

NETAC networks

Providing technical assistance to professionals working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing in postsecondary settings

October 1998

The Hiram G. Andrews Center – a Pennsylvania gem

One of the Northeast's best-kept secrets is the Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGA) in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, which for nearly 40 years has provided individualized educational and rehabilitation programs for students interested in postsecondary education.

HGA is the world's first "rehab" facility designed to provide comprehensive services under one roof, in this case, the 45-acre HGA campus in suburban Johnstown. Its mission is to provide career opportunities and teach independent life skills to the 500 plus students it serves, including nearly 80 deaf and hard-of-hearing students annually. It is managed by the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and relies on payment for services from the public and private sectors.

HGA's respected deaf services unit, which is managed by Lori Hutchison, NETAC's site coordinator for the state of Pennsylvania, combines the talents of interpreters, counselors, tutors, and other support service personnel. The diversity of the group, and its reputation for thorough advocacy on behalf of its students, makes HGA an attractive educational option for deaf students.

Daniel Piccerillo, who graduated from HGA's dental lab assistant program last August, concurs.

"The interpreters at HGA are all quite good, which allowed me to clearly understand my classwork. The whole deaf services unit was great... I had no problems at all."

Piccerillo, 42, chose HGA on the recommendation of his VR counselor. After completing high school, he did a variety of odd jobs before deciding that he wanted to "settle down and get an education."

Four-year colleges were not appealing to him, because he didn't want to commit the amount of time needed. At HGA, he completed an associate degree as a dental lab assistant in 16 months and is awaiting responses to resumés he recently sent out.

He calls the dental program "tough" but realizes that "it will help me get an opportunity for a good job, with good pay."



Student Bob Mock's Auto Mechanics class is interpreted by Joyce Gallagher

At HGA, students like Piccerillo pursue vocational training that leads to either an associate degree in specialized technology or business, a diploma, or a certificate in nearly 30 career areas ranging



Tara Burkey interprets for Lance Marks, instructor, and Lois Myers, student, in a Data Processing class

from accounting to watch repair. The dental lab program, as well as the building maintenance, culinary arts, and materials management and distribution programs, are immensely popular with students who are deaf.

Students live on campus in regular or transitional living dormitories or may commute. They spend the majority of their time learning job skills in the classroom, but

also enjoy support services such as counseling, vocational evaluation, career guidance, placement help, independent living skills, and deaf services.

Interpreting is provided in all classes in which students who are deaf are enrolled. Interpreting also is provided for extracurricular activities, such as student council, and notetakers can be arranged by request. Classroom interpreters also serve as tutors and are available by appointment.

HGA's interpreting staff wins rave reviews from students, including Lois Myers, a 30-year-old HGA student from Greencastle, Pennsylvania.

"I am so impressed with the interpreters at HGA," she says. "They are all well qualified and help us a lot by offering tutoring help as well as interpreting."

Myers is on track to receive her degree as a medical office assistant in 1999. With previous college experience at a Virginia university, from which she received a bachelor's degree in drama and art, Myers has an interesting perspective from which to evaluate her current educational experience at HGA.

She looked into HGA at the suggestion of her VR counselor, because she couldn't find a job after getting her first degree.

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The Director's column

by Karen Hopkins



As most of you know, Alan Hurwitz, NETAC's director, became dean of NTID this spring. We congratulate Alan on his achievement and feel confident knowing that we have a strong NETAC advocate in this important administrative position. Congratulations, Alan!

In mid-summer, I became director of NETAC. One of my first tasks was to hire new staff members for our growing office. We look forward to introducing you to our team that now

includes Patricia Billies, Mary Lamb, and Charley Tiggs.

Pat, formerly coordinator of international student admissions for NTID's department of recruitment and admissions, is NETAC's new project coordinator. She brings with her 19 years of administrative and teaching experience at NTID and is a welcome addition to NETAC's efforts.

Mary joined NETAC in mid-summer as department secretary. Hers is the always-pleasant personality who handles most NETAC inquiries.

