

The DODHH Bulletin

Published by the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns, Department of Labor & Economic Growth, www.mcdc-dodhh.org

Granholt Signs Laws Expanding Rights of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Qualified Interpreters Now Required in All Circumstances Specified by ADA

Past and present staff of DODHH is proud to be a part of the new and historic interpreter legislation in Michigan, Public Acts 23 and 24, that went into effect June 28, 2007. Governor Jennifer M. Granholt hosted an invitation-only ceremonial bill signing (pictured below) in her office at the state capitol on October 25, 2007. The press release is reprinted in this DODHH Bulletin and is online at www.mcdc-dodhh.org. DODHH was honored to have served as an advisor to the sponsors of this legislation, Senator John Gleason and Representative Dudley Spade.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) related to the legislation are on the DODHH website at www.mcdc-dodhh.org. Updates on any issues related to the legislation and the rulemaking process will be posted regularly on the website.

June 29, 2007 – LANSING – Governor Jennifer M. Granholt signed legislation that requires the use of qualified sign language interpreters who possess state or national certification in all accommodations required under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), making the scope of Michigan’s law comparable to the federal law. Approximately 1.4 million Michigan citizens are deaf or hard of hearing.

The MCDH-DODHH has been granted authority to promulgate the rules of this legislation which will serve as the guidelines for the laws. This includes the rulemaking that governs procedures for certification, minimum credential requirements, levels and minimum standards of practice, continuing education, renewals and grievances. DODHH will be hosting a rules promulgation committee that will begin work this fall to clarify the details of the laws. The rules process may take up to one year to complete.



“We’re ending the confusion, frustration, and errors that are so often experienced by the deaf and hard of hearing in important life situations due to misinterpreted information,” said Granholt. “Equal access to accurate communication is a basic civil right of us all.”

Under Public Act 23 (Senate Bill 25) and Public Act 24 (House Bill 4208) employ-

ers, state and local governments, and businesses providing a variety of services to the public are now obligated to provide for effective communication. Such entities include public and private schools and colleges; doctors’ offices, hospitals and pharmacies; banks, hotels, restaurants and theatres. Reasonable notice is required if a qualified interpreter is needed.

Public hearings will be announced with full accommodations during the rules process. DODHH looks forward to receiving your input. The DODHH staff will continue to educate the Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing interpreter community about the impact of this legislation and also the businesses, organizations, and agencies that provide and host interpreter services to the citizens of Michigan.

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The DODHH Bulletin is produced up to two times a year and available on the DODHH website at: www.mcdc-dodhh.org. Requests for printed copies of the DODHH Bulletin can be sent to: www.dodhh.org.

Opinions expressed in articles appearing in the DODHH Bulletin are those of the author. Mention of goods and services does not mean the DODHH endorsement, nor should exclusion suggest disapproval.

Executive Director's Corner

Greetings Michigan Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing citizens. I am Duncan Wyeth, executive director of Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns (MCDC) and the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DODHH). I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself to each of you in this fall 2007 DODHH bulletin. We are in a time of transition here in Michigan and our office is no exception to these changes. As you know, Chris Hunter, DODHH director of 27 years, retired May 1st after many tireless years of dedicated service to this office. During this time of transition, I am serving as the executive director of the DODHH along with the MCDC. I want to update you on the current state budget situation and more importantly, the work of the DODHH staff.



of Public Acts 23 and 24, the new interpreter laws. Given the new laws, staff has been very busy responding to questions and maximizing our resources to provide testing opportunities for sign language interpreters seeking QA certification and Educational Interpreters Performance Assessment (EIPA).

I want to assure you that the staff of DODHH, Janet Jurus, State Interpreter; Twyla Niedfeldt, Hard of Hearing Specialist; and Joy Thomassen, State Interpreter Coordinator and myself, are working on a daily basis to ensure your rights as Michigan citizens and educate the general public on the rights of all Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing citizens.

The Michigan Legislature has been able to successfully agree on a budget for fiscal year 2008. Although a budget agreement has been reached, essentially, the very limiting restrictions placed on our spending for the current year remain in place. Consequently, we are unable to schedule any meetings or trainings beyond those that are required by law or that will produce new revenues. Therefore, any boards, commissions or councils that are not funded with federal dollars cannot meet, nor can future meetings be scheduled until we receive further guidance. Unfortunately, this also affects the DODHH Advisory Board meetings that are typically hosted twice per year. I will continue to strongly advocate for the resources needed that will allow for an early resumption of Advisory Council meetings.

