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Association for the Deaf
& Hard of Hearing



PRESS KIT



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OVERVIEW

To Designated Media Outlet,

Modern technological advancements in newborn hearing screening offer more parental options than ever before. Devices such as hearing aids and cochlear implants transfer environmental auditory information to the brain of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, where it can then be processed. In other words, it is possible for a child born with hearing loss today to be able to listen and learn how to speak.

The Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AG Bell) educates parents about this communication option for their children who are deaf or hard of hearing and serves as a resource for those who choose the listening and spoken language (LSL) methodology. AG Bell facilitates the connection between families of children with hearing loss and qualified professionals who assist the children in mastering spoken language. Through publications, outreach, advocacy, events, trainings, scholarships, financial aid and global chapters, AG Bell offers families and professionals the support they need close to home.

As AG Bell's chief executive officer, I am excited to provide you with the attached information about our organization's mission, where we work globally to ensure that people who are deaf and hard of hearing can hear and talk. Please find included in this press kit information about AG Bell, our work and the history behind our work. If you would like to reach out to AG Bell, contact information is available below.

I look forward to speaking and collaborating with you.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Emilio Alonso-Mendoza, J.D.

Chief Executive Officer

Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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BACKGROUND

HISTORY

Although widely known as the inventor of the telephone, Dr. Alexander Graham Bell was first and foremost a teacher of the deaf. Dr. Bell established two organizations: the Volta Bureau in Washington, D.C., constructed in 1893, which served as a repository for information related to deafness, and the American Association to Promote the Teaching of Speech to the Deaf, organized in 1890. Over time, these organizations evolved into what we now know as the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AG Bell).

ABOUT

What is AG Bell?

AG Bell is an international nonprofit organization that brings families and professionals together to support children with hearing loss. AG Bell's community comprises families who have children who are deaf or hard of hearing; adults who are deaf or hard of hearing; and the professionals who work with them, including teachers of the deaf, speech-language pathologists, audiologists and certified Listening and Spoken Language Specialists (LSLS®s), who are certified through AG Bell's Academy.

MISSION

“Working Globally to Ensure That People who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing can Hear and Talk.”

We want all families to be informed and supported, professionals to be appropriately qualified to teach and help children with hearing loss, public policy leaders to effectively address the needs of people with hearing loss, and communities to be empowered to help their neighbors with hearing loss succeed.

AG Bell works to promote issues relevant to children and adults with hearing loss to legislators, regulators, health care systems, the media, and educational and legal systems. AG Bell participates in a variety of coalitions that address issues of concern to the larger community of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, such as the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Alliance (DHHA) and the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH), among others.

OUR WORK

To carry out this mission, AG Bell is organized into four goal areas:

Community Building

AG Bell's vibrant community of 17,000 provides information and opportunities to network for families of children who are deaf and hard of hearing; for professionals, including teachers of the deaf, speech language pathologists, audiologists, and LSLSs; and adults who are deaf or hard of hearing. Programs include:

- **Listening and Spoken Language Knowledge Center**

Provides ongoing support and education through the ages and stages of raising a child who is deaf or hard of hearing. It is the go-to source for parents, adults who are deaf or hard of hearing and professionals to find up-to-date information about technology, legal and education news. Information is available in both English and Spanish.

- **Parent Advocacy Training (PAT)**

PAT is an online course that enables parents to successfully advocate for their child and make sure his or her educational needs are met. PAT is offered free of charge.

- **Financial Aid and Scholarship Programs**

AG Bell offers financial aid and scholarships to help support a listening and spoken language outcome for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. Programs are classified by age and educational level and range from infancy through post-graduate school.

- **Leadership Opportunities for Teens (LOFT)**

AG Bell's acclaimed LOFT program is offered annually and designed for participants to develop skills in individual leadership, communication, teamwork and self-advocacy.

- **Volta Voices**

A quarterly magazine with features and regular columns that focus on the latest in hearing technology, communications access, educational approaches and professional development.

- **The Volta Review**

AG Bell's scholarly peer-reviewed online journal offers the latest research in the field of listening and spoken language development. Recent topics include early hearing detection and intervention and professional development.

- **LSL Leading Edge**

An exclusive benefit for AG Bell professional members, this e-newsletter focuses on professional issues and intervention strategies for the classroom and clinic.

- **AG Bell e-News**

AG Bell's weekly e-newsletter is available for free. Topics include the latest news and announcements in hearing research, communications access and professional development.

- **Chapters**

AG Bell has an extensive network of local chapters throughout the United States, as well as global affiliates, that offer local area information and resources, special events, and networking opportunities.

