



It has been my privilege to serve on the Board of the Academy since 1992. Initially I was a non-voting member, serving as chairman of the Cerumen Management Training Team. In 1994 and 1996 I was elected Treasurer, followed by President-elect in 1998. Over that period of time, I developed an appreciation for continuity and coordination of effort. What has been achieved by this Academy has been by virtue of the accomplishments of many. Working together, the Board of Directors and the membership have built this organization into one of the most powerful and influential forces in our profession.

The transition of our profession to the doctor of audiology was mapped out in the late 1980's. The Academy continues to accept the challenge of keeping progress regarding this initiative on track. The Academy adopted a by-laws change effective January 2001, which specified the Au.D. as the credential for new members. We were the first Audiology organization to take this position. Many interpreted it as controversial at the time. We continue to support the Au.D. program in a variety of ways. We developed a student mentoring program which is only available to Au.D. candidates in residential training programs. We provide financial support to the AFA scholarship fund for Au.D. candidates. We continue to offer a basic tract of instruction at our conventions focused primarily on the entry level Au.D. candidate who is interested in private practice.

The Academy continues to assume the position of guardian of our mission and our member's best interests. When ASHA and the AAO (American Academy of Otolaryngology) attempted to develop America's Hearing Health Care Team, our Academy vocally opposed this initiative as a guarded attempt by the AAO to gain control over the dispensing network. If this initiative would have become reality, AAO could have theoretically used this rhetoric to persuade Congress to deny our profession direct access to third party billing, and eventually denied Medicare access. In hindsight, our opposition to this initiative served to bring our members closer together. Following an ADA alert, our members spoke in mass to ASHA by resigning their membership and refusing to continue to pay for their CCC certificate.

On the legislative front, our Academy gained direct access billing for Federal employees through Blue Cross and Blue Shield. We also gained direct access to the National Mail Carriers Insurance policy. We attended fundraisers, contributed to legislative efforts, and met with many

influential members of Congress over the past few years. Tommy Thompson, Secretary of Health, Jim Scully, director of Medicaid, Senator Tom Daeschel, Congressman Ed Whitfield, and many others have been a very important part of our past success and will be even more important to our future.

Our cooperative efforts with the AAA have resulted in many favorable gains, both at the national and at the state level. We worked with AAA to better define ethical issues to keep our members abreast of changing federal policies and laws. We are working on an ongoing basis with AAA to establish outcome based standards by which to define the new AuD training programs. It is anticipated that most of the new training programs will embrace this new standard, both for its efficiency and its practicality. They, like us, assess that it is time for Audiology to be recognized as an autonomous profession and more than just a necessary part of a speech therapy training curriculum. The board of directors of the Academy feel strongly that this cooperative effort is a very important part of our success to date, and is integral to our advancement into the future.

The Academy has over 15 active committees. We are involved in the planning of at least four BOD meetings, AAA convention and our own convention. We are updating our web site daily. We must coordinate member concerns on a daily basis, log, bill and collect commitments to the Academy on a daily basis, and we must maintain lines of communication with manufacturers, our members, prospective members, students, and consumers. As you can understand, this commitment is now well beyond the capabilities of a volunteer staff of elected officers. Consequently, the Board of Directors approved the hiring of an Administrative Audiologist, Susan Flory. It will be the responsibility of the Administrative Audiologist to work under the direction of the President. This person will coordinate and monitor programs on a daily basis.

Over the past two years, the Academy has been active in developing a buying group for our members. This buying group will be administered by AudNet, Inc., a company founded and operated by David Smriga. It is the goal of the buying group to provide our members with good pricing and practice related services including advertising which will brand the Doctor of Audiology to the general public, equipment financing, employment services, retirement planning, etc.. Considering the buying power of our membership, this business model has great potential for building the resources necessary to promote our professional identity.

Finally, it is the commitment of the Academy to again become active at the state level and consider offering a state chapter network. State level involvement is necessary to prevent unwanted regulation and redefinition of the Au.D. by standards below reasonable expectation by the profession. Licensure laws must be rewritten and promoted and licensure boards must be educated regarding professional expectation of Au.D. standards. Membership recruiting

must go to the roots of our profession, and networks of communication must be set up to be more efficient and effective as we proceed through the legal tangle of reassessing and building a new doctoral level profession.

I want to thank you, the members of this great Academy, for giving me the opportunity to serve as your President. I feel very strongly that this has been the highlight of my career and I will cherish the friends and colleagues that I have made during my tenure. I encourage you, as members, to get involved and stay involved with your Academy. ADA is known for the ability to push the envelope and occasionally, draws criticism as a result. However, our continual and undaunted desire to improve is why we have been so successful in the past, and why we will continue to take the lead in the future. Before you criticize any actions of your Academy or your Board of Directors, pick up the telephone and call any one of the members listed in the front of your membership directory. It is only through our combined efforts that we have come this far, and only through your continued participation and communication that we will take the profession to the next level.