



ATA Electronic Newsletter
June 2011 - Volume 1, Issue 2

Anniversary Spotlight

An Interview with Gita Bhattacharya and Her Story of Triumph Over Vertigo

What's new? You may remember ATA asking for your participation in our 40th Anniversary survey a few months back. Gita Bhattacharya was the investigator and respondent behind that survey and in this interview, she talks about how she became involved in tinnitus and shares the results of her survey. She also provides us with some wonderful information on ways you can help in the pursuit of her research and other questions from the results of the research. Research is our passion and we are so excited to share it with you.



AMERICAN
TINNITUS
ASSOCIATION

COMMITTED TO A CURE

2010-2011 ANNUAL REPORT

It Was the Best of Times, It Was the Worst of Times...

In the book *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens wrote, “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.” In his story he was referring to the period of time before the French Revolution. I believe the same is true for the current state of affairs for tinnitus.

FY 2010-2011 ATA Milestones

1. ATA's annual *Jack Vernon Walk to Silence Tinnitus* expanded to include the state of Arizona. The first ever *AZ Walk to Silence Tinnitus* took place in March 2011.
2. ATA held its first-ever celebrity memorabilia auction which raised funds that helped ATA fulfill its mission of silencing tinnitus.
3. ATA said goodbye to co-founder and organization visionary Jack A. Vernon, Ph.D., and his wife and tinnitus researcher Mary B. Meikle, Ph.D.
4. ATA began offering its new member benefit, the *ATA Electronic Newsletter*, a publication that complements *Tinnitus Today* and is sent out in February, June and October.
5. ATA added new functionality to its website ATA.org, including a videos page, podcasts to download, and a blog.

It is the *best of times*, because for the first time in the long history of tinnitus, more money is being spent researching the condition than ever before. Since 1980, the American Tinnitus Association has funded more than 100 research projects. These projects have pushed the envelope and advanced what we know about tinnitus. Also, due to ATA's aggressive advocacy efforts, Congress has finally stepped up to the plate and allocated money for research for the number one disability for veterans – tinnitus.

However, for some tinnitus patients, it is still the *worst of times*. No cure has yet been found for tinnitus. Millions are still suffering with the sometimes debilitating “ringing in their ears” that is destroying their livelihood, their home life and their interactions with others.

During my time as Chair of ATA's Board of Directors, I led and participated in some of the *best of times*. I witnessed the great dedication of our staff, Board of Directors, and Scientific Advisory Committee who all work tirelessly to ensure that ATA continues its longstanding tradition of being leaders in tinnitus research. In particular, over the last year we funded several proposals that could lead to new treatments for tinnitus which you can read about in this Annual Report.

ATA is fully funded by its membership and all of our ability to fund research comes from the generosity and initiative of our donors. This means we also receive zero funding from the government or from grants. That's why this year, when a committed group of ATA members and volunteers in Arizona wanted



to expand our annual *Jack Vernon Walk to Silence Tinnitus* we knew that it would increase our ability to fund research. In addition, this year a brand new event, the *Tour de Tinnitus*, was started by ATA member Mark Church in his home state of Missouri. Both of these events raised money that was restricted to ATA's research grant program. We are grateful to the volunteers in Arizona, and

Mark and his supporters in Missouri, whose efforts will go directly toward helping those who may be experiencing the *worst of times* with their tinnitus.

Although we are in difficult economic times, we cannot give up on funding research. Almost every charitable organization has seen a drop in their financial support, and with the tough economic times, ATA is no different. However, we cannot give up now when so much is at stake. It is imperative that ATA continue to enable scientists to discover new paths to that cure.

What ATA wants is the *best of times* for everyone. I hope you find this Annual Report informative and it motivates you to contribute whatever you can to make 2012 the best year ever for tinnitus research.

Gary P. Reul, Ed.D.

Chair, ATA Board of Directors, FY 2009-2011

Thoughts From ATA's Executive Director

ATA works hard all year long to make sure that we're maximizing your contributions to advance tinnitus research toward a cure.

Our hard-working staff of eight works tirelessly to run our Support Network, answer your inquiries, manage our research program, advocate on your behalf, and develop creative ways of increasing our ability to fund research by expanding our fundraising efforts.

Below is a snapshot of ATA's program areas and how we allocated your donations during FY 2010-2011.

And we owe a special thanks to the members of our esteemed Board of Directors who served during the 2010-2011 fiscal year. This group, made up of tinnitus health professionals, researchers, patients and advocates, volunteered their time to be ambassadors of ATA's mission.