You are all very important to DODHH as advocates in the community. The DODHH staff depends on your networking and education efforts to ensure that every person in Michigan who is Deaf, Deaf-Blind or Hard of Hearing receives the support that they need to be included in all of their family and life activities. I particularly want to thank you for your continuing efforts to educate state government decision makers about the importance of filling the directorship of DODHH. We all miss the incredible influence of Chris Hunter and he can best be honored by making sure his efforts will be continued by a new director.

The entire DODHH staff continues to be actively involved in issues that require minimal travel. Staff has been particularly active in the formation of a highly skilled workgroup that will draft the rules and regulations for implementation

I hope you will share this information with everyone who is committed to the rights of Michigan's Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing citizens. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,
Duncan Wyeth

Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing Information

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Granholm Signs Laws Expanding Rights of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (Continued from cover)

PA 23 and 24 amend the Deaf Persons' Interpreters Act (PA 204 of 1982) which limited the application of interpreter standards to court and administrative hearings and was not sufficiently clear on the standards. PA 23 now defines a "qualified" interpreter as a person who is certified through the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf or by the Division of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DODHH) in the Department of Labor & Economic Growth (DLEG).

"I'm pleased to sign legislation that sets universal standards of excellence for qualified interpreters and protects our citizens from unqualified practitioners," Granholm said.

If an entity willfully fails to provide an interpreter when one is required or an unqualified interpreter is provided, the business or entity may be subject to a civil fine. Individuals who misrepresent themselves as qualified interpreters would be guilty of a misdemeanor and punishable by imprisonment and/or a fine. Individuals who violate the law are subject to rejection of their application for certification, or revocation, suspension, or limitation of certification.

PA 24 grants rulemaking authority to the DODHH, including establishing rules on minimum credential requirements and levels, minimum standards of practice, and continuing education. Rules must be coordinated with the Michigan Department of Education and the Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education for the purpose of increasing interpreter qualifications, improving educational services to deaf and hard of hearing students, increasing the supply of qualified interpreters by promoting interpreting as a profession, and increasing the number of training programs.

Michigan becomes one of only a few states to recognize the interpreting field for the skills and credentials it requires and make qualified interpreters mandatory in a broader range of situa-

tions. These factors serve the state well in attracting qualified interpreters to Michigan as well as training more people who want to become interpreters.

"This brings significant job growth opportunities to the state," said Keith W. Cooley, director of DLEG. "We're already in short supply of qualified interpreters and the demand for services is growing."

According to a 2006 study "Supply & Demand for Interpreters for the Deaf in Michigan" conducted by Public Policy Associates, Inc., in consultation with DODHH and the Michigan Department of Education (available online at www.mcdc-dodhh.org) the demand for interpreters will grow over the next 25 years and it will take 15–20 years to close the gap between the supply and demand for interpreters. Factors contributing to the demand include: the aging of the deaf and hard of hearing population; the growing need for interpreters in health care settings; expansion of video relay service (VRS) and other new communication services for the deaf and hard of hearing; and the impact of the No Child Left Behind Act, the ADA, and the Educational Interpreters Proficiency Assessment guidelines.

To meet the demand, interpreters in the future will need to be better educated, possess more specialized skills, and will be required to meet more stringent certification criteria. The study found that 30 percent of interpreters in Michigan are not certified at all.

Currently there are approximately 500 state or nationally certified interpreters in Michigan. Interpreters who possess Michigan Quality Assurance Certification at levels, I, II, or III are considered qualified until that certification status expires. Such a certificate may be renewed annually until it expires and retesting is required. Interpreters who currently hold national certification recognized by DODHH must be issued a state certification upon filing a completed application and paying applicable fees.



Michigan School for the Deaf attendees: Cecelia Winkler, Principi, Senator Gleason, Ted Owens, Shamonique Amerson, Terran Bullock, Representative Spade, Chelsea Kmetz, and David Sanderson, Superintendent



(Left to right, standing) Janet Jurus, Senator Gleason, Duncan Wyeth, Chris Hunter, Twyla Niedfeldt, Representative Spade, Joy Thomassen. Governor Granholm (seated).



Senator Gleason, Governor Granholm, Representative Spade



From the desk of...