Charley formerly was an assistant dean of students at Texas Tech and a program director for a company providing services to persons with disabilities in Amarillo. With NETAC he will be responsible for documenting and evaluating our technical assistance provided

within NETAC's 13 states and territories.

Additionally, Sherlea Dony has been promoted and is focusing her energy on the NETAC newsletter, our Web site presence, and other myriad tasks.

As we begin this academic year, please remember NETAC's main goal: to be of service to YOU. Through forums, workshops, internship opportunities, and other resources, we are here to help you better serve students at your institutions who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Our focus this year, in addition to our regular activities, will be to "open doors" for students who are deaf and hard of hearing at proprietary schools and those who offer certificate programs in our region.

Projects/publications in the works from the NETAC office include a package of teacher "Tipsheets;" additional National Task Force Reports; a training package for faculty/staff members who work with students who are hard of hearing; and a videotape/training program that explains the role of Vocational Rehabilitation in postsecondary education. If you'd like information on any of these initiatives, contact the NETAC office.

We look forward to working with you this year!

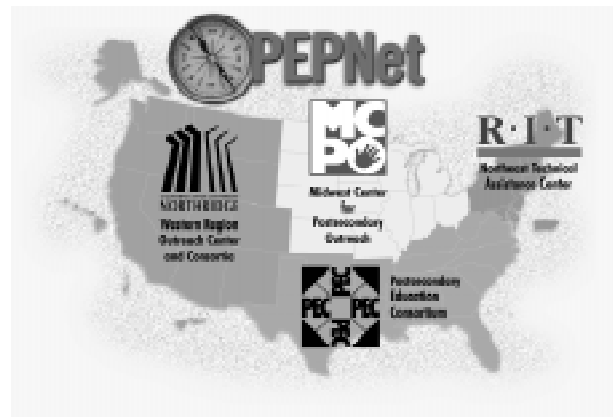
Visit the PEPNet Resource Center

By phone or Internet, users can access the PEPNet Resource Center (PRC) for information and referrals about services for people who are deaf and hard of hearing. Postsecondary institutions welcoming their first deaf or hard-of-hearing student or seeking to expand their services can obtain information and referrals.

Established in 1997, PRC houses a wealth of books, videotapes, periodicals, documents, and academic research projects related to

deafness. Internet users can browse these materials on the PRC web page, as well as find information about national and regional clearinghouses that can provide additional materials and resources. Training modules (teaching packages) are also available on a variety of subjects tailored to specific audiences (administrators, faculty, or support service providers).

To access the PRC:
Web site address: <http://www.pepnet.org> and go to "Resource Center"
Email: prc@csun.edu
Telephone: 888-684-4695 (Voice/TTY) (not available from Puerto Rico)
or
818-677-2611 (Voice/TTY)
Fax: 818-677-4899
PEPNet Resource Center
National Center on Deafness
California State University, Northridge
18111 Nordhoff Street
Northridge, CA 91330-8267



Upcoming events by state

CONNECTICUT

- “Working Together: Deaf and Hearing People,” a workshop with guest speaker Arthur Moore of Sprint Relay Services, New Haven. Exact dates and location TBA. For further information, contact Elaine Taylor at 860-738-6380 (voice/TTY) or through email at NW_NETAC@commnet.edu.

MAINE

- “Voyage to the Future,” a career awareness program for high schools students and their parents, co-sponsored by the University of Maine System and the Muskie School of Public Service, November 6-7, at the Campus Center, University of Southern Maine. For further information, contact Barbara Keefe at 207-781-6209 (voice/TTY) or through email at Keefe@FC.Baxter.pvt.K12.me.us.

MARYLAND

- Career Awareness Program co-sponsored by the Maryland Steering Committee for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students. Exact dates and location TBA. For further information, contact Florence Cooney at 410-455-4369 (voice); 410-455-4553 (TTY) or through email at aafc@catmus.cat.cc.md.us.

