

Message from the President

Published November 20th, 2019

Sarah Mason, MCIsc, AuD

Like all beautiful cities across Canada, Halifax is known for its unique personality. That is why I, admittedly, had some trepidation about the weather forecast for our 22nd CAA conference in October. The week leading up to Halloween can easily bring wet windy weather to our shores, but I believe all attendees at our largest conference in CAA history were not disappointed. Even the brief downtown-wide power outage did not dampen the enthusiasm. As Brent Edwards stated during his plenary presentation, “at least I know where I was during the outage of ‘19.” What a wonderful way to celebrate over 20 years of Canadian audiology programming, exhibits, education, and networking.

Meeting old and new friends as well as colleagues from across the country and around the world. Highlights of the conference include our keynote speaker, Sue Michie who discussed the impact of behavior change on our patientcare practices. I was also particularly pleased to see that K. Shane Moodie (Western University) won the Richard Seewald Career Award at the conference. Mr. Moodie has contributed so much to pediatric audiology research and has trained so many students over the years, including me.

While our internationally renowned conference is something to celebrate, the work that is done to advance our profession throughout the year should also be acknowledged and highlighted. We had our first “Virtual” Annual General Meeting on October 1st, 2019 which highlighted some of the activities in which CAA is currently involved. Last year, the academy identified several strategic objectives to serve its members. These included public relations and awareness; promoting inter-provincial collaborations; increasing advocacy activities with the government; membership support and educational/professional growth. Furthering our awareness objective, earlier this year, CAA announced joining the Hearing Health Alliance (HHAC), a growing hearing healthcare group focussed on developing a national hearing strategy to inform the public and policymakers. CAA is also a joint member of the Canadian Infant Hearing Task Force, which, earlier this year, published an updated 2019 report card on EHDI programs in Canada. Ongoing projects continue to gain momentum such as the Accessibility Project; Over the Counter and Direct Referral to ENT projects among others.

Educational initiatives include a new partnership with the Ida Institute; webinars, podcasts and “members only” blog published throughout the year. Marshall Chasin and Steve Aiken were recognized at the Halifax CAA conference for their outstanding efforts with the e-journal which continues to expand readership across the world. I invite members to review the full AGM annual report available on the CAA website for a comprehensive overview of all the important work that has been done over the past year and beyond.

Many thanks to Dave Gordey, now Past President and Marlene Bagatto (Past President), along with Jean Holden (Executive Director), and Tracy Cook (Administrative Manager), whose tireless work culminated into a very successful year. To our committed volunteers on the Board of Directors, as well as on the many committees, task forces and special interest groups and members, I say thank you as the new President of CAA. A warm welcome to the student members from across the country. You represent the newest voice of Audiology and it was wonderful to see some connections being made at the conference. To Angela Weaver and Bill Hodgetts, thank you for your longstanding service to the academy. And a warm welcome and thank you to Tara Collins, our newest Board Member. It is a huge honour to collaborate and learn from such dedicated voices.

Some may say that Audiology is as diverse as our country. Celebrating our diversity is a strength. Having a strong academy with the representation of all sectors, across the country will allow Audiology to maintain and expand its growth well into the future. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as President of CAA for 2019/2020. I look forward to listening to all our voices and keeping the momentum moving forward.

Warm Wishes,