

# Hearing Your Best

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INFORMATION FROM

Associated Audiologists, Inc. *"Hearing Your Best for Life"*

## Introducing Widex EVOKE:

# The World's First Truly Smart Hearing Aid



Duplicating the ear's natural ability to constantly adjust to a wide range of sounds and listening environments is a constant challenge. Keeping up with hearing in an always-changing environment requires a hearing aid that can seamlessly adapt and adjust.

**N**ow the world's first truly "smart" hearing aid is coming as close as possible to real-life hearing. Widex EVOKE™ keeps learning from you as you use it. With the EVOKE technology, it is now possible for a hearing aid to learn from your preferences and even compares your preferences with those of other wearers around the world. It's a paradigm shift in hearing technology.

### How does EVOKE work?

The new SoundSense Technology means you just tell your EVOKE hearing aids which sounds you prefer by choosing between sound suggestions provided by your smartphone using the EVOKE hearing app. Then, EVOKE's powerful processor uses this data to

deliver even better real-life sound, based on your personal preferences, in real time.

What's more, the combination of individual wearer input and machine learning enables EVOKE hearing aids to be able to combine all user preferences, using anonymous data, to help in predicting the preferred sound settings and further improve real-life sound experiences.

An added bonus is that EVOKE's one-touch controls are intuitive and simple-to-use, letting you choose your hearing preferences. Even more, you don't have to remember the exact changes you made for the fine tuning on the next visit to a specific setting. EVOKE remembers those settings for you.

### EVOKE:

- > Personalizes your hearing aid to meet your unique preferences.
- > Maps your environment and prioritizes key sounds.
- > Reacts to changing environments.
- > Sounds natural.
- > Remembers your changes and applies them to similar situations, getting "smarter" as you use it.
- > Learns from and benefits every single user.
- > Fastest hearing aid processor currently available with dual core chip technology.

Ultimately, Widex EVOKE is the first hearing aid that is truly intelligent and grows smarter as you use it. EVOKE not only learns on the level of the individual device, but also from all EVOKE users, whether they are across the room, or across the world.

**Widex EVOKE is now available at Associated Audiologists.**  
**Talk with your audiologist to see if you might benefit**  
**from this groundbreaking technology.**

# Hearing Your Best



## Hear Here...

By Tim Steele, Ph.D., FAAA, President,  
Associated Audiologists, Inc.

We recently finished a facelift at our Shawnee Mission clinic. This required completely moving out, temporarily setting up our administrative staff at another location, and then moving back in. It's always a humbling experience to see everything come together, but it's a stressful process. I have also come to realize how helpful our technology, computers, equipment, and digital phone system are, but how challenging it is to disconnect and set it back up so it functions correctly again. Kudos to my wife Julie who handles all the behind-the-scenes functions of our clinics and made sure this process was seamless.

I also must admit that the physical aspect of moving things in and out is much harder on my body than it was 10 years ago. I guess, just like technology, our bodies are also complicated. We've been given one body to take care of so we can do the good work we are each called to do, and support those important individuals in our lives. I realize that many of our patients aren't as physically strong or healthy as they once were, but there are many other ways in which you are stronger, such as how you continue to learn, how you provide emotional support and encouragement, or how you share your advice and knowledge.

This reminds me of the different seasons of our lives. When we first moved into our existing Shawnee Mission clinic, our children were ages 2, 9, 11, and 13 years old. We had taken a picture before the demolition, and after they were playing "hide-n-seek."

Today, they are 9, 16, 19, and 21 (too old for "hide-n-seek.") Many of you, who I admire, have always said how hard it is to believe how time flies. With this recent landmark update at the clinic, I'm reminded of how true this is. Yes, my body is eight years older than it was during our first Shawnee Mission remodel, and I am not as physically capable as I was back then, but I'm able to provide different contributions now with a more mature perspective.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank each of you. You make our lives richer. Our audiologists and administrative staff regularly comment on the positive influences many of you provide. Just last week, a 95-year-old, long-standing patient of mine who always calls me "Dr. Steele" said to me as I was leaving the room, "Tim, slow down." I stood in the hallway after leaving the room to gain my composure. My dad, who passed away in 2002, always used to say that to me. I couldn't help but think that she was sharing important and sage advice from my dad.

