



Community Review

Winter 2014

Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Director's Message | 3 |
| Boeing Outreach Effort Wins Washington State Governor's Award | 5 |
| Do you have a success story? | 5 |
| Could You Be a Caring Foster Parent to a Deaf or Hard of Hearing Child? | 6 |
| Statewide Community Calendar of Events | 7 |
| Deaf Interpreter Standards for Education | 8 |
| Let's Loop DSHS | 9 |
| Putting the Hearing Loop to Work Works | 10 |
| Dear Fellow Washington Citizens | 12 |
| Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Transitions to Aging and Long-Term Support Services | 14 |
| Welcome to Our New Intern | 15 |
| ODHH Contact Information | 17 |

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Director's Message

Eric Raff, ODHH Director

A very important change for ODHH is our realignment within Aging and Long-Term Services (ALTS). While the accompanying article will explain in depth about the realignment, it is essential to mention it as I write about ODHH's greatest asset, its employees. ODHH would not be successful today if it were not for dedicated staff performing their duties with a passion. Most of the staff have niche knowledge and expertise in specialized fields related to serving people with hearing loss that cannot be had elsewhere else within state government. 2013 has certainly been a year of staff changes. Here's the latest:



Last September, Lien Ngo-Tran, Fiscal Officer, announced her intent to retire by the end of the month. She provided 31.5 years of faithful service to the state of Washington, joining ODHH on January 19, 1988. She was a professional with dedication, reliability and integrity throughout her entire career. She will be missed. While ODHH continues to pay the bills, the position will be reclassified and will report to the Aging and Long-Term Services Financial Manager, focusing on ODHH's accounting and budget functions.

After an extensive search, Jacqueline Borde, an Administrative Assistant employed with the Kent police department, was appointed to our Executive Assistant position. She started working on October 16th and has been taking all the required trainings since that time. She will be taking American Sign Language courses at a local college so she can communicate with some of our Deaf staff. We are excited to have her start helping us with the administrative functions to ensure our office is running smoothly. Please welcome Jacki next time you visit our office!

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At the end of October, Bob Lichtenberg, Assistant Director, announced he had accepted a job with the Administrator of the Courts (AOC), focusing on spoken and sign language interpreting issues. His last day was on November 15th. He had joined ODHH on January 22, 1998 and had been with ODHH for nearly 15 years. He was a professional with passion and integrity throughout his career. He will be missed in the office, but will partner with ODHH on court interpreting endeavors. The Assistant Director position will be reclassified to a position that either provides a direct service to the community or support the Department with a service integration initiative, pending a review.

Berle Ross was transferred from Assistive Communication Technology (ACT) program manager position to the Sign Language Interpreter Management (SLIM) program manager position. Berle has been with us since August 2012 and graciously accepted additional responsibilities when the SLIM position became vacant. Recently, ODHH received approval to fill the position and it was decided that Berle has more to offer as a SLIM manager. Berle will continue to support both programs until the ACT position is filled. Recruitment is now active and underway.

For the next six months, we'll be seeing new staff appointed to the Fiscal Officer and Assistant Director positions which will be reclassified as well as the ACT position which will remain unchanged. The majority of us who have been with ODHH for many years will remain to provide stability in the services we offer to our stakeholders.

Boeing Outreach Effort Wins Washington State Governor's Award

by James R. Shapard

For efforts to overcome disabilities in the workforce and improve communication and understanding between deaf/hoh employees and their colleagues, Boeing was awarded with the 2013 large private employer award by the governor's committee on employment and disability issues. James Shapard, a quality systems specialist who is deaf and who was instrumental in multiple outreach efforts, accepted the award on behalf of the company. "It is a tremendous honor for us to be recognized by the state of Washington for our efforts, but our work is not over yet," Shapard said at the awards ceremony. "Boeing promises to continue to look for ways to enhance the workplace for our employees with disabilities, including those who are deaf and hard of hearing, and to open the doors of possibility for us all."

Do you have a success story, advocacy issue, news, or want to share what matters most to you?

You can send articles via email to:

odhh@dshs.wa.gov

or call:

360-339-7382 VP for the ODHH Community Review Newsletter

Could you be a caring foster parent for a deaf or hard of hearing child?

A new collaborative partnership was forged over the last several months between the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) and the Children's Administration (CA). The partnership focuses on recruiting deaf and American Sign Language (ASL) proficient prospective foster parents to provide care for deaf children when they must be placed in out-of-home care. Suzanne Mannella and Berle Ross, Program Managers with ODHH together with CA's Stacy Winokur and Meri Waterhouse, Foster Parent Recruitment & Retention have served as the core team working on the recruitment effort.