Capacity Building

AG Bell works to increase the number of highly trained professionals available for families and individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to achieve a listening and spoken language outcome.

- **LSLS Certification**

The Alexander Graham Bell Academy for Listening and Spoken Language, a related but separate organization from AG Bell, credentials LSLSs. The LSLS certification distinguishes a professional who

FACTSHEET

has demonstrated the knowledge, skills and abilities to work with children who are deaf or hard of hearing to achieve an outcome of listening, spoken language and literacy.

- **AG Bell Convention**

AG Bell hosts approximately 1,500 attendees at its biennial convention, which features concurrent sessions, a research symposium, an exhibition hall, a child and teen program, and social networking opportunities for professionals, families and adults who are deaf and hard of hearing.

- **LSL Symposium**

AG Bell hosts a LSL Symposium that focuses on professional development for teachers, therapists and early interventionists.

ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

AG Bell is governed by a volunteer board representative of its community of families, professionals and adults living with hearing loss. AG Bell has a professional staff of 33 who are based at the organization's historic headquarters, the Volta Bureau, in Washington, D.C., and in Madrid, Spain.

AG BELL INTERNATIONAL

In 2017, AG Bell merged with Madrid-based [CLAVE](#) and [Fundación Oír Es Clave](#) (Hearing is Key Foundation) to form Alexander Graham Bell International (AG Bell International). For nearly 10 years, CLAVE and Fundación Oír Es Clave have followed AG Bell's vision and model throughout Spain and Latin America. AG Bell International works to reach and advocate for Spanish speakers with hearing loss and the professionals who serve them – in Spain and in all Spanish-speaking populations, including those living in the United States.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

AG Bell Publications

Volta Voices, The Volta Review, e-News, LSL Leading Edge

Career Development

AG Bell's continuing education programs, including the biennial AG Bell Convention and the annual LSL Symposium, provide groundbreaking information, state-of-the-art resources and new ways of supporting individuals with hearing loss. AG Bell also provides members with high quality training programs, materials and continuing education opportunities.

Advocacy and Support

AG Bell members are an integral part of AG Bell's advocacy efforts to advance public policy initiatives that will advance listening and spoken language for children and adults with hearing loss, as well as for the professionals who serve them. AG Bell works in coalition with a wide range of organizations that represent professionals and consumers in the field of hearing loss and is a major voice in Congress, the courts and federal regulatory agencies. AG Bell supports important policy initiatives, such as the reauthorization of early hearing detection and intervention (EHDI), hearing aid tax credit, state hearing aid insurance legislation and other issues.

Peer Networking and Leadership Opportunities

AG Bell's numerous state chapters, special project committees and leadership opportunities make members part of the most extensive network of professionals, individuals and family members who support listening and spoken language today. AG Bell provides a wide range of opportunities for members to serve in leadership positions at the local, state and national levels.

Up-to-the-Minute Access via the Web

At the LSL Knowledge Center, you can get the latest updates on news in listening and spoken language, participate in AG Bell's social media outlets, join or renew your membership, register for professional development events, and order books and other quality resources.

AG Bell's Online Job Board: Members can register resumes, view job postings and apply for jobs – all on AG Bell's Online Job Board, the only job board devoted exclusively to positions in the field of LSL.

DIRECTORY

EXECUTIVE TEAM



Emilio Alonso-Mendoza has served as AG Bell's chief executive officer since 2014. He brings with him an extensive history in the nonprofit sector, assisting organizations such as the Catholic Community Foundation and Children's Home Society of Florida raise their national profiles. Emilio holds a B.A. in journalism and J.D. from the University of Miami, as well as a professional certificate in fundraising (CFRE) from the Association of Fundraising Professionals. He is trilingual (Spanish, English, French), a traveler, art collector and loving husband to his wife, Marina, CPA. Emilio and Marina live in Georgetown (Washington, D.C.), where he also serves as a board member for several human services and arts organizations.



Gayla Guignard, M.A., CCC-A/SLP, LSLS® Cert. AVT, has served as AG Bell's chief strategy officer since September 2015. She worked as a direct service provider, clinical supervisor, state (EHD) coordinator and as the inaugural director of Indiana's Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education (CDHHE). Ms. Guignard has special interests in systems change and strategic activities related to improved outcomes for children and their families. She also served in numerous leadership roles on national committees and work groups.