MASSACHUSETTS

- Deaf Services/Technology Expo '98, co-sponsored by the Massachusetts State Association of the Deaf, the Massachusetts site for NETAC, and MCI, October 30, 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Hotel, Peabody. View the newest technology on the market and meet with agencies that serve the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. For more information, contact Jane

Nunes at 978-556-3341 (voice/TTY) or through email at NETAC@nec.mass.edu .

- The Massachusetts NETAC office has been working with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) on ways to better collaborate with postsecondary institutions in support of their clients. NETAC and MRC will host a “town meeting” to discuss issues relative to the reimbursement of interpreting and notetaking services for students who are deaf and hard of hearing. For information regarding the location, date, and time of this discussion, contact Jane Nunes.
- The office also is collaborating with the Federal Interpreter Education Project at Northeastern University to provide training for interpreters and trainees working in or desiring to work in postsecondary environments. Scheduled events will be forthcoming.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

- C-Print training, week of November 2. For more information, contact Cate Weir, University of New Hampshire, 603-228-2084 (voice/TTY), or through email at cweir@cisunix.unh.edu.

VERMONT

- “Taking Off the Kid Gloves: Tackling the Disability Barrier in Higher Education,” featuring Jeanne Kincaid, November 10, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Vermont Technical College in Randolph. This workshop will highlight the Americans with Disabilities Act with a discussion of specific cases in higher education. For more information, contact Rita Straubhaar at P.O. Box 876, Shelburne, VT 05482-0876, 802-985-4034 (TTY), 800-253-0195 (Voice Relay) or through email at Rstraubh@aol.com.

How Pam Giles spent her summer vacation



Pam Giles, C-Print Training Coordinator, demonstrates the C-print notetaking system.



Giles answers a question posed by Lisa Sorenson of Maine.

NETAC Networks is produced at least three times a year. Articles should be submitted to Sherlea Dony, editor, NETAC, 52 Lomb Memorial Drive, Rochester, NY 14623-5604, through e-mail to SADDHD@rit.edu, or by fax to 716-475-7660. All articles are subject to editing. Comments and suggestions are always welcome!

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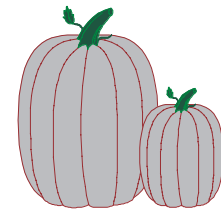
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* The new Rhode Island site coordinator will be announced in the next newsletter.



The Hiram G. Andrews Center – a Pennsylvania gem *(Continued from page 1)*

“Because I like to work with computers and like an office setting, I began in HGA’s office clerk program,” she says. “When I did well, my counselor suggested I switch to the medical office assistant program, because I have the potential to earn more and get a better job.”

To prepare Myers and her fellow classmates for the working world, formal “job readiness” training begins two months before graduation and is conducted in a group format that addresses issues

related to job seeking, interviews, and resumé writing. Lots of role play gives students the confidence and experience to use an interpreter in a formal setting.

“One of the unique things about HGA is that it is an OVR education facility,” says Hutchison. “This combination can provide opportunities for creative counselors and committed instructors to assist students in understanding work expectations.”

Look who's talking!

by Jane Jarrow

Have you ever thought about why playwright Mark Medoff titled his most famous work, *Children of a Lesser God*? This cautionary tale about a deaf woman and the speech therapist who comes to know and love her is, in my opinion, less about Deaf culture than it is about human communication.

The deaf woman, Sarah, refuses to apologize to the hearing world for being deaf. Her speech therapist/teacher/husband loves her for who she is—but wishes she wasn't deaf. While he doesn't admit it to himself or to Sarah until late, the fact remains that he feels sorry for her because of all the things he believes she misses by not being able to hear, and he really wishes she could and would talk to him. It always reminds me of a sign that used to hang in the Speech and Hearing Clinic in my undergraduate days... "May He, who has chosen to limit some of His children, be gracious enough to guide the hands of those entrusted with their care."

