

## Industry News

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The Canadian Academy of Audiology

### Jack Katz, PhD, researcher, author, speaker, and clinician

Up to 15 years ago, I wasn't sure that Dr. Jack Katz actually existed. How can one person be so prolific and everywhere at once- one day giving a talk in Ankara, Turkey, and the next, a seminar in Iowa. And then a book chapter came out, and... How can only one person be everywhere and doing everything at once? I was convinced that Jack Katz was really several people who were paid actors and the real Jack Katz was somewhere else. Then I met Jack ... or perhaps one of his paid actors (?) who gave the keynote talk at the Canadian Academy of Audiology- we were kindred spirits and I finally got to actually meet him. And several years later (purely coincidentally) I met his last PhD student, Dr. Kim Tillery and we have been married now for 12 years. Jack actually gave the toast to the bride and groom at my wedding.

Jack is known for many things- he is one of the pioneers of central auditory processing assessment and therapy and the father of the Buffalo Model of CAPD, but also is the Editor in Chief of 7 editions of the Handbook of Clinical Audiology, also known as HOCA. While on a Senior Fullbright Scholarship in Ankara, Turkey his students would refer to him as "Hoca" which means "highly regarded teacher". This is quite appropriate because HOCA is indeed a highly regarded teaching textbook- I learned from Edition 2 and each audiologist in the last 50+ years can date themselves by which edition of the textbook they used.

"Are you Ready?"

This is the carrier phrase of Jack's Staggered Spondaic Word (SSW) test which even today remains the mainstay of a central auditory processing battery, and it was Jack's own voice (or maybe one of the many actors that posed as Jack over the years?). Anyone who has studied in the field of central auditory processing has heard him say "Are you ready?"

Jack was a researcher, an author, a presenter, but also a clinician. Even at age 90, he would provide auditory therapy for those in need at the senior's facility where he and his wife Irma lived. Jack was able to see what worked, and what didn't work- his approach was always being updated. He has had clinical success with people with cochlear implants in the 1990s with superior results, and improving the auditory skills of individuals with low IQ - resulting in improved speech production. At age 91, Jack published a paper for the American Academy of Audiology on the Buffalo Model and how it came to be ([How the Buffalo Model Came to Be - American Academy of Audiology](#)).

But always with a smile.

I have never seen Jack when he didn't have a large smile on his face- see accompanying picture! Despite all of his successes and important work, Jack was humble, kind, had great integrity, never ending humour, and a clinical style that many of us envy.

Like many of his contemporaries, Jack was initially trained as a Speech-Language Pathologist and worked in several school boards, first studying at Brooklyn College, Syracuse University, and the University of Pittsburgh. His first audiology teaching job was at Northern Illinois University, followed by Tulane Medical School. He founded the speech and hearing clinic at Menorah Medical Center; and taught at the University at Buffalo for 28 years and Kansas University Medical School. He recently retired from private practice, Auditory Processing Service, in Kansas City.

And - Jack probably has clients all ready lined up where he is now.... smiling as he says, "Are you ready?"

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## Getting to Know Margaret Drent, CASLPO's New Registrar and CEO

We recently welcomed Margaret Drent as CASLPO's new Registrar and CEO, following the retirement of Brian O'Riordan in January. Margaret has been with the College since 2020, most recently serving as Deputy Registrar. As she steps into the Registrar and CEO role, we spoke with her about her background, what inspires her, and how she sees the College continuing to work in partnership with registrants to protect the public and support quality care.

### **Q: What does it mean to you to take on this role?**

*I feel privileged to lead an organization that plays a vital part in supporting safe, competent, and ethical care for people across Ontario. I look forward to working with our team and Board to continue delivering on our public protection mandate—and to supporting our registrants in the important work they do every day. Together, we help make sure that patients and families receive the care they need and deserve.*

### **Q: How has your time as Deputy Registrar helped prepare you for this position?**

*Over the past few years, I've led work in Registration, Quality Assurance, and Professional Practice. I've also helped implement the College's Strategic Plan, monitored progress on key performance indicators, and supported our reporting to the Ministry of Health through the College Performance Measurement Framework (CPMF). These experiences gave me a strong understanding of the College's day-to-day work and long-term goals, and of the many ways we can support registrants in staying current, competent, and confident in their practice.*

### **Q: What inspired your career in professional regulation?**

*I first became interested in professional regulation while working at the Legislative Assembly of*

*Ontario in a non-partisan research role, supporting the work of legislative committees. During a one-year secondment to the Health Professions Regulatory Advisory Council (HPRAC), an agency of the Ministry of Health that provided advice to the Minister, I had the opportunity to attend Council, or Board meetings for various health regulatory colleges, including CASLPO.*

*I was impressed by how engaged Board members were and how committed they were to both public protection and patient care. Although HPRAC no longer exists, that experience opened the door for me into the world of health professional regulation. What drew me in (and continues to inspire me) is the opportunity to work on meaningful, real-world issues like ensuring the sustainability of our health care system, adapting to technological and policy changes, supporting registrants in providing excellent care, and guiding Board and Committee members in their important decisions.*