ATA's Board of Directors

Gary P. Reul, Ed.D.

Chair, Issaquah, Washington

Mark K. Johnson, J.D.

Vice Chair, Anchorage, Alaska

Barbara Kennedy

Secretary, Mays Landing, New Jersey

Marsha Johnson, Au.D.

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Warrenton, Virginia

William (Van) Brooks Harrison

Tempe, Arizona

Cathy Henderson Jones, Au.D.

Warrenville, Illinois

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Valencia, California

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Arlington, Virginia

Michael J. A. Robb, M.D.

Phoenix, Arizona

Michelle Stergio

Tuxedo, NY

Joseph Trevisani, M.I.A.

New York, New York

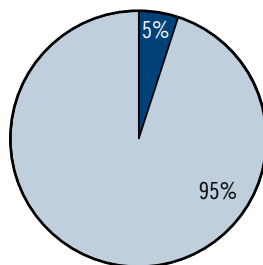


Michael Malusevic

ATA Executive Director

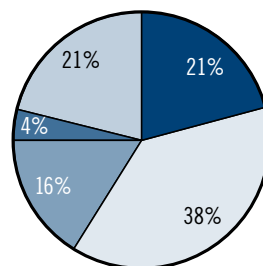
The Financials

Revenue and Support



95% Individuals
5% Foundations

Expenses



21% Advocacy 4% Management
38% Research 21% Fundraising
16% Support

Statement of Activities

Revenue and Support	\$ 1,050,235
Total Program Services	\$ 834,326
Total Supporting Services	\$ 279,053
Beginning Year Net Assets	\$ 576,787
Change in Net Assets	\$ (63,144)
End of Year Net Assets	\$ 513,643

The American Tinnitus Association has 501(c)(3) status as a nonprofit organization; all contributions are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

ATA is a member agency of the Health Medical Research Charities of America Federation for the Combined Federal Campaign. We appreciate those donors who choose the CFC to make direct contributions to ATA by indicating #11030 on their work place giving form, or when necessary, simply writing in, "American Tinnitus Association."

ATA's Support Network

ATA's Support Network consists of support groups and help network volunteers.

A **support group** is led by a volunteer who coordinates, organizes and sets up meetings at a local place, such as a classroom, house of worship or hospital, where space can be donated to meet. ATA is proud to have 46 support groups in 25 states across the U.S.

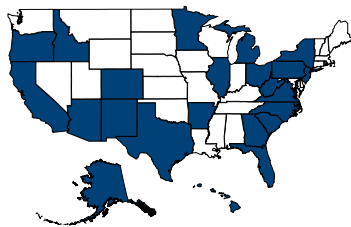
A **help network volunteer** is an individual who may not have the time to run a formal support group, but who wants to support other tinnitus sufferers in their geographical area. ATA connects with 168 help network volunteers in 39 states in the U.S.

Our **Support Network** even reaches across international borders, with support groups

and help network volunteers in Australia, Canada, England, South Africa, and Sweden. ATA's Support Network continues to grow thanks to many new volunteers. This past fiscal year, 26 new volunteers came on including:

- 10 new help network volunteers
- 16 new support groups

These new volunteers came from all across the United States and include Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Washington, D.C., and West Virginia.



ATA also has international support groups in Australia, Canada, England, South Africa, and Sweden.

For a complete listing of support groups and help network volunteers by area, visit ATA.org/support.

ATA's Membership

ATA has several categories of membership.

We have our **regular membership**, mostly made up of tinnitus patients that includes people in the United States and around the globe. Our **Professional Membership** program is comprised of tinnitus health professionals and our **Corporate Membership** program is for companies that wish to demonstrate their commitment to curing tinnitus.

In January 2011, ATA raised its regular membership dues for the first time in seven years from \$35 to \$40 annually. In addition, we added another membership category – an Online membership for \$35 which provides a PDF copy of *Tinnitus Today* and access to ATA's Members section on ATA.org.

ATA's list of regular and online members and supporters totaled approximately 9,500 individuals in fiscal year 2010-2011.

ATA has 73 professional members – tinnitus health practitioners who are dedicated to helping tinnitus patients. This program grows by the month.

ATA is proud to partner with 17 corporate members that include tinnitus device manufacturers, audiology clinics, biomedical research companies and event sponsors, all who believe in ATA's mission of silencing tinnitus for good.