Maybe we should all heed her advice from time to time and slow down. I know after this recent work at the Shawnee Mission clinic, I'm going to try to take some time to relax and recover. The summer can be a good time to do this.

Thank you for your loyalty and business, we are grateful for you.



2011



2018



## Calling all Knitters!

Associated Audiologists' patients, along with **Sarah Mediavilla, Au.D., FAAA**, audiologist, and **Terri Phillips**, medical transcriptionist and claims assistant, again will be donating hand-knitted or crocheted scarves to the Red Scarf Project this coming year, so start knitting now!

**T**he practice began participating with this initiative in 2015, and since then, patients and staff have contributed more than 100 hand-made red scarves to the effort.

The Red Scarf Project is a multi-faceted charity program that benefits foster children once they "age out" of the system and go to college. The organization accepts donations of hand-knitted or crocheted red scarves, which are given to the college-age students on Valentine's Day each year.

They also provide these students with an emergency fund donation program and book money. The project has delivered over 20,000 scarves to foster youth in college and training programs across the U.S. since they began the Valentine's Day packages in 2005.

Associated Audiologists also is assisting with this project by covering the cost of shipping for the scarves.

**If you knit or crochet, or know someone who does and would like to participate, contact Terri for more information at 913-403-0018. Scarves are due to Terri by Dec. 1, 2018. You can find project details and patterns at: <http://www.fc2success.org/how-you-can-help/red-scarf-project/>.**

# Hear 2 Help KC Makes Hearing Aids a Possibility for Kansas Kids

When Terri Steinlage's daughter, Macy, was born in 2002 in the state of Oregon, she didn't pass a newborn hearing screening test. Further evaluation showed Macy was born with a moderate to severe bilateral sensorineural hearing loss.

Oregon is one of only 20 states in the nation that requires insurance to cover the lifetime cost of hearing aid expenses. Macy received her first set of hearing aids at just 4 months old. But when her family relocated to Kansas in 2005, Terri discovered the opposite was true. Kansas provides help for infants/toddlers, but is one of the 30 states that doesn't require insurance to cover the cost of hearing aid expenses.

"Many families don't have the financial resources to pay for their child's hearing aids out of pocket, and that often means these children go without the technology they need as they grow and develop," Terri said. If left unaided, hearing loss can negatively impact a child's language, social/emotional, and educational development.

"We have seen firsthand the impact that having early access to hearing

aids has provided," Terri said. "It is huge. Today Macy is a thriving teenager thanks to her hearing aids, and we feel truly blessed."

But the need to help other families afford the hearing aid technology their children need tugged at Terri's heart strings, inspiring her to establish Hear 2 Help KC in 2017.

The non-profit organization helps raise funds to provide financial assistance to families in need whose children are deaf/hard of hearing. The funds are used to provide hearing aids and assistive technology.

In fact, in the organization's first year, Hear 2 Help KC has funded the purchase of four hearing aids for two Kansas children, but that's only the tip of the iceberg. It's estimated there are approximately 1,000 school-aged children with some degree of hearing impairment living in Wyandotte and Johnson counties.



## How U Can Help 2

Hear 2 Help KC is a volunteer organization that depends on community donations to fulfill its mission. If you'd like to help, visit the organization's website to make a donation or volunteer.

And, if you're a golfer, be sure to check out their fundraiser scheduled for Sept. 23, 2018 from noon to 3 p.m. at Topgolf in Overland Park, Kan. Associated Audiologists is proud to be a sponsor of this event. All proceeds go to provide financial assistance for hearing aids and hearing assistive technology for hearing-impaired children in Kansas.