Lisa Chutjian has served as AG Bell's chief development officer since 2014. She is a certified fundraising executive with nearly two decades of experience leading and managing relationship-building efforts to help engage people in supporting great causes. At AG Bell, she works closely with staff, board members and supporters on broadening our alliances and growing our membership. She is responsible for AG Bell's financial aid, scholarship programs and leads its efforts to develop strong staff teams and interns. She is a strategic thinker who continuously focuses on innovative ways to better serve people with hearing loss, their families and the professionals who support them. She volunteers as a chapter organizer for the Grant Professionals Association and is a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals.



Christopher Gensch has served as AG Bell's communications director since April 2017. Originally from the New Jersey shore, Chris earned his bachelor's degree from Rutgers University, where he majored in Spanish translation and communications. He has worked in various communications roles since graduating, including at the Brady Campaign and Center to Prevent Gun Violence in Washington, D.C. At AG Bell, he works to advance the organization's mission through its communications initiatives.



Paul Monarch has served as AG Bell's chief operating officer since 2014, overseeing budgetary and financial matters. He brings with him three decades of financial operations, information technology, mergers and acquisitions, infrastructure and business strategic planning at some of the most well-known technology companies in the world. Hailing from Boston and educated at Fairfield University in Connecticut, his tenure at AG Bell began after a chance meeting with Emilio in a Florida youth mentoring program. Seeing positive transformative effects on kids' lives as a result of AG Bell's work has kept Paul here ever since.

AG BELL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMBERS

Emilio Alonso-Mendoza, J.D., CFRE, chief executive officer
Robert J. Bush, CPCU, CPIA, treasurer
Ivette Cejas, Ph.D., MSci
Ellen L. Estes, M.S., LSLS® Cert. AVEd
Howard W. Francis, M.D., M.B.A.
Kevin Franck, Ph.D., M.B.A., CCC-A
Sara Grosvenor
Susan Lenihan, Ph.D., CED, secretary
Catharine McNally, chair-elect
Ted Meyer, M.D., Ph.D., chair
John F. Stanton, Esq.
Arlene Stredler Brown, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
Meredith K. Sugar, Esq., immediate past chair

AG BELL ACADEMY BOARD MEMBERS

Rollen Cooper, M.S., LSLS® Cert. AVEd
Ellen L. Estes, M.S., LSLS® Cert. AVEd
Sherri Fickenscher, M.S., LSLS® Cert. AVEd
Ulrika Lofkvist, Ph.D., LSLS® Cert. AVEd., M.Sc.
Jane R. Madell, Ph.D., LSLS® Cert. AVT
Ted Meyer, M.D., Ph.D.
Teri Ouellette, M.S. Ed., LSLS® Cert. AVEd
Leana "Lee" Rech, J.D.
Emma Rushbrooke, MPhil (Audiology), B.A., DipAud, MAudSA, LSLS® Cert. AVT, RNC
Ellen Thomas, M.A., CCC, LSLS® Cert. AVT
Jenna Voss, Ph.D., CED, LSLS® Cert. AVEd
Elizabeth Rosenzweig, M.S. CCC-SLP, LSLS® Cert. AVT
Experts
Ellen L. Estes, M.S., LSLS® Cert. AVEd
Rollen M. Cooper, M.S., LSLS® Cert. AVEd

EXPERTS

Gayla Guignard, M.A., CCC-A/SLP, LSLS® Cert. AVT, chief strategy officer, AG Bell
Carol Flexer, Ph.D., CCC-A; LSLS® Cert. AVT, distinguished professor emeritus, audiology,
The University of Akron, Akron, Ohio
Donald M. Goldberg, Ph.D., CCC-SLP/A, FAAA, LSLS® Cert. AVT, president emeritus, AG Bell

LATEST NEWS

EVENTS



[The AG Bell Convention](#) is a place to learn, network and connect with your community of parents, professionals and individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Attendees will have the opportunity to spend time with old friends and colleagues and meet new ones by taking advantage of the many opportunities to connect with others.

Guests will also learn the latest about research and innovative practices related to listening and spoken language.

[AG BELL NEWSROOM](#)

[“SPEAKING FROM THE VOLTA BUREAU”](#)

In this regular column, AG Bell CEO Emilio Alonso-Mendoza shares his perspectives on the work the organization is doing to help individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing live a life without limits.

MEDIA MENTIONS

[Associations Now](#) – January/February 2018 Issue

[Integración](#) – January 2018 Issue

[Media Planet’s Hearing & Vision Campaign](#) – March 2018

[Hearing Review](#) – October 2017 Issue

[Hearing Our Way](#) – February 2018 Issue

[Telemundo](#) – October 5, 2017 (Interview) | September 11, 2017 (Feature)

[Association of Fundraising Professionals](#) – October 17, 2017 Issue

[Corporación de Radio y Televisión Española \(RTVE\)](#) – October 2017 Interview

[Popoviuli](#) – Interview

MEDIA

SOCIAL MEDIA

AG Bell’s Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn pages are places for AG Bell members and the public to share information, ask for help and network.

