

ODYSSEY

transition

WHAT SCHOOLS CAN DO TO FOSTER CAREER SKILLS

**planning &
preparation**

LAURENT CLERC
NATIONAL DEAF
EDUCATION CENTER

SUMMER 2001

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Transition Planning— So Our Students Will Be Prepared

What exactly is transition planning? Most people immediately think of skills such as filling out resumes and conducting interviews. However, transition planning involves much more. Ideally, it begins long before high school and includes real life work experiences. I was fourteen when I had my first work experiences as a camp counselor and a part-time clerk at Kresges headquarters. Little did I know how valuable these experiences would prove to be. As research shows, students who hold jobs outside of school attain statistically higher levels of success after graduation. As this correlation demonstrates, students need to learn a variety of job-related skills that are best learned “on the job.” Learning how to collaborate with colleagues, following instructions, and organizing and completing tasks according to a boss’s expectations are among these skills.



At the Clerc Center, transition is one of our priorities. Freshmen at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf participate in work preparation practices, sophomores intern at our schools, juniors intern throughout the Gallaudet University campus, and seniors intern at a variety of locations off campus. To ensure that transition is part of our kindergarten through twelfth grade curriculum, our staff developed guidelines that will be published this winter. In addition, we are collaborating with South Hills High School in California and the Illinois School for the Deaf to pilot a Transitional Instructional Package for Students, *TIPS*, to foster students’ decision-making skills.

In this issue of *Odyssey*, **Judith LeNard** describes how Clerc Center researchers and our collaborators interviewed deaf students to establish their needs. **Eric Eldritch** describes what may be a transition model where employees who are deaf serve as mentors to deaf students. **Cynthia Ingraham** and **Harry Anderson** emphasize that teaching self-determination and self-advocacy skills must be a priority in any transition program. **Kelli Thuli** outlines the impact of school-to-work legislation. **Robert Johnson** reflects on standardized testing. **Thomas Pierino** illustrates how one school uses test results to guide the transition process. **Susan Starnes** relates the struggle of a student who, as he faced graduation, had to let go of his career dream.

As these articles illustrate, transition skills are critical for success in the world of work. While success is measured in different ways and each student will take a different road to success, it is our job, as educators and family members, to ensure that students are provided with opportunities to explore career possibilities and to engage in a variety of work-related experiences by the time they graduate.

Katherine A. Jankowski, Ph.D., *Dean*
Gallaudet University

On the cover: Every year a new group of students enters the workforce. What can we do to ensure that they are prepared?
Photo by John Consoli.



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ODYSSEY • NEW DIRECTIONS IN DEAF EDUCATION

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Odyssey is published three times a year by the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, Gallaudet University, 800 Florida Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20002-3695. Standard mail postage is paid at Washington, D.C. *Odyssey* is distributed free of charge to members of the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center mailing list. To join the list, contact 800-526-9105 or 202-651-5340 (V/TTY); Fax: 202-651-5708. Web site: <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu>.

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to Norman Bauman,

Program Manager at the Model Secondary School

for the Deaf, and the models for the photographs

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Harry Carter, Kia Proctor, Sherrod Webb, Darryl

Duval, Hatem Zarrouk, Nataly Urrutia,

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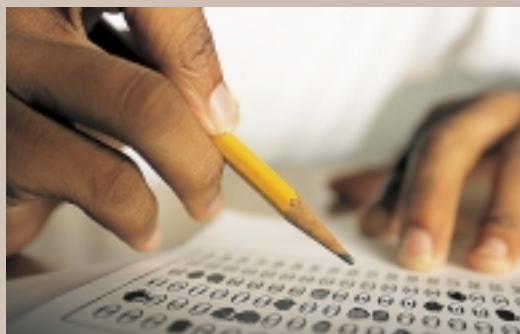


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on-the-job experience

it works at the
Library of Congress

By Eric Eldritch and Cathryn Carroll

“No,” Allen Talbert, work study coordinator at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD) was firm but patient with the young woman who stood before him.

The young woman paused. One of dozens of students gathered in the school lobby, she was eager to work. She simply wanted a different job.

She had the job all picked out. It was at the same place where her friends worked.

“You can’t just show up unannounced to a work site,” Talbert explained.

Seeing her puzzled expression, he continued. “They didn’t hire you. They don’t even know you. They’ll wonder what you are doing there.”

One of her friends spoke up, “How about if she interviews? How about if she competes?”

Talbert paused. It was clear that some of the training had been successful.

“Right,” he agreed. “If she goes through the procedures, then maybe she can get a job there.”

But today isn’t the day for procedures, he pointed out. “It’s a regular workday.”

The young woman nodded and resigned herself to returning to her own job. With a shrug, she told her friend she would see her later.