Joy Thomassen
State Interpreter Coordinator

New Interpreter Laws Impact Quality Assurance (QA) System, Testing, Fees



Legislative Impact on QA

Interpreter legislation, Public Acts 23 and 24, signed into law by Governor Granholm on June 28, 2007, will change some aspects of the QA system, including an increase in testing fees and renewal fees. The new laws call for increased testing fees that will be \$125 for Michigan residents, and \$175 for out-of-state test candidates. The current renewal fee of \$15 is expected to increase to \$30 under the new legislation. DODHH will keep you informed of the fee change amounts and effective dates.

Workgroups will be meeting this fall to promulgate rules and clarify when new fees will go into effect and which levels of QA will be appropriate for particular assignments. If you have not already done so, please update your contact information with the DODHH office so that you may receive updated information on a timely basis.

Traveling QA Popular With Interpreters

We were pleased to hear so many positive comments from interpreters around the state regarding implementation of a traveling QA system. This year, DODHH tested in metro Detroit/Bloomfield Hills, Lansing, and Traverse City. In the future, we hope to include Escanaba, Grand Rapids, and interpreter training programs.

Welcome Delores Gariepy, New QA proctor!

We are excited to have Ms. Delores Gariepy, new QA proctor serving the metro Detroit/Bloomfield Hills and Lansing test sites. In her own words, she is "thrilled to be working with the great people at DODHH and ... enjoy(s) meeting all of the interpreters coming to take their QA performance test." (She has) ... "been impressed by each person's enthusiasm and commitment to improve their interpreting skills."

QA Readiness Workshops Make a Big Comeback!



The revival of the Michigan QA Readiness Workshop has been a big success! Attendance reached maximum capacity at the May 11–12 workshop held in Okemos. The fall QA Readiness Workshop, held September 21–22 in Detroit was another great success with more than 60 people participating.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! The Spring 2008 QA Readiness Workshop will be held May 16–17 at Michigan Works! located at 1209 S. Garfield Avenue, #C, in Traverse City. Look for the registration forms available this winter at www.mcddc-dodhh.org and www.michdhh.org.

QA Unit Sponsorship



If you are planning to host an event and want QA unit sponsorship from DODHH, contact Joy Thomassen at thomassenj@michigan.gov. Please provide the event agenda/outline and flyer. The flyer shall include the QA logo, statement of DODHH sponsorship, and the exact number and type of QA units that can be earned. DODHH will be happy to provide a flyer template upon request. A signed agenda or certificate of attendance documenting the number of QA units earned shall be provided to participants that will show QA unit accrual at renewal time.

QA Renewals – Honorable Mentions



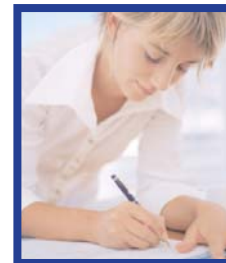
This year, we were impressed by the number of QA renewing interpreters who put a little extra care into their unit and fee submissions. While there is not space to mention everyone, the DODHH would like to recognize:

- ❖ Sheryl Parling for typing her activities on the QA log. These were so easy to read. Thank you!
- ❖ Karen Kramer for an extremely impressive 99.5 QA units of professional development. Way to go, Karen!
- ❖ Kathleen Edwards, a new QA interpreter, for earning 45 units in only four months.
- ❖ Joy Heimbeck who received 211 hours for all of the classes she has been taking at college. Congratulations!
- ❖ Bruce Wicklander for creatively developing a flyer to document professional development. You brightened our day!



DODHH Wants to Hear From You!

Interpreter and Deaf communities are very important to the DODHH. If you have ideas, praise, or thoughts on how to improve the QA system, please feel free to send them to Joy Thomassen at thomassenj@mi.gov. Your feedback will serve as a guide for rule promulgation of PAs 23 and 24.



Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) Update

This year, the DODHH filled all 76 test slots for the EIPA given by Boys Town through the contract with the Michigan Department of Education. Testing sessions were conducted in Grand Rapids, metro Detroit/Bloomfield Hills, Lansing, and Traverse City. In September, the DODHH received confirmation from Boys Town that 144 testing slots will be offered in 2008.

EIPA Application and Fees

We are proud to report that the DODHH office and Boys Town have now signed an independent contract that allows interpreters to take the EIPA if they live out of state, are not working in the schools, or would like to take the exam a second time. Please keep in mind that fees for this test increase every year. In 2008, the EIPA full exam fee will be \$375.