**For more information, visit [Hear2HelpKC.org](http://Hear2HelpKC.org), or contact Terri at 913-424-7673.**

## Shawnee Mission Clinic is Looking Great!

Thank you for your patience while we recently underwent a major facelift at our Shawnee Mission Clinic, located at 8800 W. 75th Street, Suite 101, Shawnee Mission, Kan. The renovation included new paint, carpet and furnishings to upgrade the facility for patients and staff. **Be sure to stop by to see how it turned out and say "hi" to our audiologists at this location, Lisa Battani, Au.D., FAAA, and Susan Smittkamp, Au.D., Ph.D., FAAA.**





## The Connection Between Diabetes and Balance Disorders

By Danielle Dorner, Au.D., FAAA,  
Dizziness and Balance Specialist

People with diabetes over the age of 65 are three times more likely to be hospitalized in a given year for falls. That's why preventing falls in this age group can help limit a reduction in mobility, activity avoidance, loss of physical independence, and even death.



**B**ut why does being diagnosed with diabetes put you at an increased risk for falls?

We use three important senses to maintain our balance: touch, vision and ears (hearing/balance).

Each of these senses is required to help keep us upright and prevent us from falling. Deterioration of one or more of these sensory systems may adversely affect balance and increase fall risk. That's where diabetes comes in. There are four common complications from diabetes that can contribute to poor balance.

**1. Diabetic peripheral neuropathy (DPN):** deterioration of nerves

that are responsible for the sense of touch may lead to neuropathy, and is common in individuals with diabetes. Peripheral neuropathy can be described as a numbness, tingling, or burning sensation of the feet and/or legs. A reduction in sensation and control of the lower limbs reduces the ability to detect surface changes. An example of this would be from walking on a firm surface, such as concrete, transitioning to an uneven surface, such as a lawn.

**2. Retinopathy and macular degeneration:** blurred central vision and reduced contrast sensitivity

(color differences) can lead to the inability to recognize balance threats, such as navigating around obstacles in the environment. These conditions are complicated further by poorly lit areas, like using the bathroom in the middle of the night, and tripping hazards, such as throw rugs.

**3. Vestibular dysfunction:** reduction in nerve and sensory organ function that is responsible for sending motor commands to tell us where we are in space. When wrong information regarding head and/or body movement is being exchanged, it can lead to dizziness and imbalance. Your brain is receiving two different signals, and is unable to decide which one is correct.

**4. Blood pressure control/stroke:** having elevated blood pressure can often accompany diabetes. This can be a risk factor for stroke. Strokes (abnormal bleeding in the brain) can affect cognitive function and motor control, and often impact balance.

What can we do to reduce the risk of falling if we have diabetes? Prevention is key! Keep track of your numbers, including blood glucose and blood pressure. Follow doctor's orders, take your medications, follow a healthy diet, and exercise. Physical exercise is not just good for your joints and muscles; it is good for your ears, balance and fall prevention, too! Stay active. The old sayings are true: a body in motion stays in motion; and if you don't use it, you lose it!

**To schedule a comprehensive dizziness and balance evaluation with Dr. Dorner, call 816-442-7831.**

# Does Stress Contribute to Tinnitus?

If you suffer from ringing in your ears, or tinnitus, keeping stress levels down and inducing relaxation may help you cope better with your tinnitus, promote better sleep, improve your concentration ability and reduce anxiety and tension.



**T**here is a strong connection between tinnitus disturbance and stress level. The human body can respond to stress in physical ways by tensing muscles, increasing the breathing rate and by producing chemicals consistent with a “fight or flight” response. The response to tinnitus and certain external sounds (loud sounds, unexpected sounds, and even eating and breathing sounds), may also cause a physical “fight or flight” response. There are many approaches to managing stress, and many of these can be helpful if you struggle with tinnitus. Some of these include:

> **Meditation:** Meditation can take many forms, but essentially, it involves quieting the mind and facilitating tranquility. A common technique is to concentrate on a word, feeling or an image until the mind slows.