Talbert moved off to another group of students. His work was just beginning.

It was Wednesday, school-to-work transition day at MSSD, when freshman participate in a student-managed learning environment that focuses on developing skills, both technical and personal, that are required in a productive workplace. Sophomores work throughout the Clerc Center. Juniors are employed across campus at Gallaudet University. Seniors go off campus to offices and places of commerce throughout Washington, D.C.

“One boy works at a downtown market,” Talbert reflected. “Several students work at the Smithsonian and at the Library of Congress.”

At the Library of Congress, the program has been particularly successful.

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Interpreter Services
Program Manager, in
Human Resource Services,
at the Library of Congress.

Cathryn Carroll is
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Gallaudet University
Laurent Clerc National
Deaf Education Center.

Left: MSSD teens—
successful interns at
the Library of
Congress.

Photographs courtesy of the Library of Congress

Library of Congress

More than Shelving Books

The MSSD Internship Program, or “MIP” for short, features challenging work, job accommodations, and mentorships with deaf Library of Congress employees. Eric Eldritch, Interpreter Services Program Manager, set up the program with the administrative support of Leon Turner, Work Study Programs Coordinator, at the Library of Congress. Long-term employee Rosalee Connor and recently hired Deanna Herbers gave on-the-job attention to the needs of supervisors, mentors, and interns. Other key components were the time and resources of the Library of Congress Deaf Association, whose monthly lunchtime meetings the students were required to attend, and the richly experienced deaf adults who served as the student mentors.

Begun by an act of Congress in 1800, the Library of Congress has over 100 million items, including 15 million books, 39 million manuscripts, 13 million photographs, four million maps, more than three million pieces of music, thousands of motion pictures, posters, newspapers, drawings, videotapes, disks, and computer programs. Every day 31,000 new items arrive at the Library of Congress to be considered for addition to an ever-growing collection. Helping to organize the myriad of materials and assist patrons who wish to use those materials are 14 MSSD students, who once a week join 23 deaf employees in the library’s total workforce of 4,300 employees.

Talbert and an *Odyssey* reporter visited the Library’s three buildings that are located a block away from the Capitol building. At the first stop, Patricia Myers-Hayer, a team leader for the Cataloging in Publication section, explained the work of processing books before they are published.

Linda Brooks, a MSSD senior who joined Myers-Hayer’s 11-member team last fall, sat before a computer in a small cubicle with a cart brimming with books. She picked up the newly issued *The Post Modern President*, turned carefully to the table of contents, and verified the book’s serial number against the Library’s enormous database. The processing, based on a publisher’s draft, is part of the pre-publication of every book. Brooks will help her team process 14,000 of over 50,000 books that will be processed this year, adding to a current database of 16 million bibliographic records.

Myers-Hayer said that she saw the advent

of deaf students coming to work in her department as an opportunity to broaden everyone’s horizons. She was already familiar with competent deaf workers, she noted. Two of her team members, Toby French and Marie Dykes, are deaf and together have more than 60 years of experience at the Library of Congress. French directs Brooks’ work and serves as her mentor.

All of the employees who became mentors have taken a special interest in the work of individual students on the job. Their presence has made the students’ acclimation and experience especially rich and valuable. Eldritch and the MIP planning team made arrangements for all the supervisors to adjust the interns’ work schedules so that they could share a common lunch hour. The result? By noon, one of the long central tables in the Library’s enormous lunchroom is alive with deaf students, deaf adults, and hearing persons who are fluent in American Sign Language, chatting about their work and their respective lives. The lunch hour has become an important time

to make announcements, gauge the students’ work experiences, and present information that will assist students in career choices.

“I tend to ask the students about their daily work experiences. I direct them to take care of issues independently, to talk directly to their supervisors in writing or e-mail, or through an interpreter,” said Connor. “Deanna [Herbers] tends to ask them about their long-term goals.”

Herbers, who as a college student worked at the U.S. Department of Labor, noted that she would have welcomed a mentor who was deaf during her own intern days. “I looked up to the deaf employees who had been working there,” she remembered. “We would meet and talk at lunch—and that’s where I learned a lot.” Working with the students has enriched Herbers’ work experience as well.

“I learned confidence, how to give presentations and facilitate discussions,” she said, smiling. “It used to be unnerving!”

She also learned confidence in handling young teens who sometimes dallied at video games after their lunch break or who wandered away from their respective offices into the offices of their friends.

“Hearing people might be hesitant to correct the students,” she said, “but as a deaf person, I read the situation clearly and instinctively know an appropriate approach. I’m not reluctant to simply and directly say, ‘Get back to work!’”



Fassilis and his supervisor, Charles Jackson, prepare the cart that Fassilis uses to fetch books among the library’s shelves.