On October 29, the first of three information nights was presented in Tacoma. 16 individuals and families attended the recruitment event to hear from a panel of deaf and ASL proficient foster parents and learn about their experiences and the current need for foster parents. Children's serves about 10 – 15 deaf children through the foster care system in Washington. Though the population is small, there is a significant need for safe, loving foster parents who can help meet the unique needs of these children and youth.

Foster and adoptive parents, Lance and Joan Forshay, Jeanmarie Moore and Marlene Swartz shared their personal experiences as foster parents and answered questions from the audience. Arthur Fernandez, with the University of Washington Training Alliance offered information about foster parent pre-service training requirements and opportunities. Cindy Luzi, social worker with the Division of Licensed Resources shared information about the licensing process and Jill Boyce, Supervisor with Children's Administration at the Tacoma Placement Desk offered information on the placement process that brings together children and caregivers.

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Foster parents who currently care for deaf children are few in number and widely disbursed across the state; this makes access to information and support for these caregivers challenging. To assist in connecting deaf and ASL skilled foster parents, a secure Facebook page is being established with the help of the Olive Crest – Fostering Together program. Olive Crest is the foster parent recruitment and retention contractor working with Children’s Administration. The Facebook group will be known as the “Deaf Foster Child Network.”

Additional recruitment evenings are being planned for Vancouver and Spokane. Event flyers and an invitational video on You Tube will announce the next dates. Everyone is welcome to attend!

Statewide Community Calendar of Events

ODHH offers a centralized statewide calendar of community events as a public service. The purpose of the Community Calendar of Events is to bring the community and services together. If you have an event you would like to include on our calendar, submission guidelines and procedures are available on the webpage below:

https://fortress.wa.gov/dshs/odhhapps/EventOfCalendar/Event_Request.aspx

Email event information to: **odhh@dshs.wa.gov**

ODHH will post events for anyone to view in the community calendar.

Deaf Interpreter Standards for Education

by David Brenna

A new collaborative partnership was forged over the last several months between the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) and the Children's Administration (CA). The partnership focuses on recruiting deaf and American Sign Language Following the setting of a 3.5 score on the Education Interpreter Performance Standard (EIPA) in July, the Professional Educator Standards board (PESB) had another task assigned by the Legislature. In HB 1144, there was initially a requirement that by the year 2019, all educational interpreter had to not only perform to standard on the EIPA, but must carry the NIC. That has the net effect of raising the EIPA standard to 4.0; the Registry for Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) awards the NIC to individuals with a 4.0 on the EIPA. Candidates could also take and pass the performance assessment for the NIC.

In October, the PESB re-convened the workgroup that had generated the report to the board recommending the EIPA of the NIC with the written portion of the EIPA. The task this time was to follow up on HB 1144. The section of the bill that required the NIC by 2019 had been amended in the final hours before passage and replaced with a requirement that PESB report to the Legislature on how to "appropriately use" the NIC and EIPA.

The workgroup met for a full day and explored the challenges of the current system responding to these new standards in time for the 2016 school year, the need for training and testing opportunities, and the status of the current workforce. After consideration, the workgroup recommended that the PESB report to the Legislature to not advance an additional requirement at this time. The report will further recommend that the PESB re-visits the standard in the future as the system responds to these new requirements. On November 14, the board approved the content of the report and will forward the work to the House and Senate Education Committees.

Let's Loop DSHS

by Berle Ross and Katie Doyle

Induction Loops make sense, allowing people with hearing aids or cochlear implants to go about their business with equal communication access. Audio input captured by a dedicated microphone is routed through an Induction Loop Amplifier, which then drives the sound current through an established Loop cable. This can be either in a piece of equipment or installed around a whole room. The cable creates a magnetic field which is picked up by a telecoil in cochlear implants and specific hearing aids, and amplified as high quality audio signal. For users it only takes the click of a simple T switch on their aid or implant. The majority of aids dispensed today have the T switch, yet too few consumers are aware of how they work.

The Looping trend was brought to the U.S. by Michigan psychologist David Myers, a Seattle native who has hearing loss and experienced the clarity of Loop in Europe in the 1990s. Myers' website offers much information at www.hearingloop.org. The systems are being promoted by the ADA. However, their advantages over infrared and FM systems have yet to be seriously acknowledged.

The trend has been promoted locally largely by Let's Loop Seattle, an educational and advocacy organization founded by Cheri Perazzoli in 2012. Their campaign to "Share the Sound" addresses our whole state. Information can be found at www.loopseattle.org, including how Perazzoli also discovered the new international standard for hearing access in Europe.