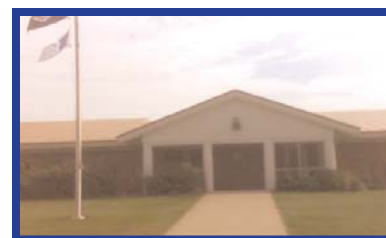
Two new EIPA performance test proctors have joined the DODHH team. Welcome nationally certified interpreters, Joyce Washington and Rebecca Shriner!

EIPA Written Test Proctor Announced

Ms. Rebecca Shriner also serves as Michigan's approved written EIPA exam proctor. She can be reached via e-mail at rshriner@madona@.edu.

For more information about testing, criteria, and the process, visit www.classroominterpreting.org/EIPA/standards.

Registration information may be given to Mary Patterson, EIPA Written Test Coordinator via phone (402) 452-5059, fax (402) 452-5028, or e-mail patter@boystown.org. After submitting application information to Ms. Patterson, contact Ms. Shriner to schedule a written test in November 2007 or August 2008.



Registry of Interpreters (RID) for the Deaf Continuing Education Units (CEU) Sponsorship



For those seeking Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) Continuing Education Units (CEU) sponsorship through the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DODHH), please e-mail Joy Thomassen at thomassenj@mi.gov. Keep in mind, the RID workshop approval process needs to be commenced at least 45 days prior to a workshop to earn CEUs. Examples of how to complete the forms, reminders and guidance lists for completing the sponsorship process, actual RID forms, logos, template flyers and evaluation forms, and much more can be found on the DODHH website at www.mcdc-dodhh.org. These will assist you or your agency in completing the RID CEU sponsorship process. All of the latest

forms from summer 2005, may be sent to you via fax or e-mail. DODHH provides sponsorship for Participant Initiated Non-RID Activities (PINRA), academic coursework, statewide conferences, and independent study activities. Watch for RID CMP/ACET CEU updates, including the addition of minimal fees in 2008.



RID & CEU Sponsorship Workshop

The DODHH worked with Madonna University and Spectrum Health, two RID CEU sponsors in Michigan, to provide a free workshop entitled "RID CEU 'How to' Workshop" on July 17. Several agencies and local chapters of MIRID participated. After receiving a positive response, we hope to again provide this workshop early next year. The goal is to empower the Michigan community with access to the tools for continuing education unit maintenance and further the education of interpreters.



RID Recently Certified Interpreters

Congratulations to Jonathan Truman for achieving his CT and Janet Jurus for earning her CI!



Interpreter Insights

Janet Jurus
State Interpreter

Interpreter Legislation and You Renew Your Commitment



By now, most of you have heard or read about the new interpreter legislation in Michigan, Public Acts 23 and 24. You might be asking yourself "how does this apply to me"? The DODHH has developed a FAQ that is posted at: www.mcdc-dodhh.org in a section marked "What's New." You may also view the press release from Governor Granholm. This historic legislation was recently highlighted in the national newsletter the VIEWS from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. (August/September 2007)

It is important that all Michigan interpreters have a clear understanding of how this legislation affects them. The definition of "qualified interpreter" has been addressed in the legislation. According to the legislation you are a "qualified" interpreter in Michigan if you hold current QA or RID recognized credentials. There are financial and legal penalties for individuals who

misrepresent themselves as interpreters under this new law; the penalty provision went into effect on October 1, 2007. It is important that all Michigan interpreters achieve and maintain the credentials that are required under this new legislation. All interpreters are encouraged to continue skill development with the QA and RID CEU opportunities that are offered throughout the state. We also urge you to pay the appropriate credential fees in a timely manner at renewal each year to avoid any lapse in your credentials.

Michigan is reaching a new level in professional standards for all interpreters, from students to seasoned interpreters alike. It is a time for a renewed commitment to our field and to your skill development. DODHH is looking to all of you to continue to make this a state that all interpreters, Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing citizens can be proud to live in.

RID: San Francisco Style



The RID National Conference was held in fabulous San Francisco August 3–8 at the beautiful downtown Marriott hotel. What a wonderful opportunity for the 2,000+ attendees to enhance their knowledge and tool set in interpreting as well as network with a diverse group of dedicated professionals.

More than 100 presenters offered 100+ presentations and events for this dedicated group of attendees. Some of the more well attended workshops were: legal interpreting, VRS interpreting, K–12/EIPA interpreting, and all topics related to direct skill development.