Staying on Task Covering the Basics

Supervisor Rose Marie Clemandot of the Chief Law Library Collection Services Division, says that placement success is ensured by having trusted employees serve as the students' mentors. Peter Fassilis, the MSSD student who was assigned to her division, learned a lot while working there.

"A workplace remains a workplace," Clemandot explained. "We have to maintain our level of productivity, and we require a level of seriousness and experience that 18-year-old students are often only on the verge of developing. I have seen Peter grow and develop tremendous confidence, and he truly contributed to our operations."

"Our work here is very complex," agreed Betty York, a long-time deaf employee at the library who served as Fassilis' mentor. "We had to adjust the work to allow for entry-level skills."

York, an expert in the myriad of law journals that are produced in countries around the world, took her high school student under her wing, deepening his understanding of the library, its mission, and its systems. "Peter had to learn our technical and academic jargon," she explained. "For example, the term *call number* has a specific meaning in Library Sciences. When he referred to this term in American Sign Language, I expected him to fingerspell it as a term founded in English. And, of course, I expected him to understand its usage and meaning."

York also emphasized that in the work of a library, accuracy is much more important than speed. She said, "In a collection of thousands of items, any single misplaced item may be lost to researchers forever."

Clemandot and York arranged for Fassilis to experience different parts of the law section. When *Odyssey* met him, Fassilis was in the subbasement, where shelves of law materials from around the world cover an area equaling three football fields. Mounted on moveable tracks, the shelves slide back and forth electronically at the push of a button to enable condensed storage. Fassilis proudly displayed the book cart, a kind of fancy grocery cart, labeled *Peter's limo service*, that he uses to work among the shelves. Charles Jackson, his supervisor, insisted that



Above: Allen Talbert (standing) discusses the work of a student intern with supervisor Rose Marie Clemandot (far left), Eric Eldritch, Interpreter Services Program Manager, Betty York, long-time Library of Congress employee and student mentor, and Peter Fassilis, her mentee.

Below: Jason Lopez, an MSSD intern, concentrates on his work in the Geography and Maps division of the Library of Congress.

Photos courtesy of the Library of Congress

he use the cart for safety reasons.

"The shelves all have electric sensors that are supposed to stop their motion once they encounter an unexpected blockage," Jackson noted. "But I don't want Peter to take any chances." Fassilis identifies and retrieves requested items by call numbers written out by legal researchers. These requests are delivered by pneumatic tubes that lead Fassilis to repeated

adventures in the miles of shelving to retrieve the requested materials.

Student Katie Gordon, who works in the Prints and Photography Division, reflected on the program. The students were assigned work sites and were responsible for making transportation arrangements, she noted. "I had heard of the Library of Congress, but I really had no idea what it was," remembered Gordon. "We had to find out its location, figure out how we would get there, and coordinate our commute to work."

Brooks, who sat next to Gordon on her lunch break, said that she wants to be an accountant, journalist or computer expert. She had never heard of the Library of Congress before working there, she said, and she was amazed at her discovery. "This prepares us for the real world of work," Brooks exclaimed. "And guess what? This summer I will have a full-time job here!"

It will be her first full-time job.



taking the surprise out of transition

DEAF GRADUATES DESCRIBE
THEIR EXPERIENCES

Judith M. LeNard, M.Ed., is a program evaluator at the Gallaudet University Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center. She is the coordinator of transition projects in the department of Exemplary Programs and Research. She welcomes comments about this article:
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By Judith M. LeNard

"Looking back, high school was SO easy. Yeah, they had a lot of rules but they did everything for you... It's not like that now."

"I am responsible for everything for myself."

"Freedom! I am independent."

These are some of the ways deaf and hard of hearing graduates characterize their transition from high school to life after graduation. The Model Secondary School for the Deaf at the Clerc Center, the Illinois School for the Deaf, and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program at the South Hills High School in West Covina, California, are collaborating on a follow-up study of their recent graduates. The study will provide insight into transition experiences after high school graduation from the unique perspective of the graduates themselves.

Asking graduates about their accomplishments has long been a tool used by administrators who see this as evidence of their program's accountability. Typically, a written survey is used to ask the graduates questions about their education, shelter, employment, and other aspects of their lives that fit into predetermined categories. The Clerc Center and its collaborators seek the same information. But, in addition, we want to elicit responses that show how and why our graduates made the choices that determine how they are leading their lives. Through in-depth face-to-face interviews, graduates use the mode of communication that is most comfortable to tell their stories in their own words. It is from these stories that the Clerc Center hopes to learn the meaning of transition from the individuals who make that journey.

