



**Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Bulletin
May 2009**

VISION

Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, in concurrence with the Colorado Department of Human Service vision, seeks to become the nation's leader in empowering Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals, families, and communities to become safe and independent.

MISSION

To promote the interests of our constituents and to work to ensure the quality of communication access for individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing living in the state of Colorado.

"Cliff Notes"

THANK YOU --

the deaf and hard of hearing community members,

deaf and hard of hearing services/programs and the providers,

Senators,

House Representatives,

Office of Legislative Council,

the CCDHH Commissioners,

Senator Kester and Rep. Gagliardi who sponsored Senate Bill (SB) 144,

Office of Legislative Legal Services,

Governor Ritter and his staff,

the Department of Human Services (Executive Director, Executive Management Team, Legislative Liaison Office, Office of Employment and Regulatory Affairs Deputy Director, Budget Analysts and the Division of Boards and Commission Director), and

the CCDHH staff

-- from the bottom of my heart for being part of the meaningful SB 144 journey.

SB 144 did not end on the Governor's desk for his signature (it was signed into law on May 2, 2009 at a town hall event in Arvada which Rep. Galiardi represents) after it went through both Houses (Senate and House of Representatives). It built a strong collaboration among the key players mentioned above for passage of SB 144 and most importantly, educated the public about the unique linguistic/communication access needs of the deaf and hard of hearing community while it was in the process.

This journey began when the CCDHH submitted a legislative initiative, which was later given the title and bill number, to the Department of Human Services for their consideration early in the summer. Intensity increased when the CCDHH legislative initiative got approval from the Department Executive Management Team and the Governor's Office to get it introduced in the General Assembly. It then remained intensely important for everyone until the end of SB 144's journey. There were constant bits of critical work (i.e. bill drafting, fiscal note work, information sheets for legislative committees, auxiliary services arrangements, updates for the community, gathering of people for committee testimony) involved in this process and everyone was part of it.

How this journey "strengthened" us into a united community sends a powerful message. It showed how critical SB 144 was to us, especially with the deaf and hard of hearing community. It created a clear direction for us to build efficient systems of programs/services for the deaf and hard of hearing community. This, to me, is a foundation built by all of us (key players) for the CCDHH to be able to serve and advocate for many generations of deaf and hard of hearing people who live in Colorful Colorado! The CCDHH is proud to have been part of the "shared" responsibility in carrying SB 144 to the Governor's desk.

Thank you very much!

From the TEDP Corner

The Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (TEDP) will be experiencing several changes to make the program as effective as possible and for the program to be able to reach out to each and every deaf and hard of hearing person.

The program is in the process of revising materials such as application, brochure, and other information to make them consumer-friendly. The program will have its own booth display for promotional purposes. The video log with captions and voicing capability is also being developed.

Other developments include an on-line application through the CCDHH website and establishment of technology demonstration rooms in different locations in the state. These demonstration rooms will display telecommunications equipment that is available through the TEDP. They will enable the applicants to use the equipment before determining which equipment will best suit their needs.

Finally, the program intends to contract with two Marketing/Outreach Specialists for promotion of the program and to assist individuals with the application process for fiscal year 2009-2010. Please contact Rob Loveless at tedp.ccdhh@state.co.us or 720-457-4679 (VP/voice) if you are interested in contracting with CCDHH for this type of work.

About Legal Auxiliary Services

As the CCDHH worked on Senate Bill 144, it caused the Legal Auxiliary Services to look back at the past two years of the Legal Auxiliary Services and examine the progress that has been made. Two of the main goals are to improve the quality standards of auxiliary service providers (interpreters and CART providers) as well as to increase the pool of interpreters who are legally qualified.

Below is a summary of progress made to date:

Legally qualified interpreters:

2006: 20

2009: 28

Currently, 11 interpreters are getting their 35 supervised experience hours with mentors and will become legally qualified and added to the roster this year.

SC:L (Specialist Certificate-Legal, highest certificate awarded by RID)

2006: 8

2009: 15

The Commission strongly supports and encourages interpreters to get this type of certification.

CDI (Certified Deaf Interpreter), awarded by RID

2006: 1 CDI

2009: 1 CDI

Four deaf interpreters have taken the 50-hour basic legal seminar. One is currently getting the 35 supervised experience hours with mentors, and will become legally qualified and added to the roster this year. We will continue to support and encourage deaf interpreters to take our trainings and also encourage them to take the RID CDI exam to become Certified Deaf Interpreters.

The requests for CART are also increasing and we have the same two goals for this auxiliary service. Currently, there are only two CART providers on our list. Increasing the quality of CART providers as well as increasing the pool of qualified CART providers will become a focus over the next year.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse System-Level Advocacy Update

The CCDHH Mental Health and Substance Abuse Implementation Team has submitted two grant proposals since February 2009. The Implementation Team submitted a grant proposal to the Colorado Health Foundation and a grant application to the Department of Human Services/Statewide Strategic Use Fund.