What does this have to do with college students who are deaf? Lately I have been hearing a lot of stories about faculty members who balk at the idea of having a deaf student who uses sign language involved in courses such as Public Speaking or Marketing, courses that have a heavy emphasis on oral presentation.

The argument is usually presented in two parts: (1) the presentation element of this class is an essential part of what is being taught, and (2) there is no reasonable accommodation that can be made to the assignment for the deaf student. How about using a sign language interpreter to reverse interpret the presentation, you ask? That won't work, asserts the professor, because I am grading on how well the student presents himself/herself, not how expressive, articulate, or effective the interpreter can be.

These arguments should not be allowed to inhibit a deaf student's educational pursuits, but sometimes these arguments hold sway—

and that's wrong. That same professor likely will tell you that the whole purpose of the assignment is to have the student learn to handle the pressures of standing in front of a class and making an oral presentation.

The student in a wheelchair, of course, is permitted to sit while making a presentation since that is the way s/he does, and will continue to, function in this world. Ummm....does anyone else see a parallel here? The deaf student should be permitted to use an interpreter since that is the way s/he does, and will continue to, function in this world!

Unfortunately, the majority of the hearing world still believes that the use of sign language is second best. It may be acceptable in some situations, but everyone knows that speech is the only good way to communicate, right? Hearing people may be fascinated with sign language, they may envy those with facility in its use, but when it comes down to the wire, they believe that anything other than speech is a poor substitute.

We have to help faculty, staff, students, and the community understand that sign language is a viable alternative to speech. The use of sign language does not diminish either the user or the value of the communication. Until that point is made—and understood—deaf students using sign will always be seen as doing the best they can, under the circumstances. Talk about damning with faint praise!

Jane Jarrow, Ph.D., is president of Disability Access Information and Support (DAIS). An expert in disability services, she has been providing technical assistance and training to service providers on access and support services for persons with disabilities in higher education and has co-authored or authored numerous books and articles in the field of disabilities in higher education over the past 16 years.



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The University of Maine System

by Barbara Keefe

The University of Maine System has seven campuses geographically distributed throughout the state. The state's rural population has driven the development of these campuses and encouraged the deployment of sophisticated telecommunications systems to deliver educational services to its citizens. Whether someone lives in Eagle Lake, by the Canadian border, or in Vinalhaven, a tiny island off the coast of Maine, one can access a postsecondary program. NETAC is working with the University of Maine System Network to broaden services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students wherever they might live in the state.

The University of Maine System Network and the NETAC staff are working collaboratively with the University of Southern Maine campus to increase support services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students on its campus by offering C-Print services for deaf students enrolled in a Marine Biology class. Lisa Sorenson, the C-Print captionist who received training this past summer at NTID, is providing this service along with scheduled C-Print demonstrations to administrative deans of postsecondary institutions in southern Maine.

This fall a career awareness program, Voyage to the Future, is planned with the Muskie School of Public Service on November 6 and 7 for 30 high school students and their parents. NETAC will host this exciting event at the Campus Center of the University of Southern Maine. A variety of successful deaf professionals, including a lobster fisherman, a lawyer, a computer programmer, a chef, an actress, and an undertaker, have been invited to participate in the Career Fair segment of this program. The response to date has been enthusiastic.

Each state in the Northeast has a unique contribution to make to improve services to deaf and hard-of-hearing students in their postsecondary institutions, and each state looks to its own future to see how it will design that contribution.

Maine's character is rural and its resources are limited. A state-of-the-art telecommunication system is being built in Maine. Accessibility to that technology infrastructure is critical for deaf and hard-of-hearing people to maximize their full potential in a global economy. NETAC's emphasis in Maine will be to support the creation of a replica model of telecommunications accessibility as we move into the millenium. As Maine goes, so goes the nation... we hope!

Collegiate Education for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons (CEDHH), home of the Connecticut NETAC site office

by Elaine Taylor



Northwestern Connecticut Community-Technical College (NCCC) and the Collegiate Education for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons (CEDHH) program are proud to soon be celebrating 25 years of providing full support services to deaf and hard-of-hearing students throughout Connecticut and its neighboring states.