Photography by John T. Consoli

Models: Timothy Worthylake and Qian Yi-Wei



Since high school preparation has its greatest influence on the period immediately after graduation, the study focuses primarily on the first five years after high school graduation. The sample of graduates was selected from the graduating classes of 1995 through 1999. We wanted our sample of 56 deaf and hard of hearing graduates—29 from MSSD, 15 from Illinois School for the Deaf, and 12 from South Hills High School—to reflect the students that teachers and counselors work with every day. For this reason, we considered reading level at graduation, parent hearing status, and the ethnic, racial, and geographic diversity of our nation's

people. These graduates pursue many different career paths, including part- and full-time employment, two- and four-year degree programs, and homemaking.

We hope to use the graduates' perceptions of themselves, their school days, their experiences at work and school, and their reflections on strategies for decision making and problem solving to help administrators and teachers think about the real-world needs that students face after graduation. A goal of this study is to obtain new information that will guide curriculum change in transition programming.

The same group of graduates will be interviewed each year of the study. The

study is in the middle of second-year interviews and analysis of first-year interviews is underway. It is too early to draw conclusions or share results, but we are very impressed with the resourcefulness of our graduates. Every stage of this study is yielding important insights. Even the process of recruiting participants for the study has provided us with very valuable information about how well our graduates carry out real world tasks. We've seen how they've developed skill in corresponding, negotiating appointment times, keeping appointments, providing directions to the interviewer, arriving on time, and following up on commitments or

correspondence.

The interviews were open-ended, based on only four basic questions:

- What are you doing right now?
- What is the most important thing that has happened to you since graduation?
- How do you compare life when you were a student in high school with your life now?
- If you had a chance to talk with the teachers and students in high school, what advice would you give them?

The interviewer used a number of probes about decision making, use of resources, and problem solving to guide the responses, but basically followed the lead of the graduate. The graduates were very open, talking about all aspects of their lives. Most of the interviews were two hours or longer.

The analysis of the first-year interviews will attempt to:

- Preserve and learn from the life stories of individual graduates.



“I would feel alone without the deaf community,” one of the graduates said.

- Look across the whole group of diverse graduates and identify common themes and strategies.

To preserve the life stories, the researchers are developing a personal growth profile for each

individual based on his or her interview. Categories such as early development, career goals and work experience, and self-identity and values provide a template for writing a personal growth profile.

The process for identifying common themes of the whole group is more complicated and time-consuming. We feel it is extremely important to stay very close to the words that the graduate used in the interview. A small group of teachers, counselors, and researchers who have worked with deaf students developed a web that displayed all the

The graduates were very open, talking about all aspects of their lives. Most of the interviews were two hours or longer.

Choices and Consequences TIPS Provides Transitional Tools

The Transitional Instructional Package for Students (TIPS) is currently being developed by the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center. TIPS focuses on empowering students to make their own decisions and plans. The materials engage deaf and hard of hearing high school students in setting goals, making plans, and solving problems to implement their plans.

Based on research that suggests self-determination is a critical factor in successful decision-making and planning, the TIPS materials allow students to explore life choices in the classroom. The educator in this setting becomes a facilitator. TIPS materials help students make choices by helping them learn about and take responsibility for themselves.

Group and individual projects allow students to experience choice and responsibility in an authentic way. A central component of the package is videotapes of recent deaf high school graduates describing the real-life choices they faced after graduation. The vignettes are used to generate discussion,

critical thinking, and conceptual applications of the decision-making process.

TIPS differs from other previously developed decision-making materials because it reflects a theoretical framework targeting some of the underlying skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed for successful transition to life after high school. This approach is geared to helping resolve issues for students who can repeat the mechanical steps involved in making decisions, but lack the self-determination, responsibility, and authority needed for effective transition.

The TIPS instructional package has been pilot tested at Model Secondary School for the Deaf, Washington, D. C.; Illinois School for the Deaf, Jacksonville, Illinois; and South Hills High School, West Covina, California. After revisions, it is expected to be available for purchase in 2002. For more information, contact Gary Hotto at gary.hotto@gallaudet.edu.

events and feelings that the graduate described in a single interview. This web naturally clustered around significant parts of the graduate's life, such as early educational experiences, family relationships, high school experiences, and future plans. The group repeated this process with additional transcripts. After examining these webs, common categories revealed themselves. The group further refined these categories into codes that could be used on the remaining transcripts. Most passages from the interviews are coded to more than one code. The process of coding is currently underway at all three sites.

As the content analysis of the interviews reveals patterns of effective and less effective strategies for decision making and problem solving, other questions will arise. What role does the deaf community play in the lives of recent graduates? What is the role of the family at this stage in life? Does the deaf or hard of hearing graduate struggle with transition issues that differ from his or her hearing counterparts? If yes, in what ways? Through an exploration of themes and issues of transition from the graduates' perspective, this study expects to provide the teachers, counselors, dorm staff, and administrators with new insights into the early years after graduation.