- Facebook: [The Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#)

AG Bell and the LSL community are on Facebook in two spaces. Since conversations about hearing loss tend to be personal and may deal with children, AG Bell has created a closed [Facebook Group](#), which is designed to be a safe space where families, adults and professionals can gather and discuss issues openly. To join this group, click the Join button on the top of the group page, and after a review of your request, you will be considered a member. AG Bell staff monitors this group only to ensure it remains a safe, open and respectful space for all to discuss LSL. Read more about AG Bell’s policies [here](#).

- Twitter: [@AGBellAssoc](#)

- Instagram: [@agbellassociation](#)

- LinkedIn: [The Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#)

- YouTube: [Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#)

LOGO (PRINT AND WEB)



PHOTOS







AWARDS AND FINANCIAL AID

AWARDS

- The **AG Bell Honors Award** is given to an outstanding person who is involved with people with hearing loss and is recognized by the AG Bell Association for extreme dedication to, and sustained efforts toward, the goals and purposes of the AG Bell Association.
- The **Award of Distinction** is given to an individual or organization outside the field of education/rehabilitation of individuals with hearing loss. This is the “layman’s” award – an outreach award for outstanding contributions to the field locally, nationally or internationally during the five years preceding bestowal of the award.
- The **Volta Award** is given to a publication, production, individual or agency for making a significant contribution to the increase of public awareness of the problems and potentials of people who are deaf and hard of hearing, directly enhancing the goals, purposes and image of AG Bell.
- The **AG Bell Award for International Service** is given to an individual who has demonstrated accomplishments in international service to the field of LSL through work and involvement with people with hearing loss.

FINANCIAL AID

- The **George H. Nofer Scholarship for Law and Public Policy** is for full-time graduate students with a pre-lingual bilateral hearing loss in the moderately severe to profound range, who use LSL as their primary method of communication and who are attending an accredited, mainstream law school or graduate school full-time, working toward a Master’s or Doctoral degree in public policy or public administration. Up to three awards of up to \$5,000 each may be awarded per year.
- **College Scholarships** are for full-time students who are deaf or hard of hearing and use LSL.
- The **Arts & Sciences Award Program** is available to students who are deaf or hard of hearing in grades one through twelve. Awards allow students to participate in after-school, weekend or summer programs that develop skills in the arts or sciences. Applications are now closed for 2018.
- The **AG Bell AVEd Scholarship** has established a professional scholarship to support certification of educators through the AG Bell Academy. The purpose of this scholarship is to assist one LSLS professional per year in fulfilling the requirements for certification as a Listening and Spoken Language Specialist (LSLS®) in Auditory-Verbal Education (LSLS Cert. AVEd). This program is now open.
- The **Parent & Infant Financial Aid Program** is for families of infants and toddlers under the age of 4 who have been diagnosed with a moderately-severe to profound hearing loss who are pursuing a spoken language outcome for their child.
- The **School-Age Financial Aid Program** is for students with a pre-lingual bilateral hearing loss in the moderately-severe to profound range who use listening and spoken language and who are in first through twelfth grades and attending a parochial, independent or private mainstream school.
- The **Preschool Financial Aid Program** is for families of preschool-age children who have been diagnosed with a moderately-severe to profound hearing loss and who are pursuing spoken language education for their child. Families who apply should be committed to a listening and spoken language approach for the development of their child’s listening, speech and cognitive skills.
- AG Bell and The Listen Foundation’s **Doreen Pollack AVT Scholarship** assists one LSLS professional per year in fulfilling the requirements for certification as a Listening and Spoken Language Specialist (LSLS®) in Auditory-Verbal Therapy (LSLS Cert. AVT).



MEDIA CONTACTS

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ABOUT THE ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL ASSOCIATION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

The Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AG Bell) helps families, health care providers and education professionals understand childhood hearing loss and the importance of early diagnosis and intervention. Through advocacy, education and financial aid, AG Bell helps to ensure that every child and adult with hearing loss has the opportunity to listen, talk and live a life without limits. With chapters located in the United States, AG Bell International in Europe and a network of international affiliates, AG Bell supports its mission: *Working Globally to Ensure That People who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing can Hear and Talk.* Visit www.agbell.org.



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