ODHH is now promoting the use of Induction Loops in DSHS Community Service Offices throughout the state. We started this project in April 2013 with a pilot site at the Tumwater CSO and expanded to South Pierce in November. ODHH has also purchased Counter Loops for the regional service centers in Seattle, Tacoma, Bellingham, Vancouver, Pasco and Spokane. These are compact, close proximity local Loop system units. We are educating client advocates on using this equipment at the office and during one-on-one meetings.

Putting the Hearing Loop to Work Works

by Cheri Perazzoli

Today, universal hearing loop technology can be implemented almost anywhere worldwide, opening communication for millions of people with hearing loss. Hearing loops are unique in two ways: they are the only assistive listening solution that provides effective communication access in transient situations to many people at once, and loops are the only technology able to do so without an additional device.

What is a transient listening situation? Simply a place you'll be in for a short time. For example, an information counter at the train station or a museum. A looped counter or ticket window contains a loop of wire that connects to an amplifier and a sound source, like a video or a person speaking into a microphone. All other sound is blocked, so the hearing aid, when switched to T-Coil, relays only the voice of the ticket clerk. That loop transmits the sound wirelessly to the hearing aid or cochlear implant. Though it's not widely known, hearing aids don't work well—sometimes not at all—in environments with poor acoustics, such as most transient environments.

What does this mean? Virtually any customer service counter can be easily looped to provide effective communication for both customers and employees. Airports kiosks, stadium concession stands, and opera house ticket windows can use loop technology to offer outstanding customer service and accommodate a worker with hearing loss. Banks, pharmacies, hospitals—any facility where the exchange of information and privacy are critical can build both customer and employee confidence and loyalty by adding simple, affordable loop technology.

Job opportunities, better service, easy communication. Nurse's stations, library counters, automotive centers, and rental car stations can benefit tremendously from loop technology. Consider the boost in employee productivity and morale, and the positive, inclusive message sent to customers. With a working induction loop in place, your employees and customers won't struggle to understand one another, saving valuable time and avoiding mistakes.

Sea-Tac Airport employs over 6,000 workers and served 33 million passengers in 2012. Installing loop technology can transform air travel for millions and bolster customer satisfaction exponentially—all while enhancing job performance. SeaTac is currently exploring adding hearing loop technology to its South Satellite.

Look for the sign. This universal blue sign lets people with hearing loss know that a hearing loop is available. Businesses should display their signs readily, visibly—and proudly. An easy switch of their hearing aid to T-coil mode (or the use of a neck loop and receiver) means crisp, clear hearing and better, understandable communication.

Accessibility is good business. The financial impact of hearing loss not adequately treated or accommodated has been estimated at \$122 billion in lost income, plus unrealized tax revenue estimated at \$18 billion. People with hearing loss report average lifetime earnings of almost half a million dollars less than their hearing counterparts, often due to barriers, impaired communication, and the resulting loss of soft skills that help people advance in the workplace.

Today many emerging young workers with hearing loss have benefitted from early intervention, digital hearing aids, and revolutionary cochlear implants. They are now primed to make their mark in the world and join the millions with hearing loss currently in the workforce. With collaborative support from DVR, employers, policy makers, and community leaders, we can create the hearing accessible workplaces, extending job opportunities and creating a dynamic economy for years to come.

Contact Let's Loop Seattle for guidance in implementing your workplace hearing loop! www.loopseattle.org, 425-785-4904.

Cheri Perazzoli,

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Founder/Director, Let's Loop Seattle

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Dear Fellow Washington Citizens

by Bob Lichtenberg

After 15 years at the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, where I had the opportunity to work with many wonderful people who care about the Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing communities, the time has come to move into more uncharted territory. On November 18th, I assumed the duties of a position with the Administrative Office of the Courts. As Language Access Coordinator for the Interpreter Commission that is chaired by one of the sitting state Supreme Court Justices, I will be working with over 200 different city and county courts as well as the state court of appeals, the Office of Administrative Hearings, and the Supreme Court of Washington. The mission is to enhance opportunities for people to efficiently get spoken and signed language interpreting and translation services so they can access daily court proceedings and services quickly.

