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**Audiologists Connect in Indianapolis for AudiologyNOW!** **2017 to Innovate for the Future**

(Reston, VA–May 02, 2017)—Audiologists from around the United States and the world converged in the unofficial “Crossroads of America,” Indianapolis, Indiana, for AudiologyNOW! 2017, the annual conference of the American Academy of Audiology.

In keeping with this year’s theme of “Connect, Reconnect and Innovate,” the traditional Thursday morning General Assembly opened earlier than usual and offered continuing education credits to attendees. This year’s General Assembly also addressed changes in the profession and the future of audiology. This year’s keynote presentation, given by Shelly Chadha, MBBS, MS, PhD, from the World Health Organization (WHO), Program for Prevention of Deafness and Hearing Loss, addressed making hearing care accessible to all. Dr. Chadha focused on an understanding of the WHO program for prevention of deafness and hearing loss, as well as sharing the public health aspects of hearing care and sparking interest among attendees in the movement globally for making hearing care accessible for all.

Similarly, Academy President Ian Windmill, PhD, addressed the assembly about several “hot-topic” items facing audiology, such as the PCAST report and the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) report on over-the-counter (OTC) devices, and the need for change within the profession.

“The past 18 months have been nothing if not interesting for our profession. Certainly, not in my professional career has the subject of hearing loss been so evident inside the Beltway,” Dr. Windmill said.

On Wednesday, the conference officially kicked off with 230 attendees participating in the ninth annual Academy Research Conference (ARC), which focused on pediatrics, advancements in assessments, and rehabilitation. This year’s ARC conference, chaired by Anne Marie Tharpe, PhD, brought together experts in the field of pediatric audiology to present information on how diagnosis and treatment of infants and children with hearing loss has significantly improved over the last decade, all due to technological advances and new understanding of developmental and biological mechanisms. Hot topics in pediatric audiology were also discussed during the conference.

Also on Wednesday, Learning Modules and Featured Sessions began for AudiologyNOW! attendees. The annual membership meeting was also hosted by the Academy Board of Directors, which gave attendees the chance to meet and hear the candidates for president-elect and members of the board present their visions for the Academy. Afterward the board took questions from membership during the Academy Team Huddle. A new event, the First-Time Attendee Orientation, saw a packed room of attendees get information on how to make the most of their time at AudiologyNOW! Another event on Wednesday afternoon, the Industry Symposium, sponsored in part by ReSound, drew a full room to hear the future of smart hearing discussed.

The opening-day reception, Celebrate Audiology (sponsored in part by Hamilton CapTel), closed out Wednesday’s festivities and kicked off the opening of the exhibit hall, where participants enjoyed food, drink, and entertainment, while meeting with exhibitors and reconnecting with colleagues. In addition, several open houses were held that evening, with

10 universities hosting gatherings for students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Nearly 180 exhibitors highlighted the latest research and technology, new products, and services in hearing health care in the exhibit hall, as well as in quick solutions

and industry update educational sessions.

Audiology students have become a growing number of those who participate in AudiologyNOW! This year’s conference was no different, with nearly 800 students attending. They took part in the Student Academy of Audiology’s (SAA) Mix and Mingle (sponsored in part by Audigy Group) and the SAA Cheers for Ears (sponsored

in part by Oticon, Inc., Phonak, LLC, and Starkey HearingTechnologies) on Wednesday evening, as well as student- specific workshops and various events at the SAA Central booth during the four days of AudiologyNOW! The fifth annual SAA Conference drew a record number of attendees.

The AAA Foundation presented three distinguished lectures during AudiologyNOW! On Wednesday afternoon, Barbara Balik, EdD, principal of Common Fire Healthcare Consulting, presented the Foundation’s Improving Patient Care through Innovation in Workplace Management Lecture (sponsored in part by Phonak, LLC). Dr. Balik’s lecture,

entitled “Innovation in Hearing and Balance Care: A Pathway to Transforming Outcomes,” tapped into the creativity and talent that audiologists possess to prompt dramatic system leadership through innovative partnerships with patients, families, community members and other health-care professionals.

On Friday, the Foundation presented two more lectures:

 The Marion Downs Lecture in Pediatric Audiology (sponsored in part by The Oticon Foundation) was presented by Dr. Anu Sharma, PhD, professor and chair in the Department of Speech Language and Hearing and a Fellow at the Institute for Cognitive Science and Center for Neuroscience at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Dr. Sharma’s address, “Brain Changes in Hearing Loss,” looked at brain plasticity and how it provides a framework upon which rehabilitation and therapy initiatives for the clinical populations needing hearing aids or cochlear implants should be based.

 The Topics in Tinnitus lecture series (sponsored in part by Widex) featured an address by Dr. James Henry, an audiologist at the National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory Research, titled “Evidence-Based Tinnitus Management—Inching Toward a Standard of Practice.”

These lectures are now available on-demand, at no cost, on [www.eaudiology.org.](http://www.eaudiology.org/)

During the President’s reception (sponsored in part by Starkey Hearing Technologies) on Friday afternoon, Dr. Windmill presented the Academy Presidential Awards to Oaktree Products, the Ida Institute, and SAA President Joshua Huppert.

In addition to the educational sessions, lectures, and new products and technology, AudiologyNOW! gave attendees several fun events to participate in during the four days of the convention. Special events ranged from a 5K Run/Walk on Thursday morning (sponsored in part by Oticon, Inc.), dine-arounds at area restaurants, Sunrise-Yoga on Friday morning, and a picnic and baseball game at Victory Field, giving attendees a chance to enjoy the company of and catch up with their colleagues.

Building upon the experience and innovation of the convention in Indianapolis, work has begun on planning AudiologyNOW! 2018, to be held in Nashville, Tennessee, on April 18–21, 2018. Visit the AudiologyNOW! website (www.AudiologyNOW.org) for more information.

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*With an active membership of more than 12,000 audiologists, the American Academy of Audiology promotes quality hearing and balance care by advancing the profession of audiology through leadership, advocacy, education, public awareness, and support of research. To learn more about the audiology profession and how audiologists are helping the*

*36 million Americans who experience hearing loss, please visit the Academy's Web site at* [*www.audiology.org.*](http://www.audiology.org/)