In a very practical way, the study expects to identify information about basic skills and knowledge for everyday problem solving that deaf and hard of hearing graduates need in moving from high school to independence. When one of the graduates described her transition from high school she said, "In high school, I did not know anything about being out in the world...I was afraid of the outside world and what it looked like. When I got in the world, I wasn't afraid. It was a surprise."

We hope that the Clerc Center's graduate follow-up study will assist teachers, counselors, and administrators in eliminating the surprise element from transition for our deaf and hard of hearing students.

Reflections of the Graduates Glimpses of Independent Lives

Although it is too early to share conclusions, these examples of responses of the graduates reflect the information we are seeking. The examples are shown below under a single code, but in the analysis process, most of the following quotations would be recorded under multiple codes.

** Remarks may be altered slightly to protect confidentiality.*

The Pre-High School Experience

The early school experience of the graduate

"When I was in public school, I didn't know that if I asked for an interpreter, I could get one."

"I tried to be an oral person. I couldn't always catch what people were saying by reading their lips."

"In school, I was involved mostly in sports, but I was not happy because everyone was hearing and I was deaf."

Deaf-related Issues

Knowledge of law and self-advocacy; Involvement with Deaf community

"I told the boss that he had to provide interpreters for the safety meeting because there are 30 deaf workers and they need to know about this. It is the law."

"I met with the interpreter before class to see if that person was qualified. She wasn't, so I told the school to get me another interpreter."

"There is a small deaf community. They are mostly older, but that is okay. I like to do things with them. I would feel alone without them."

Critical incidents

When an internal or external event changes the graduate's path

"My mother used to interpret for me. But after the divorce, I lived with my father and he could not sign."

"I got laid off and had to go home while I was looking for a job."

"I started to tutor a little deaf girl and it changed my life. It is so important for deaf children to have role models."

Values and Experiences Link

Statements of self-awareness or values

"I found out after a couple of weeks at the camp that I had leadership skills. I could tell the group what to do and they respected me."

"I got involved in high school and grabbed every opportunity. Now I am glad because that experience in community service paid off in college."

when. transition comes

COUNSELING DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING STUDENTS

By Susan Starnes

Susan Starnes, M.A.,

is a graduate of the Gallaudet University Department of Counseling. Since graduation, she has worked in a variety of positions and with all ages of deaf and hard of hearing individuals and their families in San Antonio, Texas, including the Texas Rehabilitation Commission and Brown Schools Psychiatric Hospital for Children and Adolescents. For the last 10 years, she has been a counselor with the North East Independent School District Regional Day School Program for the Deaf.

The itinerant teacher phoned to tell me that she thought one of her students was “in trouble.” The student had always been polite and mild mannered, but recently his behavior had changed. When he entered the room, he slammed his books on the desk. When she asked what was wrong, he refused to answer.

Thinking about it further, her concern grew. He was always alone, she realized. The only deaf student in a high school of 3,000, he walked between classes without companions, a tight smile on his face.

The other students appeared friendly. They occasionally exchanged greetings, but when he asked them about upcoming parties, the invitations never came. Girls whom he asked for dates avoided accepting. “That’s okay, no problem,” he always said, and he maintained that tight smile.

“I am afraid that he’s about to blow,” the teacher told me.

I was the counselor for the deaf and hard of hearing students in the North East Independent School District, which is one of four Regional Day School Programs for the Deaf, in Bexar County, Texas. Students’ range of services and placements are determined by impact of the disability on educational needs at the Individualized Education Program meetings. The student that the teacher was talking about was one of many who receive itinerant support from teachers certified in deaf education and from interpreters. There is one audiologist in the program, and I am the only counselor.

Before I drove out to meet the student, I read his file. He was bright. His family was professional and affluent. His older siblings were successful in school and athletics. Raised without sign language, he spent time at home alone in his room, the aloneness sadly reinforced by the family’s tendency to overprotect him.

I also learned that his dream—to become a teacher for deaf children—had been recently dashed. Actually the dream had faded long before, as teachers passed him from grade to grade not because he achieved, but because he struggled to achieve. Now a senior, the student had been presented with the results of the struggle. His parents were called in for a meeting. The general education staff lauded his efforts, which they described as “incredible,” but they noted that he was failing four of his seven subjects and his reading test scores were at a 3.5 grade level. Some teachers admitted that they passed him even when they knew he was failing.

Photography by John T. Consoli

Models: William Saunders, Kia Proctor, and Oluyinka Williams



But their passing grades wouldn't help now. Even junior colleges ask for sixth to eighth grade reading levels depending on the chosen major. The student and his parents were forced to face the fact that further education and a career goal of teaching deaf children was not realistic.

Apparently, they left the meeting devastated.

