



2025

# AVAA AMPLIFIER

*Quarterly Newsletter of the Association of VA Audiologists*

Winter 2025: **JDVAC 2025 Preview**

## AVAA ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

We want to hear from our members! Click [here](#) to submit the **2024 AVAA Membership Survey!**

Please register your **PERSONAL E-MAIL ADDRESS** at [myavaa.org](https://myavaa.org) to receive future updates from AVAA.



## PAY YOUR 2025 AVAA MEMBERSHIP DUES

Visit [myAVAA.org](https://myAVAA.org) to pay your dues!  
All membership dues paid by 5 pm EST of April 9, 2025 will be entered to win:

\*1 year audiology online membership  
\*\$50 amazon gift card

### 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

**ENTER TO WIN**

## SOCIAL MEDIA REFRESH!

AVAA is refreshing our social media pages! If you don't currently follow us, find us on Facebook and Instagram and give us a follow!



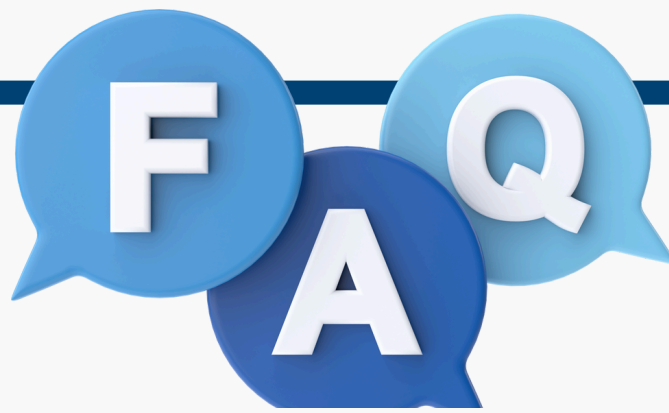


**FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:** *Danielle Crawford, Au.D.*  
AVAA President

I'm excited to attend the Joint Defense Veterans Audiology Conference (JDVAC) this year in Atlantic City, and I hope you are too! This year's conference promises to deliver invaluable insights from leading experts in the field, featuring a fantastic lineup of keynote speakers, a variety of thought-provoking poster presentations, and several hands-on workshops. Additionally, we'll have the opportunity to connect with a wide range of vendors showcasing the latest advancements in Audiology.



One of the aspects I look forward to the most at JDVAC, year after year, is the invaluable opportunity to network with colleagues across the VA and DOD enterprise. This fosters collaboration and the exchange of best practices to better serve our Veterans and active-duty service members. I can't think of a better place to learn, grow, and connect with peers who share a common mission, and I can't wait to see you there!



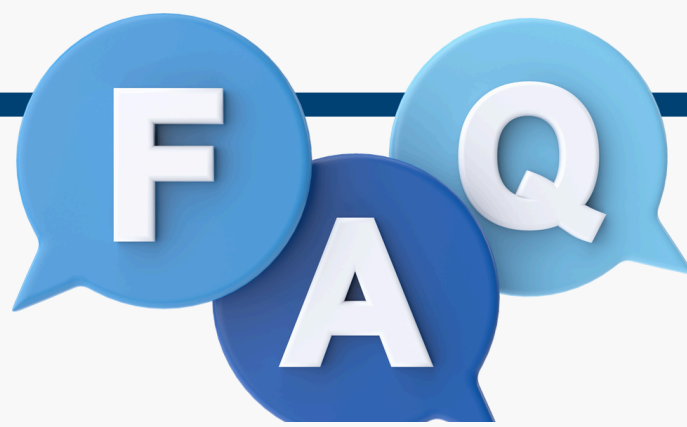
JDVAC Educational Committee is excited to see everyone at this year's upcoming conference. This year's conference is led by **Ilana Glick** (Conference Chair), **Michele Gortemaker** (AVAA Past President), **Angela Day** (MAA President), and **Megan Duke** (Conference Co-Chair). Our team has been working hard over the past year to put keynote speakers that align with this year's conference theme: New Horizon's in Audiology: A Shore Bet.

