” The page for the conference will be searchable but the content is not accessible until March 1. Starting on March 1, you can access the content by inputting your first and last name and the email address you provided when registering for the conference.

If you are unable to login or if issues occur while using the app, please email the App & Registration committee at: **[jdvacapp@gmail.com](mailto:jdvacapp@gmail.com)**.



# GROOVIN' in SoCal



**Ashley Zambetti & Stacey Sturgulewski**, your JDVAC 2024 Social Chairs, have some totally tubular and way groovy social events planned. Get ready to party through the decades at JDVAC 2024!

Hey JDVAC 2024 Attendees! We are looking forward to having you join us at JDVAC 2024 in beautiful Valley Center, California! Your Social Chairs have been hard at work planning some great social events for the evenings at JDVAC 2024. After those long days of learning great Audiology info, we hope you will join us to catch up with colleagues and have some JDVAC fun! We are going back in time to keep with our "Audiology through the years" theme, so hop in our JDVAC time machine and join us for a groovin' good time!



On **Monday March 4th**, join us for our "Welcome to the Jungle" 80's party! Look in the back of your closets for those leg warmers, Members Only jackets and neon headbands, as 80's attire is strongly encouraged! Have fun with your fellow JDVAC attendees as we take it back to the decade of Pac-Man and big hair!



Did you hear the news? The Concha Bowl is BACK! Join us on **Tuesday March 5th** for our 70's game show themed version of The Concha Bowl! Prizes for winners, so COME ON DOWN!

We will be using the **Kahoot app**, so please download prior to coming to JDVAC 2024!



# JDVAC loves our students!

**JR McCoy**, our Student Experience Chair, loves making JDVAC 2024 awesome for our student attendees. Find out what he has in store for our future audiologists!

JDVAC is proud to announce our Student Experience program. The call for student volunteers went out in the early fall and we received a large amount of applicants. Twenty-six audiology residents from both VA and the Armed Services were accepted as volunteers. Registration was waived for these students.

In addition to providing assistance in various capacities for a conference this size, the Student Experience includes a special separate learning track catering to the transition from student to career audiologist. Speaker content was selected to include topics that will aid them in making that transition as well as give them information on things that are not typically covered by Audiology programs. This year's presentations include:

## **Resume Building and the Interview**

by Drs. Erica Dombrowsky, Delia Karahalios, and Dave Jedlicka.

## **Building Specialty Clinics (with a focus on CAPD and tinnitus)**

by Dr. Delia Karahalios

And lastly, Dr. McCoy will present:

## **The Case for Animal Audiology in the DOD and Your Practice.**

In addition, time has been set aside for all participants to attend their respective association business meetings to gain perspective on how these organizations function and how they benefit their members.

All students attending the conference, volunteering or not, are invited to attend the Student Education track.

We look forward to meeting all the students who are attending the conference this year.

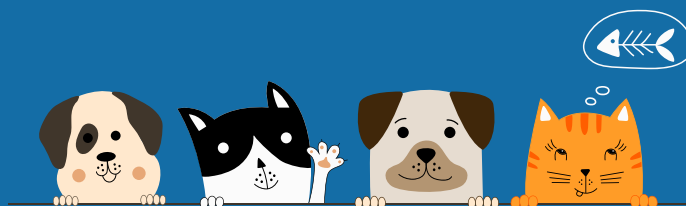


# Pets of AVAA



Avery is a 12-year-old mutt from the streets of Hawaii. She had puppies and was transferred from a shelter on the small island of Kauai to Portland, OR where she was adopted in 2014. She followed her people all around the country during grad school, including Denver, Chicago, and Central Florida. She's now home in Roseburg, Oregon with her new pal Lucifer. Lucifer is a 1-year-old black cat who thinks he's much tougher than he is. Avery and Lucifer will cuddle up together when they aren't chasing each other or playing fetch with their humans. Avery and Lucifer belong to Dr. Leah Sherwood from the Roseburg VAMC.

Darla is a former southern belle who hitched a ride to the frozen tundra of Wisconsin to be adopted by Dr. Lyndsey Craven (Madison VA) and her family in November of 2023. While they are still waiting to hear back from her DNA test, her family is convinced she is parts cat and goat since she can leap onto the kitchen island in a single bound. For such a little dog, Darla has a fierce bark that registers over 90 decibels on Lyndsey's Apple Watch.





# AVAA Soundbites



Laissez les bon temps roule! It's Mardi Gras time! Former AVAA Treasurer, **Dr. Catina Peoples** from the New Orleans VAMC, shared one of her favorite dishes that is sure to transport you down to the "Big Easy" in one bite!

