



# CochlearConnections

News from the Cochlear Implant Center | Spring 2022

## Cochlear Implant Center

19 Bradhurst Avenue  
 Suite 3800 South  
 Hawthorne, NY 10532  
 914.493.4634

[CochlearImplantCenter@WMCHHealth.org](mailto:CochlearImplantCenter@WMCHHealth.org)

The Cochlear Implant Center at Westchester Medical Center, flagship of the Westchester Medical Center Health Network (WMCHHealth), provides coordinated audiology and speech-therapy services for cochlear implant patients and those considering this life-changing technology. It is the only center between New York City and Albany providing comprehensive services for children and adult patients.

The Cochlear Implant Center is staffed by a team of highly trained audiologists and speech pathologists with expertise in evaluation and rehabilitation services for individuals who are cochlear implant candidates and those who receive a cochlear implant. Cochlear implantation is a highly successful technology that allows deaf children to hear and speak, and enables deafened adults to enhance their lives. The Cochlear Implant Center provides comprehensive services such as individualized programming of the implant and speech-therapy services.



**Westchester Medical Center**

Westchester Medical Center Health Network

Advancing Care. Here.

[WestchesterMedicalCenter.org](http://WestchesterMedicalCenter.org)

### Westchester Medical Center Health Network includes

Westchester Medical Center | Maria Fareri Children's Hospital  
 Behavioral Health Center | MidHudson Regional Hospital  
 Good Samaritan Hospital | Bon Secours Community Hospital  
 St. Anthony Community Hospital | HealthAlliance Hospital: Broadway Campus  
 HealthAlliance Hospital: Mary's Avenue Campus | Margaretville Hospital

## Welcome Back to In-Person Movies and Live Performances!

*Many movie and live theaters offer captioning and/or assistive technology to provide audiences with supplemental information.*

### Closed Captioning:

Words are displayed on a screen attached to the seat-back in front of you, on a captioning device that sits in the cupholder, or on special glasses you wear. Closed captioning may also be available cell phones.

This symbol on theater websites means closed captioning is offered:



CaptiView is a device that sits in the cupholder and is typically offered at AMC and Landmark/Ritz Theaters.



Some theaters, typically Regal Cinemas, offer glasses where captions are projected and appear to float about 10 feet in front of the user.

These devices are usually kept at the theater office.



### Open Captioning:

Words are displayed on the screen.

This symbol on theater websites means open captioning is offered:



Check local theaters to determine types of assistive devices available. Most theaters offer closed captioning through a captioning device. Open-caption movies are less common.

AMC: [amctheatres.com/assistive-moviegoing](http://amctheatres.com/assistive-moviegoing)

Showcase: [showcasecinemas.com/assistive-moviegoing](http://showcasecinemas.com/assistive-moviegoing)

Jacob Burns: [burnsfilmcenter.org/about/faqs](http://burnsfilmcenter.org/about/faqs)

Bow Tie Cinemas: [bowtiecinemas.com](http://bowtiecinemas.com)

The Facebook group **National Open Captions Network (NOCN)** offers a list of states with theaters that provide open captioning.

### Live Theaters:

Theatre Access [PS1] New York City ([theatreaccess.nyc](http://theatreaccess.nyc)) and the Theatre Development Fund ([tdf.org/nyc/41/Hearing-Loss](http://tdf.org/nyc/41/Hearing-Loss)) provide information on various shows offering open captioning and other assistive services for deaf and hearing-impaired people.

iCaption: Some theaters have hand-held captioning devices you can request in advance.



GalaPro App: You can download this free app at [galapro.com](http://galapro.com). It allows you to access real-time captioning at a live show by using your phone.