At our first meeting, I noticed that the student was trying to be polite, but that he was tense and preoccupied. As he did not know sign language, I brought a legal tablet so that he would be sure to understand what was being said. I explained my role and told him that I planned to meet with him a minimum of twice per week. Like the referring teacher, I, too, became concerned.

During the second visit, I asked him about his obvious unhappiness.

"I have a plan," he stated flatly. "I've thought about it. It will take care of everything."

I worried about suicide.

Immediately after the meeting, I notified my supervisor that I was contacting the student's father. "I strongly feel that your son is contemplating suicide," I told him. "I would like to recommend him to a psychiatrist that works well with

adolescents." I shared my observations and the father gave me permission to contact the psychiatrist. I called the psychiatrist's office right away. At that point, any fear that I had about an indifferent family was dispelled. The boy's father was already on the other line setting up an appointment with the doctor.

This was an extreme example of depression in youth, something every counselor dreads and hopes to handle successfully. But it illustrates what can happen to deaf students in the mainstream when the students' feelings about their hearing loss and sense of belonging are not openly discussed. This happens too often when general educators and parents do not fully understand the extent and impact of that hearing loss. Due to the low incidence of students with hearing loss and their appearance as physically "normal," general educators may over- or underestimate their abilities. Parents and general educators may not perceive mounting frustrations and stress when the student does not exhibit overt behavioral problems.

As time for transition from school to work approaches, the incidental learning lag and general lack of problem-solving experience compound an already fragile situation. Deaf students compare themselves with hearing peers who seem to float

anxiety-free through the process. At this critical moment in life, this student and others are forced to realize that the hopes and dreams nurtured through the years are for naught.

Transition: Unique Obstacles

In transitioning from school to work, many deaf and hard of hearing students face obstacles that are unique. These include:

- **LANGUAGE.** Colloquial expressions, woven into everyday language, are sometimes misperceived. For example, an employer asked one of our students: “Would you like to clean the tables now?” The student’s reply? “No.” There are many activities that this student liked and enjoyed, but cleaning was never one.

- **ROLE EXPECTATIONS AND WORK ETHIC.**

With lives spent exclusively in a school environment, students are sometimes naive about the rules and behavioral expectations that govern the workplace. These include everything from knowledge of the roles of boss and employee, to demeanor and dress, to the set of attitudinal and behavioral expectations we sometimes call the work ethic.

- **PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS.** Students who have grown up in homes where communication is problematic may find that their parents have unrealistic expectations. Too often these parents relegate some of the work traditionally handled at home to the school—many times at educators’ insistence. As schools and professionals take over their children’s lives, these parents become accustomed to being “out of the loop,” trusting that schools will provide the experience and opportunities necessary for educational success. These parents don’t know about academic and vocational training options for students with hearing loss or about the wide range of job skills and careers that are available to their children. In its most alarming aspect, these parents, knowing their children are bright, expect their children to continue on to college—whether or not their academic skills are adequate for admission and success. One parent tried to push her daughter to attend the college she herself had attended. The daughter, supported by professional staff, eventually convinced her mother that the community college would offer the best opportunity for the academic training to reach her goal.

- **LIFE SKILLS.** The incidental learning that occurs as hearing children watch and listen to their hearing parents dealing with daily responsibilities and dilemmas becomes essential to a successful transition—and this is often lacking in homes where there have been communication barriers. Students need to attain

independent functional experience at places such as the grocery store and the bank. They need to be able to write checks and balance their bank accounts. They need to know about rent, bills, budgeting, and how ATM and credit cards work.

- **UNEDUCATED PUBLIC.** Unfortunately, much apprehension and misperception about deaf and hard of hearing people is still present among employers. “I didn’t know that deaf people would be allowed to drive!” one employer told me. Another employer said, “You can’t tell me that a deaf person doesn’t know to ask permission to take annual leave!” But our student didn’t know the correct procedure for taking annual leave.

When he took vacation without filling out the request form, which he had never seen, he was promptly fired when he returned. For some business leaders, the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act only increases fear that profit margins will be sapped by requirements to pay for interpreter services for employees.

Our Successes

Perhaps in light of these problems, the most remarkable aspect of our schools is our success stories. One of our students was deemed “mildly retarded” and “questionably trainable.” Still, she set her sights on completing independent living training at the Southwest Center for the Hearing Impaired (what is now the Methodist Family and Rehabilitation Services) in San Antonio. With support, she landed a job at Walmart, which she continues to hold four years later. She has her own apartment, and her mother, who was initially hesitant to permit her daughter to participate in the program, ended up moving into her apartment and relying on her temporarily for financial support.