Our conference kicks off on Monday, April 7th at 7:45am with announcements followed by our first keynote speaker at 8:00am. We will be starting the conference off strong with **Dr. Benjamin Hornsby** speaking about listening effort, and how hearing loss can relate to listening-related fatigue. Dr. Hornsby is an Associate Professor in the Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. Monday morning is continued with Dr. Joshua Owen of the VA South Texas Healthcare System. **Dr. Owen** is going to speak about the integration of dermatology as a whole health factor with audiology and how the audiologist can play an integral role in early detection of skin cancer.

On Monday afternoon, **Dr. Sean McClenney**, our National Director of ASPS, will provide us with a review of FY24 and a vision for 2025. Following Dr. McClenney, will be our annual AVAA business meeting, which all VA audiologists are highly encouraged to attend (Reminder: All VA Audiologists are members of AVAA). The business meeting will include a review of AVAA from the past year, AVAA awards, as well as the announcement of the newest AVAA board members that will take their positions in June 2025.

Monday afternoon will conclude with **Dr. Ashley Zambetti**, and **Dr. Annabelle Thomlinson** sharing how they have integrated hearing service in the inpatient setting at their individual hospitals. We wrap up our day with **Dr. Jennifer Phelan** providing insight and guidance on clinical precepting. After our packed day of education and learning, do not forget to join us poolside for our Jersey Shore Social for good food, games, and music. You will not want to miss this event!





After a great night “on the shore”, join us Tuesday morning for breakfast with the exhibitors. Our first keynote of the day will be discussing migraines in the audiology clinic with **Dr. Samuel Bittel**. Following this keynote, **Dr. Lindsey Jorgensen** will discuss evidence-based practice with hearing aid fittings and verification measures. The exhibit hall will be open throughout the day to meet, mingle, and learn from all our vendors, as well as to check out all the poster presentations for additional CEUs.

Following lunch, our joint session will be an update to the VA/DOD Clinical Practice Guidelines for Tinnitus presented by **Dr. Tara Zaugg, Dr. Michele Spencer**, and **Dr. LaGuinn Sherlock**. They will be providing a one-hour keynote on important information for all audiologists. Following this session, our tinnitus specialists will be hosting a breakout session, that is a more in-depth workshop exploring these guidelines. Other breakout workshops that will be hosted Tuesday afternoon include, synchronous and asynchronous telehealth hands on telehealth training, Xander Captioned Glasses review, verification hands on session, as well as additional time to spend with the vendors and posters in the exhibit hall.

Tuesday we will come together again for a keynote presented by **Dr. Riley DeBacker** with a look into the future on how AI can play a role in hearing and balance. After a great day at conference, don't forget to take some time to check out the Atlantic City Boardwalk.

We conclude our 2025 conference on Wednesday morning with take a deep dive into aural rehabilitation with **Dr. Delia Karahalios**. Wednesday is jammed packed with two other joint sessions as well as multiple breakout sessions throughout the day. The toughest part of Wednesday will be choosing what session to attend. Whether you want to focus on cochlear implants, vestibular topics, compensation and pension updates, learn the newest vendor technology, or take a deep dive into what our DoD counterparts are working on, there will be something interesting to learn all day. Most importantly, don't forget to drop off your CEU forms before heading home. We hope everyone is excited as we are to learn, collaborate, grow, and even socialize a little, on the Jersey Shore! See everyone in a few weeks.





Come join us at **Harrahs Resort in Atlantic City New Jersey**. In your down time there are many plaes you can enjoy in the area!



- Planet Rose Karaoke Bar
- Tanger Outlet shopping spree
- Walk the boardwalk at sunset
  - Popular New Jersey food staples:
    - salt water taffy
    - pizza
    - water ice and custard
    - hoagies
    - fresh lemonade
    - pork roll egg and cheese breakfast sandwich

Don't want to leave the resort? No problem! Enjoy on site shows, restaurants and nightlife!

Follow us on social media for more JDVAC 2025 info:

 @JointDefenseVeteransAudiologyConference  
 @jdvaconference

# PREPARE FOR JDVAC 2025

**Charissa Hicks, Patricia Gabbidon, Elizabeth Elkins, and Larissa Conolly**, our JDVAC 2025 App & Registration Chairs, want attendees to be prepared when they arrive at the conference.