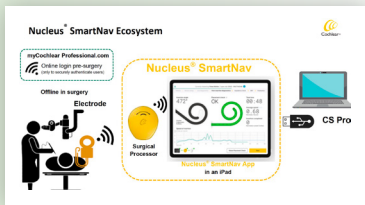
Look for this symbol in the App Store for either iPhone or Google Play (Android):



### ULC — All Movie and Live Theaters Have Loop Systems (Tele-coil)!

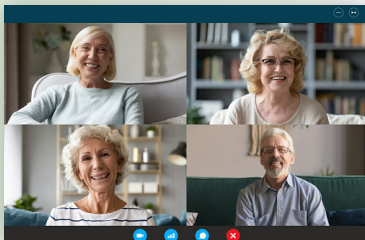
When sound travels through the air, it can be distorted by reverberation, background noise, or distance. Loop devices improve listening in public forums.

*continued on page 4*



## Research Grant Awarded to WMC CI Center

A grant awarded by Cochlear Americas provides access to state-of-the-art technology, called "Smart Nav," during cochlear implant surgeries. The goal of Smart Nav is to help the surgeon optimize placement of the internal part of the implant in the ear. Use of this technology may also shorten the length of cochlear implant surgeries.



## Older Adult Aural Rehabilitation Group

This group, funded by a Cochlear Americas research grant, provides patients with the opportunity to meet their peers and learn about ways to improve their hearing and communication. The group was offered in the Fall of 2021 and the Spring of 2022. If you are interested in joining future groups, please contact the center!



Cochlear Implant Center  
**Westchester Medical Center**

Westchester Medical Center Health Network

## Spotlight on Staff

### Jessica Hoffman, AuD, CCC-A

Dr. Jessica Hoffman has been on the Cochlear Implant team and a clinical audiologist at Advanced ENT Services since 2014. Her career as a clinical, diagnostic, and cochlear implant audiologist began in 2011 in London, U.K. Dr. Hoffman was born with severe to profound sensorineural hearing loss and used hearing aids until she received her first cochlear implant in 1998 and her second in 2007. She is fluent in both spoken English and American Sign Language.



### What does being an audiologist with hearing loss and bilateral cochlear implants mean to you? How does that help you connect with your patients?

My hearing loss, medical history, and personal experience allow me a unique perspective and an additional layer of empathy in my work as an audiologist. I am proud to be a living example of the struggles and achievements one might experience throughout a lifetime of hearing loss. Many individuals with hearing loss and parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing children are very concerned about their child's future and quality of life. It can be helpful to know that others, including myself, have had the same worries. I am happy to have the opportunity to pass on what I know from both personal and professional experience to assist them on their own journeys.

### What is your favorite vacation destination?

This is a tough question! I absolutely love traveling and exploring new places. Japan is one of my favorites. The food, culture, and history are fascinating and so different from many of the other places I've lived and visited. I was incredibly impressed by the Japanese values of high quality and pristine order in many aspects of life from food, to clothing, to their homes!

### If you could invite anyone to dinner, who would it be and what would you serve?

I would love to host Lauren Ridloff, who played Makkari in the Marvel movie, "Eternals." She is the first deaf Marvel superhero! I am a big fan of the Marvel movies and was thrilled they picked a deaf woman to play the part. Lauren Ridloff was raised as culturally deaf, has her own deaf family with two young children that are the same ages as mine, and has a background as a teacher of the deaf. She was an overnight celebrity sensation! I am so impressed by her background as a deaf person of color who was thrust into the spotlight. She only communicates in ASL and does not use spoken language. She has overcome many barriers and accomplished so much in the hearing world. I believe she is vegan and I would make her a vegan Mexican meal. I love international cooking and Mexican cuisine is one of my family's favorites!

## Patient Corner

## An Interview with Patrick McGuinness's Parents

### As Patrick's parents, can you discuss the feelings you had when he was first diagnosed with unilateral hearing loss?

Patrick's diagnosis was a bit of a shock to us. He was born in April, 2020. He failed his newborn hearing screening four times within his first week of life. This was a surprise to us because neither of our older sons has hearing loss.

We were sent to a clinic several hours away for an ABR. Due to COVID, this was the only location that was open for testing and we felt very fortunate to be seen there and have a final answer (or so we thought). Patrick was tested in May, 2020. We were told he passed in both ears and felt so relieved.