I have many people to thank because they all taught me something about myself and about working across large organizations with the needs of many stakeholders facing them. I am the richer for it and feel a debt of gratitude to each of those I worked with. I truly had a chance to stand on the shoulders of great public servants. Firstly, Leon Curtis and Ed Hidano endorsed innovative ways to address access issues during my early years at DSHS. Without them, it would have resulted in Video Relay Services and the Deaf-Blind Communicator (a high-tech communications device for the Deaf-Blind) probably not being in existence until much later, if ever at all. Then there was the dedication of Colleen Rozmaryn, the client protector Claudia Foy, the dazzling William Crites Team, the soul-soothing customer care expert extraordinaire Kelly Robison and her bevy of capable trainers, the TRS Master Steve Peck, the Interpreter Symphony conductresses Emily Hill and Berle Ross, the commitment to the future of youth with hearing loss shown by

Suzanne Mannella, plus all the wonderful supporting staff over the years who processed our paychecks and made sure we did not travel and land in Timbuktu by mistake. I wish to also recognize the wonderful work of Andy Kramer and Sheila Anderson with Contracts, Ed Dee, John Meader and Richard Wyde from the Attorney General's office, Sue Bush and Donna Platt in the emergency and disaster preparedness field, and Eric Raff and Lien Ngo-Tran in their steering of ODHH through fiscal and operational challenges.

I also wish to thank all the past and present Executive Directors of the Regional Service Centers and their dedicated staff for their tireless efforts to serve all Washington residents who have hearing loss. I wish to notably thank past and present Washington state leaders who keep ODHH alive and relevant today: Larry Peterson, Char Parsley, Clyde Ketchum, James Christianson, Judie Husted, Mildred Johnson, Theresa Smith, Shawn Broderick and the WSRID community, the Center for Childhood Deafness and Hearing Loss, the Hearing Loss Association of Washington, the awesome Ed Bosson, Phil Bravin, Jeff Rosen, Brenda Kelly-Frey, Greg Hlibok and Kelby Brick, who are all in the VRS industry. I wish also to thank Sprint TRS family led by Mr. Smooth himself, Mike Ellis, whom I met on my very first week at ODHH and have had the satisfaction of a long and fruitful working relationship. Getting VRS in place with CSD and Sprint is one of my proudest accomplishments.

Lastly, but not least, I thank my wife for suffering many long nights when I would get home late or be gone out of town on business trips. Without her and all the fine people I worked for and with over those years, I would probably be flipping burgers somewhere along Highway 66.

Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Transitions to Aging and Long-Term Support Administration

As with every new incoming Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services, a change to the DSHS organizational hierarchy is not surprising and is to be expected. ODHH itself has been realigned within DSHS several times since its establishment 35+ years ago. For example, did you know that ODHH used to be part of the Developmental Disabilities 'Division' years ago?

After a DSHS review, the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) is transitioning to the Department of Social and Health Service's Aging and Long-Term Support Administration (AL TSA) <http://adsaweb.dshs.wa.gov/documents/orgcharts/AL TSAOrgChart.pdf>. This organizational change will help ODHH obtain support for its daily operations and focus more on client services, which are better aligned with the mission of AL TSA.

AL TSA offers services to empower senior citizens and people with disabilities to remain independent and supported within settings of their choice. AL TSA also protects the safety, rights, security, and well-being of people in licensed or certified care settings and protects vulnerable adults from abuse, neglect, abandonment and exploitation. We anticipate this realignment will bring new opportunities to better serve DSHS clients, including senior citizens who are experiencing progressive hearing loss.

As we transition, services will remain intact and our office will remain at DSHS Headquarters for the next year. ODHH will eventually relocate the office to Lacey to be closer to AL TSA Headquarters. If you have any questions regarding ODHH's transition to AL TSA, please contact me directly at 360-915-5835 or eric.raff@dshs.wa.gov.

Aging and Long-Term Support Administration

VISION

Seniors and people with disabilities living with good health, independence, dignity, and control over the decisions that affect their lives

MISSION

To transform lives by promoting choice, independence and safety through innovative services

VALUES

Collaboration ~ Respect ~ Accountability ~ Compassion

Welcome to Our New Intern

Hello from Katie (Faro) Doyle, the new intern at ODHH. I am a junior at The Evergreen State College. I spent last year studying ASL and Deaf Culture. Now I am delighted to be learning about social services for deaf, deaf-blind and hard of hearing people in Washington State as well as current trends in assistive communication technology. I adore the folks at ODHH and appreciate their willingness to have me on board. I have several possibilities in mind for my future. I hope to someday provide resources and advocacy for families with deaf, hard of hearing or deaf and disabled children. I am fascinated by the connection between agencies, schools, organizations and support groups who all care to provide support for these families. I am proud to be both an American and Canadian citizen as well as a mother of four children. I have worked in various jobs, including literacy support for the Shelton School District, which included attention to a bilingual program. I cherished some years of full-time parenting. I am hooked on gratitude and am working on a book about it for children. I absolutely love dogs, cooking, nature and poetry.

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Free Matter
for the Blind
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Handicapped