

What Strategies are Implemented by ASHA to Promote Diversity within the Audiology Profession?

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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

- **Diversity**
 - Refers to various factors, including but not limited to age, race, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ability, sexual orientation.
- **Equity**
 - Refers to providing resources appropriate to the environment to obtain equal outcomes. Imbalances within our social systems result in a need to provide equitable processes. (Servaes et. al., 2022)
- **Inclusion**
 - Refers to the experiences and the degree to which all individuals are embraced and enabled to make meaningful contributions.

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)

- **ASHA**

- National credentialing association for the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology professions.

ASHA has made various strides in DEI, including recent initiatives for Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology professionals.

Components of a DEI plan

The components of a DEI plan for systematic change planning are

- Research and Data collection
- Commitment to organizational values
- Strategy and planning
- Initiatives

Research and Data Collection

ASHA data collection

- Membership
 - Demographics, degree..etc.
- Surveys
 - Experiences, ideas..etc.
- Research promotion
 - Systems, populations..etc.

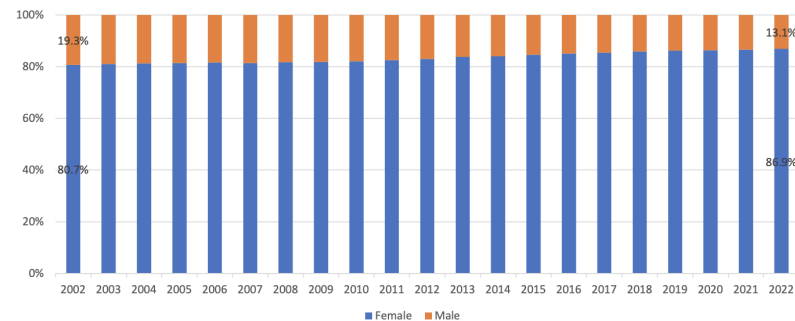
Race ^b (<i>n</i> = 194,599)	
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.3%
Asian	3.3%
Black or African American	3.7%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.1%
White	90.5%
Race Not Currently Listed	0.2%
Reported 2 or more Races	1.8%

Research and Data Collection

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In 2022, most (86.9%) ASHA-certified audiologists self-identified as female—up from 80.7% in 2002.

Figure 10. Percentage of ASHA-certified audiologists who self-identify as female or male, 2002–2022.



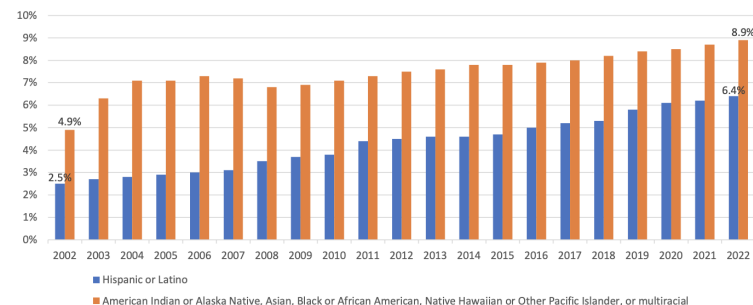
Note. These data are from the 2002–2022 ASHA Member & Affiliate Profiles.

31. How much unpaid student debt do you have for your education? Enter "0" if none.
Analyses limited to respondents who met the following criteria:
❖ CCC-A
❖ Student debt of at least \$1

Debt	Facility type					
	All facility types (n = 333)	College/university (n = 22)	Hospital (n = 135)	Franchise/retail chain (n = 16)	Nonres. health care (n = 143)	Industry (n = 15)
25th percentile	\$37,000	(n < 25)	\$50,000	(n < 25)	\$32,000	(n < 25)
50th percentile (Median)	\$75,000		\$82,000		\$62,000	
75th percentile	\$126,000		\$138,212		\$105,000	
Mean	\$87,274		\$95,866		\$80,665	
Standard deviation	\$65,060		\$64,892		\$65,637	
Mode	\$80,000		\$80,000		\$20,000	
Statistical significance: $F(4, 326) = 1.2, p = .328$ Conclusion: There is not enough evidence from the data to say that the responses vary by facility type.						