> **Yoga and Pilates:** Both yoga and Pilates are forms of physical meditation exercises that can lead to decreased tension, increased flexibility and full body strengthening.

> **Massage:** Physical manipulation of tissue and muscle can reduce muscle tension and decrease your stress level.

> **Guided imagery:** Relaxation is achieved by using your imagination to recreate and enjoy a pleasant situation. Your body reacts to these imagined scenes almost as if they were real.

> **Biofeedback:** Biofeedback is a technique that is often used for relaxation by using your thoughts to control your body.

> **Sleep:** Many people suspect that their tinnitus is loudest when they are in bed while trying to get to

sleep. However, the actual loudness of tinnitus does not vary much during the day. Tinnitus can seem more intense at bedtime because there is less environmental noise to cover up the tinnitus. In addition to reducing stress overall, good sleep habits, such as avoiding caffeine or alcohol before bedtime, or sticking to a regular sleep schedule, can improve sleep and reduce tinnitus. Many people also find it helpful to use a sound machine or download a sound therapy app they can listen to that masks the tinnitus.

In addition to following these tips, you may benefit from wearing hearing aids. If your tinnitus is more severe, Associated Audiologists offers the most recent FDA-approved tinnitus treatment systems, including the Levo System from Otoharmonics and DeSyncra.

**Call 913-403-0018 to schedule an appointment with Susan Smittkamp, Au.D., Ph.D., FAAA, our tinnitus and sound sensitivity specialist.**

## Associated Audiologists Sponsors YouThrive

Associated Audiologists supports a local nonprofit group called YouThrive. YouThrive helps foster youth as they age out of foster care and transition to adulthood, yet continue to need support, structure, and guidance.

**To learn more about the outstanding work of this organization and how you might become involved, visit their website at [www.youthrive.org](http://www.youthrive.org).**



Find us on facebook.

[www.facebook.com/hearingyourbest](http://www.facebook.com/hearingyourbest)



## STAFF NEWS

### Happy Anniversary

**Dave Nissen, Au.D., FAAA**, our Prairie Village Clinic Manager and Senior Audiologist, recently celebrated his 20-year anniversary with Associated Audiologists. He has been a vital part of our growth and development over the past two decades. Dr. Nissen is known for his technical expertise, patience, and well-composed demeanor.



Dr. Nissen

He earned his Doctorate of Audiology degree from the Arizona School of Health Sciences. Dr. Nissen is a Fellow of the American Academy of Audiology and a member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and the Kansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

**Dana Jacobson, Au.D., FAAA**, recently celebrated her 10th anniversary with Associated Audiologists. Dr. Jacobson joined the practice after completing her externship with us. She is an integral member of the team, coordinating our student program, community service, and philanthropy projects, and is the Overland Park Clinic manager.



Dr. Jacobson

She also serves as an ad hoc graduate faculty member at the University of Kansas Medical Center and currently serves on the Kansas Board of Hearing Aid Examiners. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Audiology and is a member of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association and the Kansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association, plus she is a member of the Overland Park South Rotary.

Thanks Dr. Nissen and Dr. Jacobson for all you do to help our patients hear their best!

### Leavenworth's Best

**David Paul, Au.D., FAAA**, was recently voted Best Audiologist in Leavenworth by Leavenworth Times readers! Dr. Paul is dedicated to caring for the hearing healthcare needs of our patients in the Leavenworth community. He is a military veteran, is active in the National Guard, and is a member of the Leavenworth Lion's Club. Dr. Paul also recently completed two weeks of National Guard training. Thanks for your patience during his absence.



### Kudos for Our Newsletter

We're excited to announce that our patient newsletter recently received a silver award in the Healthcare Marketing Report competition. With more than 4,000 entries, this is the largest competition in the nation focused on healthcare marketing. An expert panel of judges reviewed entries based on creativity, quality, message effectiveness, consumer appeal and overall impact. We're honored to be recognized and hope you enjoy the newsletter!