The Friday night keynote presented by Tom Holcomb focused on relationship building between the Deaf and interpreter communities as well as the Deaf being empowered

in their effective use of interpreter services. The opening ceremony included crowd pleasing dance routines and ASL interpretations of many popular songs. The closing ceremony included comedy routines and performances by the very talented Rosa-Lee Galimore. Michigan's very own Ron Dans and John Stuckless presented the ASL video "Waiting for the World to Change" by D-PAN, to rave reviews. A proud moment for Michigan indeed! You may view this video at: www.dpan.com.

Michigan was represented in San Francisco by 60+ attendees who also included MIRID board members: Micki Baumgart (president), Helen Boucher (president-elect), Martha Meginley (treasurer) and Janet Jurus (member at large). Micki and Helen represented Michigan and interpreter interests at a variety of meetings. The RID business meeting focused on a myriad of issues, many of which have been referred to task force for review and reporting. The business meeting was the last for outgoing RID president, Angela Jones as we welcome her successor, Cheryl Moose the incoming RID president.

A special thank you to Michigan's very own Bruce King for his dedicated years of service as RID national board treasurer as well as Kelly Flores, Region 3 representative, and Alicia Rondeau, Region 3 secretary and for their work on the regional and national levels. Michigan is lucky to be represented by such hard working interpreting professionals and hope this encourages our membership to consider becoming a part of national, state or local chapters in some capacity. We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming 2008 Region 3 conference in Columbus, and at the 2009 national conference in Philadelphia.



Hard of Hearing Corner

Twyla Niedfeldt
Hard of Hearing Specialist

Hard of Hearing Update

As 2007 draws to a close, it's now time to think about holiday shopping! If any of your friends or loved ones have the latest gizmos and gadgets on their wish lists, please be aware that these devices may not be accessible to persons with hearing loss or other barriers to communication. Here's the good news (and bad) to share with regard to new technology.



iPhone Is Not Accessible!

The phone is not hearing aid compatible either on microphone or telecoil settings.

Complaints have been filed with the FCC because HLAA (Hearing Loss Association of America) believes that Apple, when designing the phone, could have tested it for hearing aid compatibility implemented standards to make it accessible to hearing aid and cochlear implant users.

- ❖ Hearing Aid Compatibility for Telephone Equipment
- ❖ <http://ftp.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/hac.html>

Concerns With the Transition to Digital Television



On February 17, 2009, all U.S. television stations will stop broadcasting in analog format as they do now, and will transmit only in digital format.

For people with disabilities, problems transitioning to digital television include:

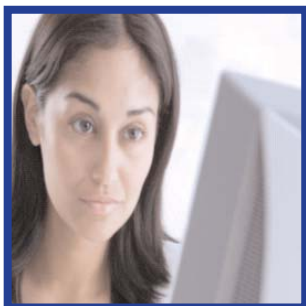
- ❖ technical difficulties associated with pass through of closed captioning;
- ❖ confusion over the scope of the FCC's captioning regulations;
- ❖ inability to locate and activate accessibility features through remote controls or menus;
- ❖ barriers to resolving concerns with TV stations, cable companies, and other video programming providers; and
- ❖ concerns about pass through of video description for people with vision loss.

For further information go to:

<http://coataccess.civicspaceondemand.org/node/46>

The Good News! HTRS Grant

A new assistive technology grant permitted Hearing Loss Association of Michigan (HLA-MI) to conduct training for approximately 15 current and new hearing technology resource specialists (HTRS). The intent of this grant is to support demonstrations that compare and contrast similar pieces of equipment. To learn more about this project and other activities of HLA-MI, go to http://www.mi-shhh.org/mishhh1_014.htm



Telecommunications MRC Report

We hope that you had an opportunity to complete the survey that was distributed as a research tool for the Michigan Relay Council report. The report is in draft revision at this time and a final version will be presented to the legislature by January 1, 2008. This report will offer recommendations for making telecommunications accessible and affordable to Michigan residents who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or speech-impaired.



Emergency & Disaster (Before & After)

In late August, the Potterville area just west of the DODHH office in Lansing, was struck by a powerful tornado. Although there were no fatalities, there were injuries and extensive property damage. Many victims and witnesses reported that they did not hear the sirens. Instead, they were alerted by television, radio, or a visit or telephone call from a neighbor or family member. A follow-up article in a local newspaper stated this as a back-up plan; if the emergency siren failed to activate, then an officer would be dispatched to a vulnerable area to make announcements from a bullhorn while driving his vehicle up and down the street.