The Colorado Health Foundation proposal involves a two-year funding for the implementation work of the first two years of the Action Plan. The Implementation Team will provide

expertise/guidance to the process, and consumer and family advocates for the concurrent development of: 1) standards, 2) technical assistance to implement the standards, and 3) capacity building in the deaf and hard of hearing advocacy community.

The Action Plan calls for development and adoption of Guidelines for Care (standards) in partnership with the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, deaf and hard of hearing consumers and leaders, the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health, and other providers and service delivery systems. The Colorado Health Foundation grant would enable the Implementation Team to begin this process.

The Statewide Strategic Use Fund (SSUF) application requested 22-month funding for development of an array of services that will support Colorado families with deaf and hard of hearing children and adults. In Colorado, even where services are being provided to deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their families, they are often not provided in a manner that is appropriate, both linguistically and culturally. The Action Plan includes the development of statewide capacity to coordinate and provide services to deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their families. Early identification of mental health needs, mental health and substance abuse services, and other supportive services in health, child welfare, TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), workforce, vocational rehabilitation, and related systems are part of the system.

To develop this capacity, the Implementation Team will work with a Technical Assistance and Project Coordinator, if funded by SSUF, and key Colorado leaders to:

- Map the existing provider capacity in Colorado;
- Create a statewide network of providers with skills and interest in serving deaf and hard of hearing individuals;
- Identify standards for the provision of services in partnership with providers, consumers, families, state agencies, and policymakers;
- Build on current telemedicine efforts in health and mental health systems to incorporate telemedicine into the service delivery model for deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their families; and
- Identify and provide training and technical assistance to providers in the statewide network.

This multi-faceted approach will only be successful with the authentic engagement of deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their families as advocates for change. The consumer and family engagement approach that is core to this work will also ensure the services available within the Statewide Network have the capacity to have meaningful improvement in the lives of deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their families.

Whether or not grants will be awarded to the Implementation Team through the Mental Health Center of Denver, as a fiscal agent, will be determined in the summer of 2009.

Deaf or Hard of Hearing Member for the State Rehabilitation Council Needed!

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has approached the CCDHH for assistance in recruiting a member from the deaf and hard of hearing community to serve on the State Rehabilitation Council. The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was initially established in

accordance with Section 105 of the 1992 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act. As amended in the 1998 Amendments, the purpose of the SRC is to review, analyze, and advise the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) regarding the performance of its responsibilities under the Rehabilitation Act. Members of the SRC are appointed by the Governor and represent diverse ethnic and geographical locations. The majority of SRC members must be individuals with disabilities, including family members, advocates, and others who represent a broad spectrum of interests, including business and industry. The SRC works in partnership with DVR to develop and review the Division's annual goals and priorities, evaluate the effectiveness of DVR's vocational rehabilitation program, and to conduct a yearly review and analysis of consumer satisfaction with DVR services. The present SRC has 15 appointed members and also includes non-appointed "associate" members who participate within the SRC structure.

Below is the SRC member "job description":

Membership Requirements:

- Must represent at least one of the groups identified in the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998
- Must be able to regularly attend council meetings (minimum of 4/year)
- Must serve on at least one Council committee
- Should be able to commit at least 5 hours per month to council activities
- Must be committed to solving vocational and independent living issues faced by people with disabilities

Term:

- Each term shall consist of 2 to 3 years, with no member serving more than 2 consecutive terms

Responsibilities:

The overall purpose of the council is to review, analyze, and advise the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation regarding the performance of the agency. Specifically, the Council will participate in:

- Preparing, administering and analyzing a survey of consumer satisfaction
- Preparing and submitting to the Governor and the public an annual report on the status of vocational rehabilitation programs
- Coordinating with other state councils that deal with issues affecting people with disabilities (Developmental Disabilities Council, Statewide Independent Living Council, etc.)
- Advising DVR in the preparation of applications, the state plan, amendments to the plan, needs assessments, and evaluation
- Holding public meetings and forums as necessary to receive input and direction from the public
- Providing input to the selection and appointment of independent hearing officers to handle client appeals.
- Assisting in performing additional duties determined by the council or sub-committees that will enhance accomplishing the mission of DVR.

If you are interested in being considered a member, please call a SRC Membership Committee representative, Marla Pinnecoose, at mpinneco@southern-ute.nsn.us or Rebecca Johnson at rebecca.johnson@state.co.us or 303-866-4714.

Commission Meeting

Mark your calendar with the next Commission meeting! It will be held from **2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.** on **Thursday, June 4, 2009** at:

Colorado Department of Human Services
1575 Sherman Street, 6th Floor Conference Room
Denver, CO 80203

An update about the SB 09-144 implementation plans, community resource directory and other relevant issues will be presented and discussed at the meeting. The Susan J. Award for Outstanding Service to the Commission will be presented to the recipient of the year. Come and learn who this person is! Check the CCDHH website for the agenda.

Cake and drinks will be served after the Susan J. Elliott award is presented.

Come and visit with us!

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