In the end, the student who had dreamed of becoming a teacher became a success too. Vocational testing helped him recognize his great strength in visual/spacial skills. Using this information, he trained as an automotive mechanic and took sign language classes while in training. He also became involved in a local church and developed a signing choir there. Now he works full time as a mechanic, and enjoys a social life and friends in the activities of his congregation.

Sometimes I reflect on this student and his school experience. When I asked his teachers why they continued to pass a student who was obviously doing so poorly, they said they would never “fail a student who tried that hard.” Well, that’s fine.

But life does fail these students.

That’s why we owe it to them to provide them with skills.

TRANSITION IN CURRICULUM Recommendations



- ✓ Pursue interests and vocational testing through Vocational Rehabilitation.
- ✓ Infuse transition skills, such as budgeting, checkwriting, and rent paying.
- ✓ Use technology in all areas.
- ✓ Expose students to jobs and job training.
- ✓ Provide role models. Often students learn best from people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or multi-disabled.
- ✓ Develop problem-solving experiences and skills relative to vocational goals.

—Susan Starnes

the school-to-work initiative

By Kelli Thuli

Teresa LoProto, a senior at Rockville High School in Rockville, Maryland, has combined her technical training in computer software applications with work experience to position herself for entry into an exciting career in a technology-related field. She works as a part-time paid intern at a high-tech company that uses computer-assisted design and other technology to reproduce high security signatures, among other products. LoProto, who is deaf, occasionally requires the services of a sign language interpreter. She also uses e-mail and other technologies to augment her communication and academic studies.

LoProto secured her position as a result of participating in the school-to-work activities offered by her school. These activities fall under the School-to-Work Opportunities Act passed in 1994. This initiative takes a new approach in the educational and workforce preparation of every young person by offering, among other things, work-based learning opportunities. Work-based learning allows young people to apply their learning in actual work settings.

As a result, LoProto enjoyed a wide range of other school-to-work opportunities, including computer technology training. This training was an adjunct to her academic subjects, which helped her gain real-work skills while meeting high academic requirements. She rated the mentoring she receives from her work supervisor as a key to her successful performance. She also credited her high school technology training classes for giving her direction in her career. LoProto is on the path to a bright future. She plans to attend college next year and continue her studies in computer technology.

Kelli Thuli, Ph.D., is the program manager for the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition at TransCen, Inc. TransCen, a nonprofit organization located in Rockville, Maryland, supports career and workforce development initiatives for youth with disabilities. Prior to joining TransCen, Thuli worked at the National School-to-Work Office.

As young adults make the transition from school to adult life, they are faced with many uncertainties. Decisions they face include whether to go on to college or straight to work and whether they can afford to live on their own. For youths who are deaf and hard of hearing and those with disabilities the transition can be even more challenging. Often these young people enter a maze of categorical services fraught with waiting lists and limited choices.

School-to-work is an approach to education that emphasizes high academic standards and hands-on learning to impart real skills. An important part of school-to-work is exposure to a broad variety of career options. The underlying goal is to provide youths with knowledge and skills that allow them to opt for college, additional technical training, or well-paying jobs directly out of high school. Activities include having guests from the community talk to elementary students about their careers; changing a science curriculum to allow the instructor to pose complex problems solvable through laboratory experiments; and at the high school level, having students spend time in a structured workplace situation that complements their academic program, and for which they receive academic credit.

Under the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, administered by the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor, all 50 states, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, six island territories, and approximately 120 local communities across the nation were awarded funds to support school-to-work system-building efforts. These funds enabled these regions to create a framework for educational reform and workforce development. To date, more than 1,000 local partnerships, involving 36,000 schools that serve more than 18 million young people, are providing school-to-work opportunities. Also, approximately 136,000 employers are actively involved in school-to-work by providing workplace experiences for young people.

With the passage of the Act came a vision for shaping an educational system that would build promising futures for America's youth by expanding career options for all young people, including those with disabilities. It is the intent and purpose of the Act that all youths, regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, or other characteristics, have the same opportunities to participate in all aspects of school-to-work initiatives and not be subject to discrimination. Data from



Left: Teresa LoProto, a high school student who is deaf, applies computer skills on her job as an intern at a high tech company in Maryland.

school-to-work grantees shows that youths with disabilities represent 10.3% of all twelfth grade students participating in school-to-work activities.

The underlying goal is to provide youths with knowledge and skills that allow them to opt for college, additional technical training, or well-paying jobs directly out of high school.

Baltimore City provides a good example. Here, young people with disabilities are placed in work-based learning experiences based on their occupational interests. These young people also develop career portfolios they can use to promote themselves in the job market. This project has been successful because of the collaborative relationship among the teachers in special education and regular education.