I know what you're thinking... many of us can't hear a bullhorn or a siren! BUT, did you know that there is a special needs NOAA Weather Radio that can be adapted to provide visual and vibrating alarms and simple text readouts? This is just one example of the importance of raising awareness about the needs of those with hearing loss.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)– National Weather Radio (NWR)

- ❖ Some complete off-the-shelf NWR (National Weather Radio) receiver-based systems will perform the required emergency warning function as they come from the box.
- ❖ In some cases, where a home alerting system is already in place, the NWR receiver can be connected to the existing alerting system, much the same as a door bell, smoke detector, or other sensor.
- ❖ In other cases, persons with some electronic skills can purchase the NWR receiver and other components and assemble them into a system designed to meet their own special needs.
- ❖ In simple systems, alarm devices can be directly connected (hardwired) to the output of the NWR receiver.
- ❖ In more complex installations, using wireless and wired remote modules, connections are made through devices that allow more remote and versatile placement of alarms.
- ❖ For more information go to: <http://www.nssl.noaa.gov/edu/safety/specialneeds.html>



What about finding information and resources AFTER an emergency?

For those who can use the telephone:

2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember telephone number that connects people with important health and human services and volunteer opportunities. **2-1-1** helps people get help and give help. **2-1-1** is the health and human service equivalent of 9-1-1.

Dial 2-1-1 to be connected to a trained operator who can provide information on a broad range of services including temporary shelters, food, utilities, health care, rent assistance, affordable housing, child care, after-school programs, elderly care, financial literacy, job training programs, and more.

2-1-1 is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week/365 days a year. Calls are answered by professional information and referral specialists.

2-1-1 calls are free to the user. Translation service is available for non-English speaking callers

2-1-1 is now available to 70% of Michigan's residents. A statewide 2-1-1 business plan is complete, calling for all Michigan citizens to have service.

2-1-1 is approved by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The Michigan Telecommunications Act was amended by the state legislature in July 2000, designating 2-1-1 statewide as an information and referral phone number for health and human services.

2-1-1 is sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, and the Michigan Association of United Ways.

But What About Us?

As we all know, any telephone-based system is not fully accessible to persons with communication barriers, including Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf-blind, and speech-impaired. Therefore, partner agencies and United Way have initiated a "2-1-1 Special Populations subcommittee" to address these barriers and to explore cooperation and collaboration between relay and VRS call centers to make this system accessible.

Be assured that DODHH and our partner stakeholders are working diligently to identify and rectify barriers to communication access during times of emergency or disaster! This is a matter of grave concern for all of us, and we appreciate your input and activity in addressing these issues, too.



Second Annual Day at the State Capitol is a Huge Success!

May 16, 2007 brought more than 100 Hard of Hearing and Deaf people, as well as family members and friends, to Lansing — all eager to participate in the second annual Day at the State Capitol (DASC). The DODHH was one of the partnering agencies that assisted in making this annual event a success. The DODHH staff, Twyla Niedfeldt and Janet Jurus, serve on the the DASC planning committee and consult on both assistive technology and interpreter coordination for the event.

2007 DASC Program Highlights

The luncheon program was special with opening remarks by Representative Michael Sak, Speaker Pro Tem, who sponsored the House Resolution establishing May 2007 as Hearing Loss Awareness Month, followed by remarks by Senator Deb Cherry, sponsor of the Senate Resolution also establishing May 2007 as Hearing Loss Awareness Month.

HLA-MI and the Michigan Deaf Association (MDA) jointly presented Senator John Gleason with the "2007 Legislator of the Year Award" for his work on behalf of Michigan citizens with hearing loss and for his tireless efforts as Senate sponsor of SB 25, Sign Language Interpreter Bill, which has now been signed into law. Senator Roger Kahn, Representative Dudley Spade (House sponsor of HB 4208, Sign Language Interpreter Bill), Representative Tom Pearce, and Representative Glen Steil, Jr. were on hand to say a few words to the group gathered in the Speakers Library. Many other legislators also stopped by.

Another highlight of the program paid tribute to an individual who has, for many years, worked tirelessly to benefit Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in Michigan. Christopher Hunter, who recently retired as Director of the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DODHH) was honored twice. The first honor came from Senator Gleason who presented a "State of Michigan Legislative Tribute" to Chris signed by Governor Granholm, Senators Gleason and Whitmer, and Representative Byrum. The tribute highlighted major accomplishments of the DODHH under Chris' leadership. The second honor was from Keith Cooley, Director of the Department of Labor & Economic Growth, who presented Chris with a "Retirement Service Award." Director Cooley addressed the effectiveness of Chris' leadership during the many years he served as director of the DODHH.