Major Ways ATA Fulfills its Mission

One of the primary ways that ATA fulfills its mission is by directly funding research. All of ATA's ability to fund this research comes exclusively from the generosity of our donors, which is why raising funds is such a crucial part of what we do at ATA.



From establishing new events, to utilizing social media, this year, ATA offered some new and exciting ways to get involved by supporting the fight for a cure.

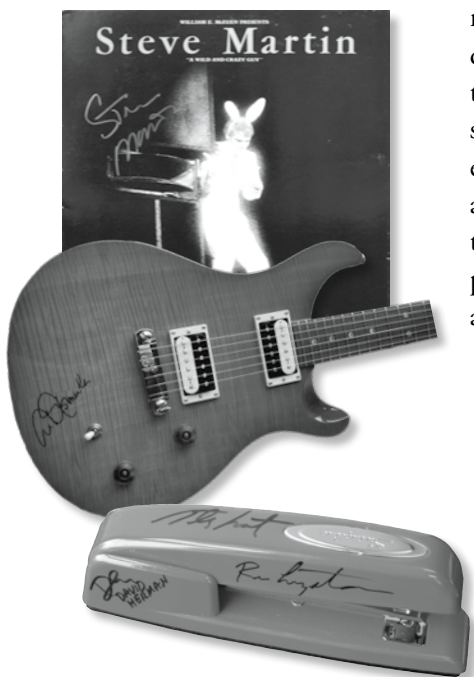
The **Jack Vernon Walk to Silence Tinnitus**, and the first-ever satellite **AZ Walk to Silence Tinnitus**, raised over \$60,000 for ATA's research fund. The combined total easily eclipsed the amount needed to fund an entire research grant. Many thanks to those who started a team or supported someone else's team!

ATA held its first ever **celebrity memorabilia auction**. Some items up for bid included those from Steve Martin, William Shatner, and Al Di Meola, as well as autographed instruments, posters, and LPs from several popular bands. The most unique item? A red Swingline stapler autographed by the cast of the movie *Office Space*.

An important component of our fund-raising program are **major gifts** – single donations that are \$5,000 or more. Over the course of the year, ATA received 16 such gifts, including a \$100,000 gift to establish a new restricted research fund. In addition, over \$75,000 was donated from two bequests demonstrating the power of planned giving. An anonymous individual also gave a \$50,000 gift – enough to fund

a research grant all on its own. Of the \$60,000 raised from the Walks, \$20,000 were from donations at the major gift level. ATA is indebted to these major donors and are truly grateful for their incredible generosity.

For the first time, ATA participated in a unique online challenge from home automation company, Vivint. Through their annual **Vivint Gives Back Challenge**, conducted entirely on Facebook, ATA was able to generate nearly \$2,000 in gifts from member donations and Vivint's corporate match.



ATA-Funded Research



ATA Awards \$202,900 in Research Grants During FY 2010-2011

Thanks to the generosity of ATA's members and supporters, we were pleased to be able to fund six (five regular grants and one student grant) very deserving investigators. We owe a special thanks to our Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) who completed the peer review of these projects and made recommendations to our Board of Directors for funding.

Berthold Langguth, M.D., Ph.D., University of Regensburg, Germany.

PROJECT: rTMS for the Treatment of Tinnitus: Optimization by Stimulation of the Cortical Tinnitus Network. GRANT DETAILS: One-year grant; \$45,000; PATHS: A,B,C,D. SCOPE: Develop an improved and optimized rTMS (repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation) procedure targeting the areas of the brain in patients where tinnitus has been identified through functional imaging.

Jay Piccirillo, M.D., FACS., Washington University in St. Louis, School of Medicine.

PROJECT: Exploration of Cortical Neural Network in Patients with Bothering Tinnitus. GRANT DETAILS: One-year grant; \$12,900. PATHS: A,B,C,D. SCOPE: Use functional connectivity MRI (fcMRI) to study cortical attention networks in patients with bothersome tinnitus and non-tinnitus controls to understand the role of the attention, control, and other cortical networks in the development and maintenance of tinnitus.

Susan Shore, Ph.D., The Regents of the University of Michigan.

PROJECT: Somatosensory Influence on Physiological and Behavioral Correlates of Tinnitus – Towards an Effective Technique for Alleviating Tinnitus. GRANT DETAILS: One-year grant; \$45,000. PATHS: A,B,C. SCOPE: Develop a detailed evaluation of the acoustic-somatosensory mechanisms involved in tinnitus, preparatory to the development of an implantable electrode to be tested in an animal model. Combined auditory-somatosensory stimulation may prove to be a viable therapy for the alleviation of tinnitus.