*Margaret Drent, CASLPO's current Registrar and CEO, shakes hands with former Registrar Brian O'Riordan, who retired in January.*

**Q: What are your priorities as you begin your tenure?**

*I'm fortunate to build on the strong foundation laid by former Registrar Brian O'Riordan and Deputy Registrar Carol Bock, who strengthened governance at CASLPO. At my first CASLPO Board meeting in the Fall of 2020, I was impressed by the commitment, wisdom, work ethic, and dedication of Board members. The collegiality of the CASLPO Board is another distinguishing factor in my view. During CASLPO Board and Committee meetings, participants are respectful of the perspectives that others bring to the table as speech-language pathologists, audiologists or public members. I plan to continue to support the Board of Directors and our committees. That includes providing high-quality education on governance, and making sure Board members have*

*the tools to deepen their understanding of the professions and keep the patient perspective central to their decisions.*

*Another priority is strengthening our relationships with system partners. These include the Ontario Ministry of Health, Ontario's university programs in audiology and speech-language pathology, regulators across Canada, professional associations, and more. In a complex health care system, collaboration is essential. I look forward to connecting with as many partners as possible, because I believe we will be more effective if we are well-informed about the realities of day-to-day practice.*

*I am also committed to continuing to support CASLPO's important work in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. These efforts are more important than ever, and I'm proud to help move them forward.*

*I'm excited about the momentum we've built through new initiatives like The Wave, which has been well received, and our **new video** explaining the College's role. I also see great potential in growing CASLPO's social media presence to better connect with registrants and the public.*

We look forward to Margaret's leadership as CASLPO continues to evolve in a complex and changing health care landscape—working in partnership with registrants to support safe, effective care for the people of Ontario.

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## **2026 Aram Glorig Recipient Professor Emerita Kathy Pichora-Fuller**

Congratulations to Kathy Pichora-Fuller, Professor Emerita in the Department of Psychology at the University of Toronto and Adjunct Professor in the Department of Gerontology at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada.

Kathy became a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences in 2022. For over three decades, she has been an inter-disciplinary ambassador between audiology and psychology. She has translated her research on auditory and cognitive aging to address the rehabilitative needs of older adults with age-related hearing and cognitive impairments, more recently focussing on social engagement and healthy aging. She has served as the audiology expert for the Canadian Longitudinal Study of Aging and the Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging, and has contributed to the WHO World Reports on Hearing and on Aging and Health, as well as the 2022 World Alzheimer Report. She has served on the editorial board for the International Journal of Audiology for 14 years and for Ear and Hearing for 18 years. She has been President of the Speech-Language and Audiology Canada and of the International Collegium of Rehabilitative



Audiologists, representing ICRA on the WHO World Hearing Forum. She leads the Hearing in Later Life working group of the International Society of Audiology and represents the ISA on the WHO World Rehabilitation Alliance working group on primary care. She co-chaired the 2016 World Congress of Audiology in Vancouver. In 2004, she organized and moderated the ISA Round Table on “Cognition and Audiology” and at WCA 2024 she co-presented an invited session on “Reframing Hearing Loss and Cognition”. She won the President’s Award of the Canadian Academy of Audiology (2007), the International Award of the American Academy of Audiology (2014), the Lifetime Achievement Award of Speech-Language and Audiology Canada (2021), and delivered the Raymond Carhart Memorial Lecture for the American Auditory Society in 2025.

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## **Eric Bernard to succeed Arnd Kaldowski as CEO of Sonova**



*Eric Bernard*

After successfully leading Sonova as CEO for nearly eight years, Arnd Kaldowski has decided to step down as CEO effective September 30, 2025, due to health-related matters affecting a family member, marking a planned transition in Sonova's leadership. He will remain available to the Group in an advisory capacity until June 2026, leveraging his extensive industry and company-specific knowledge. After a thorough selection process, the Board of Directors has appointed Eric Bernard (1967, French citizen). He will join Sonova on July 1, 2025, and assume full responsibilities as CEO by October 1, 2025, to ensure a smooth transition.

Eric Bernard brings over 30 years of global experience and proven commercial leadership capabilities in the hearing care and optical industry. From 2019 to 2024, he served as CEO of WS Audiology, a global leader in the hearing care sector, successfully managing the merger and integration of Widex and Sivantos. Prior to that, he spent 25 years in country, regional, and global leadership roles at Essilor, a world leader in the optical industry, where he was also a member of the Executive Committee. Eric received his master's degree in Applied Mathematics and Social Sciences from Université Paris Dauphine-PSL, France, and is a graduate from ESSEC Business School in Cergy, France.

Robert Spoerry adds: "I am very pleased to welcome Eric Bernard as the new CEO of Sonova. He has been appointed after a thorough selection process and will assume his position on October 1, 2025. Eric's extensive global leadership experience and management skills in the hearing care and adjacent industries are essential as we continue to advance Sonova's vision and build on our leadership in innovative hearing care solutions. I am convinced that Eric will ensure continuity and

further advance the Group in line with its successful strategy."