Here is some information so you can be electronically connected during JDVAC 2025:

- As you complete your JDVAC 2025 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 into the application, CVENT, with your mobile devices.
- You will need access to the app during your time at the conference.
- CVENT will provide you with important JDVAC 2025 information, including presentations, schedules, surveys for CEUs, and vendor info.

**If you typically register with your work email, you may want to use your personal email address instead, unless you have access to your work email during the conference!**

To access the JDVAC 2025 event page, you will need to download the **CVENT app**. Once downloaded, search “**Joint Defence VA Audiology Conference 2025**.” Please note that content is not accessible until April 1.

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)



Use the App Store or Google Play Store to find the CVENT Evgents app!



# MONDAY NIGHT SOCIAL

OH YEAH ... JDVAC... YEAH!!!  
Ashley Zambetti & Stacey  
Sturgulewski, your JDVAC 2024  
Social Chairs, have a social event  
that will get you crazy and wild!  
Info on next page!

CABS ARE  
HERE!

TAXI



# DON'T FORGET TO **GTL** BEFORE YOU HEAD TO ATLANTIC CITY!

Hey JDVAC attendees! We are looking forward to having you join us in Atlantic City. We have been hard at work planning your Monday Night Social event. After a long day of learning on April 7th, get ready to fist pump during our “Jersey Shore” Themed Social from 7-10. Dressing to the theme is strongly encouraged!



*Ed Hardy*  
By Christian Audigier

## Itinerary:

- Costume contest and Raffle - winners to be announced at event
- Food
- Cash Bar
- DJ





## WE LOVE OUR STUDENTS



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 number of applicants. 31 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:

***There will be 2 main presentations on the student track. The first will be a short presentation on Animal Audiology by Michael Berick which will be of interest to both VA and DOD Audiologists. The second will be a panel discussion that will provide the students with information about the arc of their VA career from hiring to retirement. There will be several subject matter experts on the panel as well as leaders from professional organizations outside the VA.***

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.

**Special thanks to our JDVAC 2025 conference  
chairs and cochairs! This conference would not  
be possible without all of these wonderful  
people!**

*Angela Day - JDVAA President*

*Michele Gortemaker - JDVAA Vice-President*

*Ilana Glick - Conference chair*

*Megan Duke - Conference Co-Chair*

*Tina Penman - Field Presentation Chair*

*Melissa Papesh - Field Presentation Co-Chair*

*1LT Daniel Johnston - Poster Chair*

*1LT Andrew May - Poster Co-Chair*

*Mary Kelly Bone - CEU Chair*

*Aneda Baker - CEU Co-Chair*

*Elicia Pillion - CEU Co-Chair*

*Stacey Sturgulewski - Social Committee Chair*

*Ashley Zambetti - Social Committee Chair*

*Tawni Wallace - Social Committee Co-Chair*

*Captain Emily Lee - Social Committee Co-Chair*

*Lindsay Shears - Exhibitors Chair*

*Rachel Kansky - Exhibitors Co-Chair*

*JR McCoy - Student Experience Chair*

*Delia Karahalios - Student Experience Co-Chair*

*Lindsay Shears - Student Experience Co-Chair*

*Elizabeth Elkin - Registration/App/Program Chair*

*Patricia Elie - Registration/App/Program Chair*

*Charissa Hicks - Registration/App/Program Co-Chair*

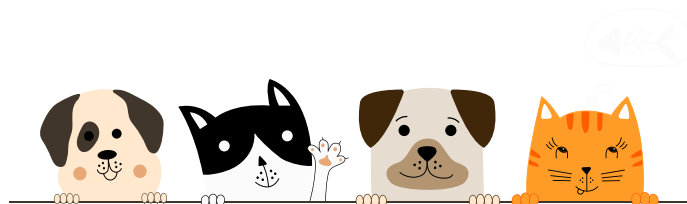
*CPT Larissa Conolly - Registration/App/Program Co-Chair*

# Pets of AVAA

These cute ladies are Mrs. Jumbo and Mrs. Potts. Their mom is **Dr. Catherine Peters** who shared with the newsletter that these girls are almost 11 years old, are Arizona natives and are from the same litter. They enjoy wet food, treats, sleeping and watching the world go by from the safety of their cat tower!