Nestled in the beautiful Berkshire Mountains, NCCC is a member of the New England Student Regional Program. This, combined with the fact that NCCC is the only postsecondary education program in Connecticut providing full support services to deaf and hard-of-hearing students, and one of few such institutions throughout New England, allows deaf and hard-of-hearing students throughout New England to attend NCCC at a much reduced tuition.

The 12 full-time and three part-time members of the CEDHH staff provide full support services to all deaf and hard-of-hearing students attending the college: interpreting, notetaking, C-Print captioning, tutoring, counseling, courses in remedial English and mathematics, academic preview (overview of class expectations prior to the beginning of the new semester), orientation regarding the use of support services, and extended orientation classes to assist with the transition to college.

Since 1974 more than 400 deaf and hard-of-hearing students have been served by the CEDHH staff. The average enrollment of deaf and hard-of-hearing students is approximately 30 students each

semester. Combined with the more than 200 hearing students who are majoring in Deaf Studies and/or Interpreting for the Deaf, a very lively deaf community exists at NCCC.

With NCCC and the CEDHH program serving as a resource center for Connecticut regarding postsecondary education for deaf and hard-of-hearing students for more than 20 years, the NETAC grant has been a natural fit. NETAC events have been well attended, and calls for the technical assistance that we can provide to other postsecondary programs serving deaf and hard-of-hearing students are increasing steadily.

On our own campus, C-Print is rapidly growing in demand. We have grown from providing C-Print services in three academic classes during the 1997-98 academic year to providing C-Print services in seven classes for the fall 1998 semester. We have also initiated an interpreter referral service to provide interpreting services to postsecondary institutions across the state, and we're considering the establishment of a similar service to introduce more campuses statewide to C-Print technology while we simultaneously respond to requests we have already received for this service.

A major new project underway at this time is the development of a distance learning course to instruct English language skills to deaf and hard-of-hearing students. This will enable us to serve a much broader range of deaf and hard-of-hearing students across the entire geographical region, especially those students who live at great distance, work full time, and yet want to return to school. We are very excited about this project!

Catonsville Community College

by Jill Brooks Hodge

More than two decades ago, Catonsville Community College spearheaded one of the first programs in the state of Maryland providing support services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The program started in 1978 with a grant from Gallaudet University. Every year the college has continued to serve 20-30 deaf and hard-of-hearing students each semester.

The college provides extensive interpreting services for all classes and campus activities, and assistive listening devices are available for hard-of-hearing students. Notetaking services are provided, and tutoring is available for students who may have difficulty in their coursework. Students are also able to seek individual counseling in reference to academic, career, or personal concerns. In addition to the credit-bearing courses, the college also offers continuing education classes consisting of basic English, reading, and math. This division also offers training programs for individuals seeking new job skills.

During the fall of 1997, the college implemented the C-Print speech-to-print transcription system through the NETAC grant, enabling the college to broaden options for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. C-Print is currently being used for five classes. NETAC/Maryland offered a regional C-Print training at Catonsville Community College the week of October 5-9, 1998.

Through NETAC, during the past year a statewide consortium was established with colleges and other agencies that serve students who are deaf and hard of hearing. One focus of this group has been to improve literacy and support services for deaf and hard-of-hearing students across the state. This goal has been accomplished through workshops, teleconferences, and conferences. NETAC/Maryland has been an exciting opportunity for Catonsville Community College to work with other professionals in examining and improving services for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals.

The Community College of Rhode Island

by Tracy Karasinski

The Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI), the largest public two-year degree granting college in New England, has offered services to deaf and hard-of-hearing students since 1977. Through a three-year grant from the Rhode Island Department of Education, the institution hired a full-time coordinator and provided advising and sign language interpreters to an initial group of 8-12 deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

CCRI was the first of the state's colleges and universities to offer services to this population on a formal basis. When the grant ended, CCRI institutionalized the coordinator's position and expanded services to all students with disabilities while retaining a focus on deaf and hard-of-hearing students. A line item was included in the regular state account to provide sign language interpreters, and this established the foundation from which later services to all students with disabilities grew.