## Classic Crawfish Etouffee

Recipe by: George Graham - [AcadianaTable.com](http://AcadianaTable.com)

- 1 lbs (4 sticks) unsalted butter
- 2 c diced yellow onion
- 1 c diced green bell pepper
- 1 c diced celery
- 1 Tbsp minced garlic
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 2 lbs Louisiana crawfish tail meat
- 1/2 c all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 c crawfish stock or seafood stock
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Dash of hot sauce
- 1/2 c chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1 c diced green onion tops
- 6 c cooked Louisiana long-grain white rice, such as Supreme



In a large skillet over medium heat, melt the butter and add the onions, bell pepper and celery. Saute until tender and add the garlic. Lower the heat to simmer and stir to combine. Sprinkle the flour over the mixture and stir to incorporate and begin cooking the flour. Add some of the stock and continuing stirring until it begins to thicken. Add more stock until you get a stew-like thickness. Season to taste with salt, pepper and hot sauce. Serve over a mound of white rice garnished with chopped parsley and green onion tops.

Serves: 4 to 6





# AVAA Soundbites



*Are you ready for some football!?!?! In honor of Super Bowl weekend, we are sharing some SUPER recipes that are perfect for feeding a crowd of hungry football fans!*

Our AVAA Treasurer, **Dr. Jocelyn Sysko** from the Atlanta VAMC, gave us her favorite recipe for "Hotlanta Wings"!

## Hotlanta Wings

2 lbs chicken wings  
2 T salted butter, melted  
1 t kosher salt  
1 t garlic powder  
1 t onion powder  
1 t smoked paprika  
½ t black pepper  
2 T cornstarch



Pat the chicken wings dry with paper towels and squeeze out any moisture. Pour the melted butter over the chicken and add the seasonings. Rub seasonings into the chicken wings to thoroughly coat. Sprinkle the cornstarch over the wings and rub into the chicken. Place the chicken wings in a single layer in the air fryer (and if you don't own one, go get one right now because they are amazing) and air fry at 400 degrees for 7 minutes. Flip the wings and fry another 5-7 minutes until golden brown. Meanwhile, melt 2T salted butter and add hot sauce to your liking (I like about 1 cup of locally made sauce or Frank's Red Hot). When all of your wings are cooked, toss them with the sauce to coat, and serve with celery, carrot sticks, ranch or blue cheese dressing. Enjoy!



## AVAA Soundbites - Continued

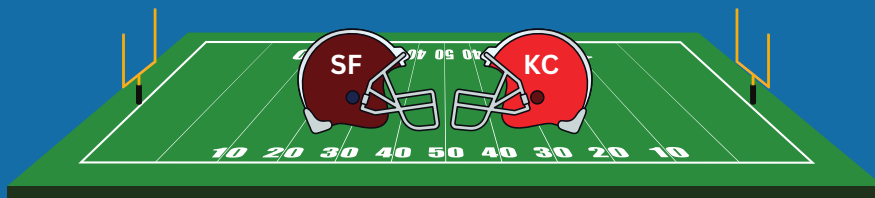
Our AVAA President, **Dr. Michele Gortemaker** from the Cheyenne VAMC, shared one of her favorite football party recipes, Chicken Tortilla Soup! Enjoy!

### Slow Cooker Chicken Tortilla Soup

2.5 cans (14.5 oz) broth (4 1/2 c)  
14.5 oz can petite diced tomatoes  
3/4 c finely chopped yellow onion  
3 cloves pressed garlic  
1 1/2 tsp chili powder  
1 tsp cumin  
1/2 tsp paprika & coriander  
1 1/2 lbs chicken breast  
14.5 oz can of black beans, rinsed  
1 1/2 c frozen corn  
1 Tbsp lime juice  
1/4 c chopped cilantro  
Tortilla strips



Pour broth & tomatoes into slow cooker; add onion, garlic, spices & chicken breast. Cook on low for 6 hours. Remove chicken and shred; return to slow cooker. Add beans, corn, cilantro & lime juice; stir. Serve and garnish with tortilla strips.



### In the next AVAA Amplifier:

#### **Mentorship in VA**

*Are you involved a mentorship program? Are you a mentor? Did you have a great mentorship experience? We want to hear about it! E-mail Stacey Sturgulewski with your mentorship info ([stacey.sturgulewski@va.gov](mailto:stacey.sturgulewski@va.gov))*