"Thank you" Vic Krause and the DASC organizing committee.

The third annual Day at the State Capitol will take place on May 21, 2008. (Excerpts used with permission from HLA-MI Summer 2007 newsletter.)

2007 DeafBlind Workshop a Success!

By Jill Robe-Gaus, Founder SHIM=DB

The 11th Annual DeafBlind Workshop (DBW) was held at the De Sales Center in Brooklyn, MI in August. De Sales Center is situated on 214 acres of quiet woodland in the Irish Hills of Michigan, overlooking beautiful Vineyard Lake.

As always, it was a huge success and every year it gets better and better. We didn't have an empty bed! Twenty-five DeafBlind, 36 sign language interpreters and four Computer Assisted Real Time Captionist (CART) providers participated. Four lead platform interpreters also participated— one sponsored by DODHH.

Self Help for Independency in Michigan Equaling the DeafBlind (SHIM=DB) collaborated with Holley Ear Institute, DODHH, Michigan Commission for the Blind/DB Unit, DB Central and The CATIE Center at the College of St. Catherine.

The whole idea of the DBW is to invite DeafBlind from all over Michigan to attend and learn advocacy, self determination, self-esteem and socialize with each other because some of us don't see each other until the next DBW. While doing all of this, the DeafBlind work with their Support Service Providers (SSP) or interpreter on how to work with them as a DeafBlind delegate.

We always start with our training of the interpreters on Thursday, Beth Kennedy and Diana Campbell are the trainers. Not only do we train hearing interpreters but we also train deaf and hard of hearing interpreters. This year we were able to add CART, which was very exciting because

Sue Deer Hall and the other CART providers learned how to work with deafblind. We had Ann Liming and Pat Vincent from Ohio help with all of the Assistive Listening Devices (ALD).

Some of the workshops and activities offered included Leader Dog (Keith McGregor); self defense (Chris Martinez); crafts (Harold Riley); massage, dancing, DB board meeting (Jeff Smith); technology (Dee Robertson and Scott Davert); new interpreter law (Chris Hunter), and many other fun workshops and activities.

What is so exciting is that other states are copying this event! Ohio had their second DBW, Illinois will have their first next year, and Indiana is hoping to have their first in two years.

Mark your calendar! DBW 2008 will be held on August 7-10, 2008 at the De Sales Center.





Miss Deaf Michigan Named Ms. Deaf Black America

Ms. Jonelle Thames, Miss Deaf Michigan 2005—2007 competed at the 2007 Miss Black Deaf America pageant on July 6 in St. Louis, Missouri hosted by the National Black Deaf Advocates (NBDA). Ms. Thames competed against 13 young ladies to win this prestigious title. Ms. Thames will continue to represent the state of Michigan with the same poise and professionalism she did as Miss Deaf Michigan.

When asked what her goals were as Miss Deaf Black Michigan she stated, "To promote NBDA, to encourage schools to teach black deaf history and serve black deaf students well, encourage more black deaf youth to serve the black deaf community and to have a leadership role. I also would like to help to improve black interpreters' qualifications. I want to see NBDA grow and be successful. I believe that tears, hard work, struggling, faith, trust, and cooperation are the ingredients of success," she said.

Ms. Thames also starred in a TV commercial produced by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). "Pure Michigan" is the theme of the commercial that promotes Michigan's tourism industry. The TV commercials are broadcast nationwide. Miss Thames appears in the commercial wearing her crown and sash and uses American Sign Language. Congratulations Ms. Thames on your accomplishments and continued success!

Michigan Deaf Association 2007 Conference

Submitted by Michigan Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

The 51st biennial conference of the Michigan Deaf Association (MDA) met July 25–28, 2007 in the beautiful Radisson Hotel in Kalamazoo. Conference organizers (Shelly Chu, Steve Chu, Frank Bystrycki, Liz Bystrycki, Scot Pott, Michelle Fletter, Claudia Jackson, and Ron Hartford) put together a wonderful line-up of speakers, workshops, events, entertainers, and socials.

