# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview ................................................................................................................. 1

## Background
- History .................................................................................................................. 2
- About ...................................................................................................................... 2
- Mission .................................................................................................................... 2
- Our Work ................................................................................................................ 2
- AG Bell International ............................................................................................. 3

## Factsheet
- Membership Benefits ............................................................................................. 5

## Directory
- Executive Team ........................................................................................................ 6
- Board Members ...................................................................................................... 7
- Academy Board ....................................................................................................... 7
- Experts ..................................................................................................................... 7

## Latest News
- Events ..................................................................................................................... 8
- AG Bell Newsroom ................................................................................................. 8
- “Speaking From the Volta Bureau” ........................................................................ 8
- Media Mentions ....................................................................................................... 8

## Media
- Social Media ........................................................................................................... 10
- Logo – Print and Web ............................................................................................. 10
- Photos ...................................................................................................................... 11

## Awards and Financial Aid ..................................................................................... 15

## Contact Information and Company Boilerplate ..................................................... 16
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
202.337.5220
media@agbell.org
3417 Volta Place NW, Washington, D.C. 20007
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 22,000 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:

• 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.

- **Cradle to Career**
  AG Bell’s Cradle to Career initiative supports a child’s listening and spoken language journey by supporting the caregivers, expanding awareness that children with hearing loss can learn to hear and talk through local expositions in partnership with AG Bell Chapters, placing college students with hearing loss in university auditory research opportunities and providing hands-on internships at our partners’ headquarters. AG Bell’s partners in this initiative help move the association forward in its mission to work globally to ensure that people who are deaf and hard of hearing can hear and talk.

- **Listen-Learn-Link New Parent Hotline**
  AG Bell’s New Parent Hotline provides a safe space for parents and caregivers of children born with hearing loss to ask any questions they may have regarding hearing loss and communication outcomes for their children, including information about technology, speech therapy, pathways for success, etc. The hotline connects parents and caregivers with AG Bell’s early intervention consultant who can direct them to resources specific to their needs. Parents and caregivers can either call (phone or video) 1-833-575-5465 (1-833-LSL-LINK) or email newparenthotline@agbell.org to schedule a 30-minute conversation at a time that is convenient for the caller.

**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 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 Chapter Community Learning Expos**
  Through its state chapter network and Puerto Rico, AG Bell hosts community learning expos that raise awareness for hearing loss as well as open doors for the local community by providing educational programs, networking opportunities and resources that connect professionals and families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing.
• **LSL Symposium**

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

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**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 26 who are based at the organization’s historic headquarters, the Volta Bureau, in Washington, D.C., and in Madrid, Spain.

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**AG BELL INTERNATIONAL**

In 2017, AG Bell merged with Madrid-based CLAVE and Fundación Oir Es Clave (Hearing is Key Foundation) to form Alexander Graham Bell International (AG Bell International). For nearly 10 years, CLAVE and Fundación Oir 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
Through AG Bell’s website, 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.
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 (EHDI) 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
Berta Burguera Arienza
Robert J. Bush, CPCU, CPIA, president
Ivette Cejas, Ph.D., MSci
Howard W. Francis, M.D., M.B.A
Sara Grosvenor
Susan Lenihan, Ph.D.
Ken H. Levinson, CPA
Catharine McNally
Ted Meyer, M.D., Ph.D
Emma Rushbrooke, MPhil (Audiology), BA, DipAud, MAudSA, LSLS Cert. AVT, RNC
John F. Stanton, Esq.
Arlene Stredler Brown, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

AG BELL ACADEMY BOARD MEMBERS
Emilio Alonso-Mendoza, J.D., CFRE, chief executive officer
Rollen Cooper, M.S., LSLS® Cert. AVEd
Ellen L. Estes, M.S., LSLS® Cert. AVEd
Sherri Fickenscher, M.S., LSLS® Cert. AVEd
Maria Fernanda Hinojosa Valencia, Ph.D., LSLS Cert. AVT
Ulrika Lofkvist, Ph.D., LSLS® Cert. AVEd., M.Sc.
Jane R. Madell, Ph.D., LSLS® Cert. AVT
Catharine McNally
Leana “Lee” Rech, J.D.
Elizabeth Rosenzweig, M.S. CCC-SLP, LSLS® Cert. AVT
Emma Rushbrooke, MPhil (Audiology), BA, DipAud, MAudSA, LSLS Cert. AVT, RNC

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
EVENTS
The 2020 AG Bell Global Listening and Spoken Language Symposium in Baltimore, Maryland is a place to learn, network and connect with colleagues from all over the world. You’ll have the opportunity to learn about the latest research and innovative practices related to listening and spoken language while networking with other professionals during this highly informative conference.

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
Organization puts together concert to raise awareness of pediatric hearing loss, John Hood, WHSV, Aug. 5, 2019
How You’re Ruining Your Hearing Without Even Realizing It, Michael Martin, Eat This, Aug. 6, 2019
AG Bell Holds First Ever Global Symposium, Hearing Health & Technology Matters, July 10, 2019
AG Bell Takes Global Symposium Abroad to Address Worldwide Childhood Hearing Loss, Audiology Online, July 9, 2019
AG Bell Holds Research Symposium to Address Childhood Hearing Loss, The Hearing Review, July 8, 2019
En Lengua de Signos – Simposio Global AG Bell, En Lengua de Signos, July 7, 2019
“Faltan profesionales cualificados para ayudar a los niños con problemas de sordera”, Celia Lopez, El Pais, July 3, 2019

LATEST NEWS
continued
SOCIAL MEDIA

AG Bell’s Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram 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 @agbellinternational

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.

- Twitter: @AGBellAssoc | @agbellint

- Instagram: @agbellassociation | @agbellinternational

- LinkedIn: The Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing AG Bell International

- YouTube: Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing AG Bell International

- Cradle to Career Blog: www.agbellcradletocareer.com
  Professional Blog: www.agbellprofs.com
  AG Bell International Blog: blog@agbellinternational.org

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.