

Starkey Press Release

F O R I M M E D I A T E R E L E A S E

Starkey Provides \$50,000 Challenge Program for AFA Fundraiser.

LAFAYETTE, Ind., –Starkey Laboratories will donate matching contributions to the Audiology Foundation of America (AFA) of up to \$50,000 in 2004. This is the third time in a decade that Starkey has offered a challenge program to help audiologists raise money to support the Au.D. movement.

For 15 years, the AFA has been dedicated to taking audiology to a higher degree. Virtually all other doctoring professions have independent mechanisms for developing educational standards and methods for accrediting academic programs..... and audiology should too. The profession needs to continue developing the building blocks to complete the entire Au.D. transition.

Working in conjunction with Starkey, the AFA will raise funds to support the development of a new accrediting body and educational standards for Au.D. programs. Starkey President Jerry Ruzicka said, "This grant will help generate excitement in the profession about the improvements we are making for the future. We will match every dollar donated up to \$50,000 enabling the AFA to raise \$100,000 or more to propel audiology's future forward."

Starkey has long understood that there is more to being a full service company than simply manufacturing hearing aids. Beyond the literature and specifications, audiologists look to manufacturers for innovative programs to make the industry more reputable, professional and knowledgeable. It's no secret that the Au.D. is here. Now that the program is a reality at more than 20 colleges across the United States, it's more important than ever to help keep the AFA's finances strong.

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Working in conjunction with the AFA, Starkey encourages practitioners to enroll in distance Au.D. programs. Audiology is not yet considered to be a doctoring profession and without the support of the entire industry, it may never become one. A critical mass of Au.D. graduates is the necessary next step to convince state licensure boards to make the Au.D. the criteria for new licensure and to achieve point-of-entry status for reimbursement.

AFA Chair Kenneth L. Lowder, Au.D. stated, "Now that the Au.D. degree is a reality, with over 2000 graduates in Spring 2004, it's more important than ever to keep the AFA's finances strong. Let's not fail to fund the next step of the transition."

All audiologists will be asked to contribute. For more information about doubling your contribution, visit the AFA's website: www.audfound.org.