MDA conducted its business in several meetings, receiving reports and making bylaw changes. The President's reception, luncheon, and banquet allowed attendees to network and socialize. Dale Ford, Nan Asher, Twyla Niedfeldt, Daniel Burch, Theron Parker, Lindy Browne and Lois Van Broekhoven presented workshops. The workshops on Friday were aimed at the deaf attendees; workshops on Saturday were for interpreters. However, everyone was welcome at all workshops. John Maucere did his Deafywood comedy act after the banquet Friday evening and had

everyone in stitches. Deaf attendees toured the Kalamazoo Air Zoo on Saturday.

The Miss Deaf Michigan Pageant was held Saturday evening at the beautiful Kalamazoo theater to elect a new Miss Deaf Michigan, and for the first time, a new Miss Deaf Teen Michigan. MI RID was privileged to sponsor Nicole Faino. Jillian Guetzner, Miss C.A.C, is the new Miss Deaf Michigan, and her sister, Karlee Guetzner, Miss Deaf CAN, is the new Miss Deaf Teen Michigan. Congratulations to all the lovely contestants and continued success!

MIRID and MDA are sister organizations that welcome the other to board meetings and appoints a liaison to coordinate services. The mutual commitment is to support each other in improving the quality of life for individuals in Michigan who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

E-Michigan Website for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Information Galore

The Michigan Coalition for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing maintains an E-Michigan website of events (www.midhh.org). The E-Michigan website has become the premier site to post information related to Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and interpreter events in Michigan. This website contains a wealth of information. For example, a calendar of Michigan events ranging from social events around the state to interpreter development opportunities, organizations and agencies, youth and senior programs as well as ASL & Deaf culture information. There is no cost to post your event or activity on this valuable website that is accessed on a statewide basis. To post your events, email the E-Michigan webmaster at info@michdhh.org.

MISS DEAF MICHIGAN PAGEANT ASSOCIATION



Kenya Lowe

Congratulations to Kenya Lowe and April Lindbergh. Your dedication to the youth of our community is greatly appreciated. The Pageant was simply amazing. Congratulations to Kendra Rose and Jamie Maes for directing the first ever Miss Deaf Teen Michigan Pageant! What an accomplishment!

Karlee Gruetzner, April Lindbergh & Jillian Gruetzner



Kenya Lowe & April Lindbergh

Karlee Gruetzner, Kenya Lowe & Jillian Gruetzner



**Miss Deaf Michigan 2005—2007
Jonelle Thames**

Miss Deaf Michigan
Jillian Gruetzner
Miss C.A.C.

Miss Deaf Teen Michigan
Karlee Gruetzner
Miss DEAF C.A.N.!

Karl, Karlee & Jillian Gruetzner, Rose Bonacci



Pageant Results

Miss Deaf Teen Queen - Karlee Gruetzner- Miss Teen DEAF C.A.N.!

- 1st runner up- Ashleigh Dreyer- Miss Teen MSD
- 2nd- Juliana Rue - Miss Teen Dr. Laurene Simms
- 3rd- Kayla Denton - Miss Deaf Teen St. Louis
- Miss Congeniality - Abbey Moreland - Miss Teen DPAN

Miss Deaf Michigan - Jillian Gruetzner- Miss C.A.C.

- 1st Runner up - Amanda Bogart - Miss Carson City Lion's Club
- 2nd - Ean Strickland - Miss DEAF C.A.N.!
- 3rd - Nicole Gaines - Miss Deaf South Lyon, Mi.
- Miss Congeniality - Amanda Bogart - Miss Carson City Lion's Club

Miss Deaf Michigan Pageant —At Camp



07/24/2007

Submitted by Deaf CAN!

A Day of Celebration for the Deaf

The DODHH was a proud participant at Deaf Celebration Day held at the Summit Place Mall on September 29, 2007. More than 1,000 attendees attended this biennial event. More than 50 exhibitors were in attendance, including the staff of the DODHH.

Presentations and events covering a variety of topics were featured including: deaf culture and language, a fashion show modeled by Deaf youth and adults, an overview of the legislative process, and an update on the DODHH provided by Janet Jurus. Several state senators and representatives had planned to attend but were unable to due to ongoing state budget negotiations held that Saturday at the state capitol. The day also marked the initial observance of the World Federation of the Deaf International Day of Sign Lanugages, a celebratory event to be observed during the last full week of September. Attendees were encouraged to wear black shirts in recognition of this historic day.

We look forward to seeing all of you in 2009 at the next Deaf Celebration Day festivities!

