

Board Certification Shows High Skill Levels and Commitment to Excellence

By Torryn P. Brazell

We recently reached out to board certified audiologists to learn more about them and why they chose to become board certified. Sheri Gostomelsky, AuD, who has been practicing since 1977, shared her thoughts with us.

“Since I started, I have been employed in many settings, including private practice, hospital, school; both public and residential, industrial, and manufacturing,” Dr. Gostomelsky said. “Unfortunately, not all of the clinical environments allowed me to spend enough time with patients, as they well deserve.”

She chose to earn ABA board certification because she felt it would set her apart from others in the field in the eyes of potential patients and because of the type of commitment required to earn it.

“I want to be recognized as the best of the best and let my patients know that I am committed to constant improvement by setting the bar high,” Dr. Gostomelsky explained. “Board certification allows me to do that because it requires commitments to continuing education

that exceed state license requirements, with a personal commitment to ethics.”

In 2001, Dr. Gostomelsky opened the Audiology Associates of Deerfield, which currently has two locations in a suburb north of Chicago, to create an environment where she could give patients more personalized care.

“Seeing one person at a time and treating him or her with the care and respect that is lacking in so many aspects of medical care is something that I aspire to as an audiologist; and I find it elevates me to a higher level,” she continued. “It is a very personal business. We know their families and they know ours!”

“We have an active patient base of more than 2,000, which consists primarily of adults. Because of our exceptional care, we have a considerable number of patients who travel quite a distance to see us,” she said.

Dr. Gostomelsky became interested in audiology as an undergraduate, when her college counselor talked to her about it. “My counselor thought that speech and hearing science would suit my intellect and personality,” she

said. “As an undergraduate, I had the opportunity to experience both speech pathology and audiology practices. The decision was an easy one for me.”

A member of the Illinois Academy of Audiology, American Academy of Audiology, and Academy of Doctors of Audiology, Dr. Gostomelsky earned her board certification in 2002. Prior to that, she maintained her CCC-A through the American



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Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) from 1997 through 2001.

"I was employed as a hospital audiologist for 17 years. During that time, supervision of graduate students required having your Cs," Dr. Gostomelsky shared. "I have held a dispensing license in the state of Illinois since 1987, as well as a New York license. When board certification was introduced, I took that step."

She chose to earn ABA certification because of the type of commitment required to earn it and because her belief that board certification sets her apart from others in the field.

"I am hoping that eventually there will be more sub-specialties in ABA certification in the future. That was one of the reasons I took the step to exceed the requirements of a practicing audiologist," she said.

Having held both a license and certification, Dr. Gostomelsky explained the differences between the two.

"A license can be obtained by meeting minimum requirements and writing a check, but [board] certification is obtained by exceeding traditional standards," she said. "There is an expectation to go beyond minimum requirements with board certification, and it recognizes exceptional performance."

"ABA certification is voluntary and shows a commitment to the profession. A dispensing audiologist needs only a license and a minimum amount of continuing education," she explained.

She sees this standard setting as a distinct advantage in patient care because she puts a high level of importance on keeping her standards "a notch above."

"My patients are looking for exceptional treatment by the most qualified professional," Dr. Gostomelsky explained, "and ABA certification helps me to demonstrate that professionalism and high quality to them." 

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