Lucien Thompson, Ph.D., University of Texas at Dallas.

PROJECT: Developing and Treating Tinnitus by Modulating Neuroplasticity in Hippocampus and Amygdala. GRANT DETAILS: One-year grant; \$45,000. PATHS: A,B,C. SCOPE: Explore whether or not treating excitatory neurons in the hippocampus, the part of the brain where anxiety starts, with D-cycloserine alter, prevent or even eliminate tinnitus perception in patients.

Pim van Dijk, Ph.D., University Medical Center Groningen, Netherlands.

PROJECT: Response of the Central Auditory System in Tinnitus and Hearing Loss, an fMRI study. GRANT DETAILS: One-year grant; \$45,000 for third year of a three-year project (\$183,006 total). PATH: A. SCOPE: Use functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to compare brain patterns to determine why some hearing impaired patients have tinnitus while others do not.

Na Zhu, Ph.D., student, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

PROJECT: Development of an Innovative, 3D Computer-Aided Diagnostic System for Tinnitus. GRANT DETAILS: One-year student grant; \$10,000. PATH: A. SCOPE: Use a novel 3D computer-aided diagnostic system to identify the specific locations in the auditory system that exhibit tinnitus-related activities to provide an in-depth understanding of the fundamental neural mechanisms underlying tinnitus.

ATA Scientific Advisory Committee FY 2010-2011



Anthony T. Cacace, Ph.D.
Chair, ATA's Scientific Advisory Committee

Anthony T. Cacace, Ph.D.,
Chair, Detroit, Mich.

Thomas J. Brozoski, Ph.D.,
Springfield, Ill.

Robert Burkard, Ph.D.,
Buffalo, N.Y.

Donald Caspary, Ph.D.,
Springfield, Ill.

Dirk De Ridder, M.D., Ph.D.,
Antwerp, Belgium

Craig Formby, Ph.D.,
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

Donald Godfrey, Ph.D.,
Toledo, Ohio

James (Jay) Hall, Ph.D.,
FAAA, Gainesville, Fla.

James Henry, Ph.D.,
Portland, Ore.

Marlies Knipper, Ph.D.,
Tübingen, Germany

Jennifer Melcher, Ph.D.,
Boston, Mass.

Jay Piccirillo, M.D., FACS,
St. Louis, Mo.

Michael J. A. Robb, M.D.,
Phoenix, Ariz.

Susan Shore, Ph.D.,
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Hinrich Staecker, M.D., Ph.D.,
Kansas City, Kan.

Jinsheng Zhang, Ph.D.,
Detroit, Mich.

ATA Advocacy in Action

ATA continued to make the case for tinnitus in our nation's capital. Some highlights of the work for this year include:



Reps. Phil Roe and Harry Teague, co-chairs, Invisible Wounds Caucus.



Denise and Jennifer Capriati

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

Chicago Tribune



- The **U.S. House Invisible Wounds Caucus** held a hearing specifically on tinnitus due to its status as the number-one service connected disability for veterans. This hearing, led by Representative Phil Roe (R,TN) and Representative Harry Teague (D,NM), raised awareness of the growing problem of tinnitus and the researchers trying to find cures. Expert witnesses from the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, AMVets, and leading tinnitus researchers testified along with ATA on why now is the time to put resources into research.
- Tinnitus was once again included as an eligible condition for research in the **Department of Defense's Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program (PRMRP)**. As a result of the previous year's effort and resulting success, three tinnitus research groups were recommended for funding, with grants totaling almost \$3.5 million.
- ATA honored its **2010 Congressional Champions**, Senator Patty Murray (D,WA) and Representative Phil Roe (R,TN). Senator Murray was honored for her efforts to include tinnitus as part of the PRMRP as well as her efforts to include the tinnitus language that appeared in the Labor Health and Human Services bill, which is the appropriations bill that funds the National Institutes of Health.

Representative Roe was honored because of his involvement with the Invisible Wounds Caucus and Veterans Affairs committee, which has helped keep focus on tinnitus in several bills.