This is Ozzie who's mom is **Dr. Janelle Shaw** from the Phoenix VA. Ozzie is a 2 year old turquoise Green Cheek Conure. She loves to run errands with her humans. Her favorite foods are strawberries, popcorn and apples!





Want an authentic Italian Sunday family dinner? Clip these family recipes from **Dr. Ashley Zambetti** from the Pittsburgh VA. Original recipes were created by her great grandma. There were no measurements so Ashley has modified them slightly. Always remember to measure with your heart (especially the garlic)!

## Traditional Red Sauce - careful it stains EVERYTHING

### Ingredients:

2 large cans crushed or pureed tomatoes (my great grandma used homemade canned.... no idea how to do that)  
 1 small can of tomato sauce  
 2 cans of tomato paste  
 1 white onion  
 3 cloves of garlic  
 1 tbs of fresh parsley  
 1 tbs of fresh basil  
 1 tbs dried oregano  
 1 tbs stock concentrate  
 1 tbs salt  
 1 1/2 large can of water  
 pepper  
 Carrots OR tbs baking soda

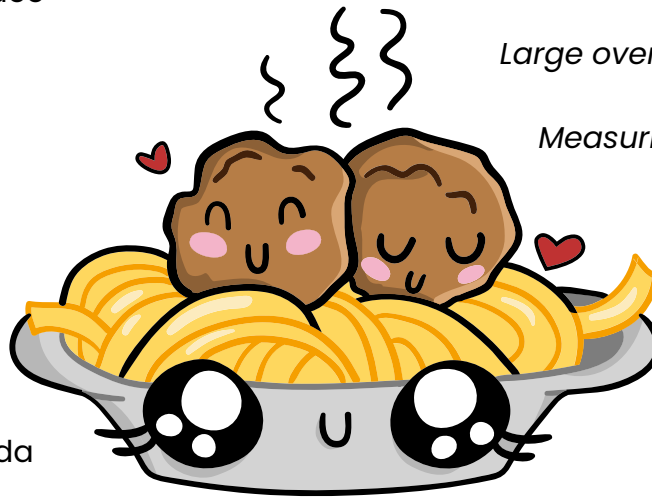
### Supplies:

Stock pot

Large oven safe frying pan

Bowl

Measuring cups/spoons



### Preparation:

Dice onion super small (even grate)  
 In the large stock pot - Sauté onions in a lot of olive oil for about 5 minutes until onions are translucent  
 Mince 3 cloves of garlic and cook for about 30 seconds (until you smell it)  
 Add tomato paste, stir and cook for about 2 minutes  
 Add cans of tomatoes, sauce, water, and stock concentrate  
 Stir  
 Add spices  
 Stir  
 Add carrots or baking soda (it's to take out the acidity)  
 Bring to simmer  
 Go make those meatballs!





## Meatballs

### Ingredients:

1 lbs ground beef  
1 lbs ground chuck  
1 cup milk  
1 cup bread crumbs  
1 cup pecorino romano cheese  
a big spoon full of ricotta cheese  
2 tbsp fresh parsley  
2 cloves garlic  
salt and pepper  
2 eggs (1 egg per lbs of meat)

### Preparation:

Add ground meats to a bowl and mix lightly with a fork (you don't want to mix too much or they get tough)

Add milk and mix with fork

Add everything except the breadcrumbs and mix with fork initially then switch to your hands

Add breadcrumbs and mix with hands

Make into golf balls

Brown outsides in the large pan with olive oil

Add to sauce and cook for about 20-30 minutes

Last 10 minutes cook your preferred pasta  
(we always used rigatoni)

## Garlic Chicken Strips

Stick of butter in an oven safe pan

Add 1 tbs of garlic

Take 2 lbs of chicken strips and dredge in flour seasoned with salt and pepper

Lay the floured strips in the pan

Cook on both sides until white on the outside (do not fully cook)

Take strips out of the pan

Add equal amounts of chicken stock and white wine (about a cup of each)

Salt and pepper

Add 1 tbs fresh parsley

Cook for a bit (until alcohol is mostly gone)

Add chicken back into a pan

Cook in oven on 350 degrees for 20 minutes

A family dinner is  
not complete  
without a side salad  
and some yummy  
bread!