When Patrick was six months old, he was referred to the ENT for possible fluid in his ears. After several appointments with the audiologist over the next six months, each time with no response in the right ear, we decided it was best for Patrick to undergo a sedated ABR. That confirmed that Patrick was profoundly deaf in his right ear and had normal hearing in his left ear. I will never forget the heaviness I felt as I sat in the waiting room when Dr. Morgan gave me the diagnosis. She was patient as I asked many questions trying to grasp what was just laid upon me.

### If Patrick has one normal hearing ear, why did you feel cochlear implantation was so important?

We wanted Patrick to have the opportunity for binaural hearing. Once we had the diagnosis of profound loss in his

right ear, the goal was to give him the best chance at binaural hearing and for us, this meant cochlear implantation.

### Were you nervous before the surgery? How did Patrick act immediately after surgery and in the days following surgery?

We were nervous to be making such a big decision for him at such a young age. Following surgery, he had some mild balance disturbances but overall recovered well.

### Was Patrick's activation appointment as emotional as the videos that circulate on YouTube/social media?

No! Thankfully, we had been warned his response may not look like what you see on social media. He didn't have much of a reaction on activation day. We were excited when we started to see more vocalizations within several days of being activated.

### Tell us about what you did to help Patrick listen using his cochlear implant alone and why that is important.

To help Patrick listen using the cochlear implant alone, we use the mini microphone. This device picks up sound and sends it directly into his processor to help train his right ear. This is important because if we don't target his right ear in listening tasks, his left (normal hearing) ear will take over and do the listening work.

### What are some of the funniest things people have said to you when they see Patrick's processor on his head?

When children are curious, they usually ask, "What's that on his head?" I use these types of questions as an opportunity to spread awareness of hearing loss. Most adults that ask me about it have some connection to hearing loss themselves. His processor has sparked many conversations and I have enjoyed learning about other people's hearing journeys.



Photo credit: Dani Fobar Photography

### What is the most impactful moment you have had in watching Patrick's hearing journey?

I love watching Patrick point to his right ear after he hears a sound. For example, he loves to watch airplanes fly over our house. He points to them and then points to his right ear. Anytime he hears something and then points to his right ear indicating he heard the sound, it makes me smile. It's truly a joy to watch him experience sound in the world around him.



## Join Us... Westchester/Rockland Walk

**Sunday, May 15, 2022 | FDR Park**

2957 Crompond Rd. (parking lot #4), Yorktown Heights, NY

Join the WMC CI Team as we walk together to raise awareness and funds for hearing healthcare. **As a Gold Sponsor of the walk, 40% of funds we raise will be donated back to our center.**

Find the Westchester/Rockland Walk and register to join the **WMC Health Cochlear Implant Center** team.



**Scan to Register!**

**Free T-shirt with sign up!** Limited Quantities, email us at [cochlearimplantcenter@WMCHealth.org](mailto:cochlearimplantcenter@WMCHealth.org)

Continued from page 1

Some rooms are “looped,” meaning they contain an (invisible) wire that emits electromagnetic signals that can be picked up by the T-coil in your hearing aid or cochlear implant. Because the sound is sent directly to your listening device, they provide a very clear signal that is not affected by the acoustical properties of the room.

To determine if a room is “looped,” look for this sign:



House of worship, meeting halls, assistive living dining halls, and schools may also be “looped.”

Some public places (e.g., museum, tour bus, theater) have personal T-coils, where a device around your neck transmits sound from the audio source to the T-coil in your hearing aid or cochlear implant.

**Infrared systems:** A transmitter uses infrared (light) signals to send speech or music from an audio source to a wearable device and converts it into speech. These systems can be used with headphones, without a hearing aid or cochlear implant, or can be coupled to a “neckloop” that converts the signal into an electromagnetic signal a hearing aid receives.

Important: NOT all hearing aids and cochlear implants are enabled for tele-coil. Speak with your audiologist to check.

### American Sign Language (ASL) Performances:

This symbol on a theater website means an ASL-interpreted performance is offered:



Hands On ([handson.org](http://handson.org)) is a New York City-based organization that provides interpreted performances for Broadway and Off-Broadway productions.