Publicity

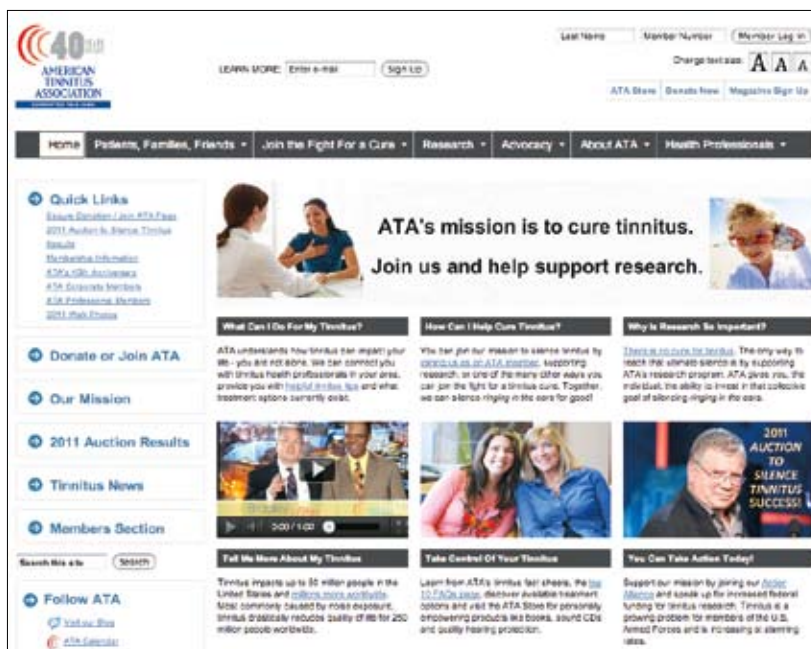
ATA also made headlines again in 2010, with spokespeople appearing in a wealth of major daily newspapers and their online sources, as well as broadcast on television and radio stations including: *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Arizona Republic*, *Fairfax Times*, and *National Public Radio*. In addition, former number one women's tennis player, Olympic gold medalist and ATA supporter Jennifer Capriati appeared on the ABC television affiliate in Phoenix, Arizona. Jennifer was in Phoenix as part of her support for the *AZ Walk to Silence Tinnitus*, that she participated in with her mother Denise, a tinnitus sufferer.

ATA Executive Director Michael Malusevic and Development Director Wes Breazeale also appeared on Portland, Oregon's KNRK radio station during Tinnitus Awareness Week 2011 to present ATA's 'Perfect Playlist' – a collection of songs relative to tinnitus.

The Power of Social Media and Networking

Just the Facts

- 768 sites across the globe link directly to ATA.org.
- Nearly 1,000 people visit ATA.org every day.
- ATA has over 5,000 “fans” on our Facebook page, 473 Twitter followers, and 23 videos on YouTube that have been viewed over 230,000 times.



ATA Online Resources

Blog:

ATA.org/blog

Events:

ATA.org/events

Glossary:

ATA.org/glossary

Index:

ATA.org/index

Musicians:

ATA.org/music

Podcasts:

ATA.org/podcasts

Sounds of Tinnitus:

ATA.org/sounds-of-tinnitus

Store:

ATA.org/store

Student Zone:

ATA.org/for-patients/student-zone

Your Stories:

ATA.org/stories

ATA.org

ATA's globally visited website evolved over the past year. Adding to its array of information and resources for tinnitus patients, ATA expanded the support section, member information archive, ATA Store and video sections. Nine exciting new areas of the site were added including downloadable sounds of tinnitus and podcasts, an events listing, a glossary of audiological terms, and special sections for students and musicians. We also launched a blog and added a place where people can sign up for an RSS feed that will alert them to the latest ATA posts on tinnitus-related stories, research updates and events.

Facebook

ATA's Facebook page has become a platform of support and an information hub for thousands of people with tinnitus. Every day, more and more people “Like” us and gain immediate access to instant news, research posts, event happenings and the latest updates in tinnitus treatments. On top of that, people are able to connect with others from all over the world who understand what tinnitus is like and who offer support, encouragement and empathy – something that is often hard to find for tinnitus sufferers.

YouTube

Our videos showcase the widespread support ATA has for its mission to cure tinnitus. With videos from celebrities such as William Shatner, David Letterman, Jerry Stiller, and Tony Randall, and sports stars like tennis champion Jennifer Capriati, Notre Dame football underdog Daniel “Rudy” Ruettiger, and Chicago Bears hall of famer Gale Sayers, our collection of videos are both educational and entertaining.



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