Today, the college offers an array of academic accommodations to deaf and hard-of-hearing students, including interpreters, assistive listening devices, and adapted computer systems. In addition, two grant-funded programs, Access to Opportunity, a TRIO-funded student support services program, and Transitions, a Perkins-funded program, provide additional support to eligible students with disabilities.

NETAC complements CCRI's mission to assist other agencies in the enhancement of their educational programs and to provide adult residents with open access to postsecondary education. Through the NETAC grant, CCRI offers its experience and expertise in working with deaf and hard-of-hearing students in reaching out to assist neighboring institutions.

NETAC's focus in Rhode Island has been two-fold: to promote a greater awareness of the needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing students among postsecondary institutions and to better prepare these students for mainstream college environments by offering technical assistance and programs to secondary level educators and administrators.

To date, NETAC-RI has developed a valuable survival guide and resource library for consortium members, provided a local site for three national teleconferences, conducted several workshops at Rhode Island institutions regarding effective classroom accommodations for deaf and hard-of-hearing students, and offered a full-day workshop addressing transition issues from secondary to postsecondary environments. NETAC looks forward to continuing these efforts in building a solid, smooth road to postsecondary education for students with hearing loss in Rhode Island.



Unreasonable...but not unusual

by Brenda Battat

A hard-of-hearing student, Anne, transferred from Gallaudet University to a mainstream university in order to, in her own words, "be schooled in my native language, English, the same language I've been schooled in all my life."

Upon arrival at the new university, she requested Computer-Aided Real-Time Transcription services (CART) for her Ph.D. classes. Her request was denied because she knew some sign language and therefore the disability services office staff said they would provide a sign language interpreter. Anne cited Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act that states that the public school system is obliged to provide the accommodation the individual requests, but the school said they had the choice as to which accommodations they would provide.

Anne had been mainstreamed all through school, was brought up oral by a mother who was a speech therapist, and had learned some sign language. But like most hard-of-hearing students, Anne's first language was English. Though she could use some sign language for socializing among her friends, she was not comfortable signing, and her mastery of sign language certainly was not adequate for comprehension in doctoral level classes. She had the equivalent of intermediate level skills, but that did not indicate, by any means, that she was fluent.

Anne struggled for a semester with a sign language interpreter. She passed all her classes but at a very high price, working twice as hard as everyone else, feeling stressed and ready to drop out.



Brenda Battat

She decided she could not go another semester without the appropriate accommodations, but she had considerable trouble convincing the disability services staff that what she really needed was CART or C-Print services in order to perform to her potential. It took some strong self-advocacy on her part, coupled with letters of support from organizations who represent hard-of-hearing and oral deaf people, to persuade the office of disability services to consider her case. The disability services staff asked for evidence of Anne's sign language skills from a sign language interpreter who confirmed that she was far from fluent.

All this effort took considerable time away from Anne's studies and contributed to feelings of self-doubt. Finally the situation was resolved positively, and she was informed that starting in the fall she would be provided with CART services. She was relieved and delighted, even more so because the decision came on her birthday. Although the good news was a great birthday present, no student should have to go through that kind of experience to get the accommodations she has a right to by law.

*Brenda Battat is Deputy Executive Director of Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc. (SHHH), a national educational organization of and for people who are hard of hearing. SHHH provides its educational offerings in a number of ways, including written materials such as the bimonthly magazine, **Hearing Loss: The Journal of Self Help for Hard of Hearing People**, other publications and videos, an annual convention, and participation in research activities. The address is: SHHH, 7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814; 301-657-2248 voice; 301-657-2249 TTY; 301-913-9413 fax; Web <http://www.shhh.org>.*

R·I·T

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