### Museums:

Several NYC museums provide listening devices. Check with the museum in advance to confirm availability.

Museum of Modern Art:  
[mom.org/visit/accessibility/#individuals-who-are-deaf-or-hard-of-hearing](http://mom.org/visit/accessibility/#individuals-who-are-deaf-or-hard-of-hearing)

Museum of Natural History:  
[amnh.org/plan-your-visit/accessibility](http://amnh.org/plan-your-visit/accessibility)

Metropolitan Museum of Art:  
[metmuseum.org/visit/accessibility](http://metmuseum.org/visit/accessibility)

Hudson River Museum:  
[hrm.org/plan-your-visit](http://hrm.org/plan-your-visit)



## Get direct support from cochlear implant manufacturers.

The cochlear implant manufacturers have professionals to help guide you through your implant journey, provide information, and connect you with other recipients, before or after surgery. Plus, you might save time and money by contacting the manufacturers for repairs or to order new parts.

### Advanced Bionics

**General Support** 877.829.0026

- Order supplies
- Schedule repairs
- Obtain immediate assistance with your devices

**Reimbursement** 877.779.0229

- Order supplies through your insurance
- Inquire/initiate an upgrade

**Online Support:** create an account at: [advancedbionics.com/us/en/home/contact-us/ab-recipient-support.html](http://advancedbionics.com/us/en/home/contact-us/ab-recipient-support.html)

Order supplies and obtain information about cochlear implants, your device, and auditory therapy exercises

### Counseling/Support Services

**Jane Ledingham**, M.E.D., CCC-SLP, Cert. AVT

- Provides pre-implant counseling information about Cochlear Americas products
- Aids in device selection for new recipients
- Learning sound processor basics, care, and maintenance
- Smartphone and wireless accessory connectivity
- Hearing therapy resources
- Upgrading to latest hearing technology

**To schedule a meeting, contact Jane at [Jane.Ledingham@AdvancedBionics.com](mailto:Jane.Ledingham@AdvancedBionics.com) or call/text 661.542.3729**

### Bionic Ear Association

866.844.HEAR

- Connect with professionals, mentors, and other Advanced Bionics recipients

### Cochlear Americas

#### General Support

800.483.3123, [support@cochlear.com](mailto:support@cochlear.com)

- Order supplies
- Schedule repairs
- Obtain immediate assistance with your devices

**Reimbursement** 800.633.4667

- Order supplies through your insurance
- Inquire/initiate an upgrade

**Online Support:** create an account at: [cochlear.com/us/en/home](http://cochlear.com/us/en/home)

Order supplies and obtain information about cochlear implants, your device, and auditory therapy exercises

### Counseling/Support Services

**Davin Cedeno**, Bilingual Engagement Manager

- Provides pre-implant counseling information about Cochlear Americas products
- Aids in device selection for new recipients

**To schedule a virtual meeting, go to [go.oncehub.com/dcedeno](http://go.oncehub.com/dcedeno)**

**Lea Marx**, Recipient Solutions Manager Supports recipients by helping them maximize the use of processors and accessories. Topics include:

- Learning sound processor basics, care, and maintenance
- Smartphone and wireless accessory connectivity
- Hearing therapy resources
- Upgrading to latest hearing technology

**To schedule a virtual meeting, go to [Cdr.me/RSMLea](http://Cdr.me/RSMLea)**

### Med El

#### General Support & Reimbursement

888.633.3524

- Order supplies
- Schedule repairs
- Obtain immediate assistance with your devices
- Order supplies through your insurance
- Inquire/initiate an upgrade

#### Online Support:

create an account at: [my.medel.com](http://my.medel.com)

Order supplies and obtain information about cochlear implants, your device, and auditory therapy exercises

### Counseling/Support Services

888.633.3524

- Alexanna Rogers, Auditory Verbal Therapist
- Annie Rodrigues, Bilingual Audiologist
- Rebecca Mancini, Audiologist