In 2022, 6.4% of ASHA constituents self-identified as Hispanic or Latino—up from 2.5% in 2002. About 8.9% self-identified as American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or multiracial—up from 4.9% in 2002.

Figure 12. Percentage of ASHA constituents who self-identify as Hispanic or Latino and who self-identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or multiracial, 2002–2022.



Research and Data Collection

Identification of trends:

- Race
 - Majority white
- Gender
 - Majority female
- Socio-economic status
 - Systems barriers for entrance to profession

Identification and Commitment to Values

ASHA leadership commits to the members and themselves to prioritize DEI within the profession through their:

- Public Policy Agenda and Values Statements.

ASHA holds a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) that directly addresses systemic racism and institutional inequity. Ultimately, the efficacy and sustainability of audiology and speech-language pathology services rests upon an understanding of and respect for each client, patient, and student—as well as the provider. It is essential that a culturally responsive workforce is promoted, that a diversified body of audiology and speech-language pathology students is supported, and that discrimination is not tolerated. ASHA has identified the following DEI priorities in the *2023 Agenda*:

- Advocate for or engage in anti-discriminatory policies and practices that support audiologists, SLPs, and people with communication disorders in areas that include ability, age, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and/or veteran status.
- Advocate for a diverse population of undergraduate and graduate students in accredited speech, language, and hearing science programs.
- Advocate to policymakers for greater awareness of different linguistic systems, the impact of language and dialects on the provision of services, and the role of audiologists and SLPs in promoting a culturally responsive workforce.
- Advocate for greater coverage of services by highlighting the impact that social determinants of health have on people with communication disorders.

We recognize and respect individuality; we value the power of the collective to promote positive change and to propel us forward; and we affirm that the more diverse our membership and perspectives are, the more effective we can be as audiologists, speech-language pathologists, speech-language, and hearing scientists, audiology assistants, and speech-language pathology assistants. We contend that respectful, purposeful, and meaningful engagement of diverse perspectives will promote equity and access and will increase our individual and collective success.

We believe that representation matters, that culturally responsive care is a clinical imperative, and that quality service and optimal outcomes are best achieved by professionals who engage in self-reflection and address power imbalances inherent to (a) educational and health care systems and (b) relationships with clients, patients, students, and families.

We commit to fostering an equitable, accessible, and inclusive professional home for an increasingly diverse ASHA membership; actively seeking to identify, reduce, and (where possible) eliminate barriers and discrimination; and purposefully advancing and integrating principles of belonging in our processes and systems.

We aspire to facilitate access to the discipline for under-represented populations, to affirm and include the voices of historically minoritized and marginalized individuals, and to be a resource and community that provides and improves experiences for all ASHA constituents, clients, patients, students, and their caregivers and/or loved ones.

Strategy and Planning

ASHA's Strategic Pathway is the ASHA Board of Directors established nine Strategic Objectives biannually. April 2024

- Strategic Objective #6:
 - Increase Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) within the Association and the discipline

Strategy and Planning

ASHA has a system of committees with varied focuses to target and improve and strengthen the profession.

- The Board of Directors (BOD)
- Ad Hoc Committees and Working Groups
- Advisory Boards and Councils
- Coordinating Committees
- Councils
- Joint Committees

Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

Examples:

- Modified and expanded the options for demographic categories so that members can accurately self-identify. –April 2023.
- Taking Action Against Microaggressions course series –April 2024
- The Hearing and Speech Career microsite
 - The site promotes the professions to individuals from under-represented racial/ethnic populations, males, and bi/multilingual service providers. — January 2024
- ASHA Support Letters
 - Speech-Language Stipend Program (April 10, 2024)
 - College Cost Reduction Act (March 1, 2024)

Future Considerations

- Advocacy for systems change in the pathway to CSD careers.
- Membership surveys geared towards identifying earlier barriers.
- SIG or group forms for open idea sharing beyond formal committees and etc.
- Emphasis on recruitment and visibility for diverse populations.

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