### Dr. Dorner and Dr. Paul Earn Certifications

**Danielle Dorner, Au.D., FAAA**, and **David Paul, Au.D., FAAA**, recently completed a course from the Council for Accreditation of Occupational Hearing Conservation and earned their CAOHC certifications.



Dr. Dorner



Dr. Paul

### Dr. Battani Attends Fly-in Event



**Lisa Battani, Au.D., FAAA**, recently attended the Audiology Patient Choice Act fly-in lobby day in Washington, D.C. Two Kansas legislators, Representative Kevin Yoder and Representative Lynn Jenkins, are co-sponsoring the bill.

The Audiology Patient Choice Act will allow Medicare beneficiaries who suspect they have a hearing or balance problem to schedule an appointment directly with an audiologist, just like those with private insurance or those who participate in other federal programs, like the Veterans Administration (VA). Passage of this legislation would also allow greater coverage for other medically necessary audiology services, such as wax removal, tinnitus treatment and vestibular rehab.

You can help make access to hearing and balance care easier for Medicare recipients. Contact your legislators via [www.18x18.org/congressional-connect](http://www.18x18.org/congressional-connect). The site helps you find your legislator and send them a message of support.



## Dr. Baldwin Takes on New Advocacy Role

Stacey Baldwin, Au.D., FAAA, has recently been promoted to Clinical Services Director and Senior Audiologist.



She also is taking on a new role coordinating the staff's efforts for all local and national legislative issues that pertain to our patients, providers, practice and the profession of audiology. Dr. Baldwin will be representing Associated Audiologists on special committees at both the local and national level. Most recently, this included successfully working with the Kansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association (KSHA) to obtain their endorsement of the Audiology Patient Choice Act. Dr. Baldwin was also able to secure endorsements from several local physicians and academic professionals from the University of Kansas.

In addition, Dr. Baldwin will serve as a member of the steering committee for the Audiology Patient Choice Act. She is working on national efforts, with her primary focus being on state American Academy of Audiology (AAA) and American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) chapters from across the country. In this role, she has helped to obtain endorsements from more than half of the state AAA chapters and several state ASHA chapters.

"As a practice, we are committed to making sure our state and federal leadership recognizes the importance of the audiological needs of our patients," Dr. Baldwin said. "And I am excited to assist in these efforts."

## How Captioning Phones Help You Communicate

Phone calls can be a challenge for many people with hearing loss, but thanks to new advances in captioning services, many people are now able to overcome that challenge.

And, thanks to a provision of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Federal Communications Commission established a fund that gives individuals with hearing loss access to this service at no cost to them.

These state-of-the-art phones are specially designed for anyone with any type of hearing loss. They feature large, easy-to-read screens that display written captions of the conversations in real time, along with amplified sound from the hand set or speaker phone. Some of the providers also offer mobile phone apps or computer-based options. There are several providers of captioned phones.

In order to qualify for these phones, a hearing care professional must certify the individual has a hearing loss that requires captions to use the phone effectively.

All of the captioned phone providers also offer complimentary in-home set up and personal instruction on how to use the phone. They do require a standard, land line phone connection and it is preferred to also have an internet connection, although some of the captioned phones can be used without internet.

**For more information on the specific phones, you can visit the following websites:**

> CapTel – [www.captel.com](http://www.captel.com)

> CaptionCall – [www.captioncall.com](http://www.captioncall.com)

> Clear Captions – [www.clearcaptions.com](http://www.clearcaptions.com)

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about hearing  
and balance  
health from your  
audiologist.

## Hearing Your Best



### Leave Early, Arrive on Time

Please be sure to allow extra time to travel to your appointment as significant road construction is affecting many of our clinics.

**If you are unable to make your scheduled appointment, please let us know so that we can help another patient.**

*Thank You*



**ASSOCIATED  
AUDIOLOGISTS**

We are on a mission:  
To improve lives through  
comprehensive audiology care.



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