Although, the school-to-work legislation is due to end September 30, many states are actively engaged in activities to sustain their efforts. Currently, these states have legislation, regulations, policies, and/or codes that support:

- **WORK-BASED LEARNING** for all youths, whereby workplaces and communities are active learning environments in the educational process (34 states);
 - **BROAD SCHOOL-TO-WORK SYSTEM BUILDING**, whereby partnerships are developed between businesses, schools, community-based organizations, families, and state and local governments to broaden educational, career, and economic opportunities for youths (21 states);
 - **SCHOOL-TO-WORK AND HIGH ACADEMIC STANDARDS**, whereby school-to-work activities are linked to state content and performance standards (16 states); and
 - **THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTEGRATED CURRICULUM**, whereby occupational and academic subjects are merged so that students gain real-life application (14 states).
- To ensure the long-term inclusion of youths with disabilities in school-to-work activities, state and local partnerships should continue to:
- **ACCESS INTERMEDIARY ENTITIES** that include organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, and are designed to convene and connect schools and employers without distinction between categories of students.
 - **PROVIDE ACCESS TO MEANINGFUL WORK-BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES** integrated with classroom learning and based on students' interests.
 - **INSTITUTE TEAM-BASED NETWORKS** in which general educators

partner with special educators to collaboratively plan and evaluate programs.

- **ADVOCATE FOR FURTHER LEGISLATION**, moving beyond solely statutory rights to access, to mandate the participation of youths with disabilities.

Recently, in order to continue sharing school-to-work best practices for youths with disabilities, the federal government funded a national research and technical assistance center to create opportunities for youths with disabilities to achieve successful futures. The National Center on Secondary Education and Transition seeks to increase the capacity of national, state, and local agencies and organizations to improve secondary education and transition for youths with disabilities and their families.

The Center, headquartered at the University of Minnesota, is a partnership of six organizations, including the National Center on the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports at the University of Hawaii; TransCen, Inc., in Rockville, Maryland; the Institute for Educational Leadership, Center for Workforce Development, in Washington D.C.; the PACER Center of Minnesota; and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education. In addition, youths with disabilities and their families are engaged at all levels of the project to ensure that they have a strong voice and a direct role in setting the direction

for the Center.

The Center has established four Technical Assistance Networks to plan and support the delivery of technical assistance and information regarding the school-to-work transition of youths with disabilities. The technical assistance networks address specific areas of national significance. These areas include: access to a full range of secondary education curricular options and learning experiences; access to and full participation in postsecondary education, employment, and independent living; involvement of parents and families in the transition process; and improvement of the linkages and coordination among those systems that serve youths.

The Center will also develop partnerships and tap into the expertise of other researchers, technical assistance providers, and dissemination centers in organizing and providing technical assistance and disseminating information.

For more information about the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, please contact us at 612-624-2097 or ncser@icimail.coled.umn.edu.

For more information on the national school-to-work initiative or to learn more about what your state is doing, contact the School-to-Work Learning and Information Center, the technical assistance arm of the National School-to-Work office, at 800-251-7236 or stw-lc@ed.gov.

“Relevant! Powerful! Illuminating!”

—Susan V. Rezen, Ph.D., CCC-A, Full Professor, Worcester State College

Hearing loss does not just affect an individual, but also their family and friends. *Listen with the Heart: Relationships and Hearing Loss*, contains true stories from the author's psychotherapy practice with individuals, couples, and families where hearing loss is present. The stories chronicle many unique challenges of hearing loss, largely having to do with communication, self-identity, and interpersonal relationships.

Beneficial to a wide audience including spouses, children, parents, friends, extended family members, and professionals, it is also an excellent text for college and graduate level courses in psychology, mental health counseling, speech and hearing, special education, and Deaf education.

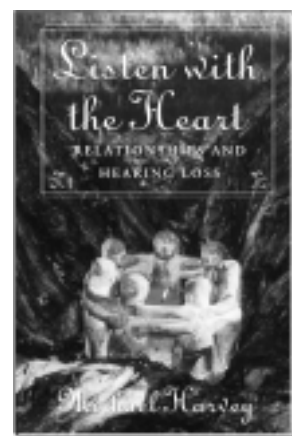
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COMMENTARY

Robert Clover

Johnson, M.A., has been senior research editor in the Gallaudet Research Institute (GRI) since 1986. He is the editor of GRI's free biannual newsletter, *Research at Gallaudet*, and the author of numerous articles concerning deafness-related research. He was one of the editors of the 1994 volume *The Deaf Way: Perspectives from the International Conference on Deaf Culture* and of the 1994 GRI publication *Implications and Complications for Deaf Students of the Full Inclusion Movement*. This article also appears in the spring/summer 2001 issue of *Research at Gallaudet*. Johnson welcomes comments on this article: Robert.C.Johnson@gallaudet.edu.

Left: If testing becomes a high stakes event in the lives of students, what will it mean for deaf teens?

high stakes testing

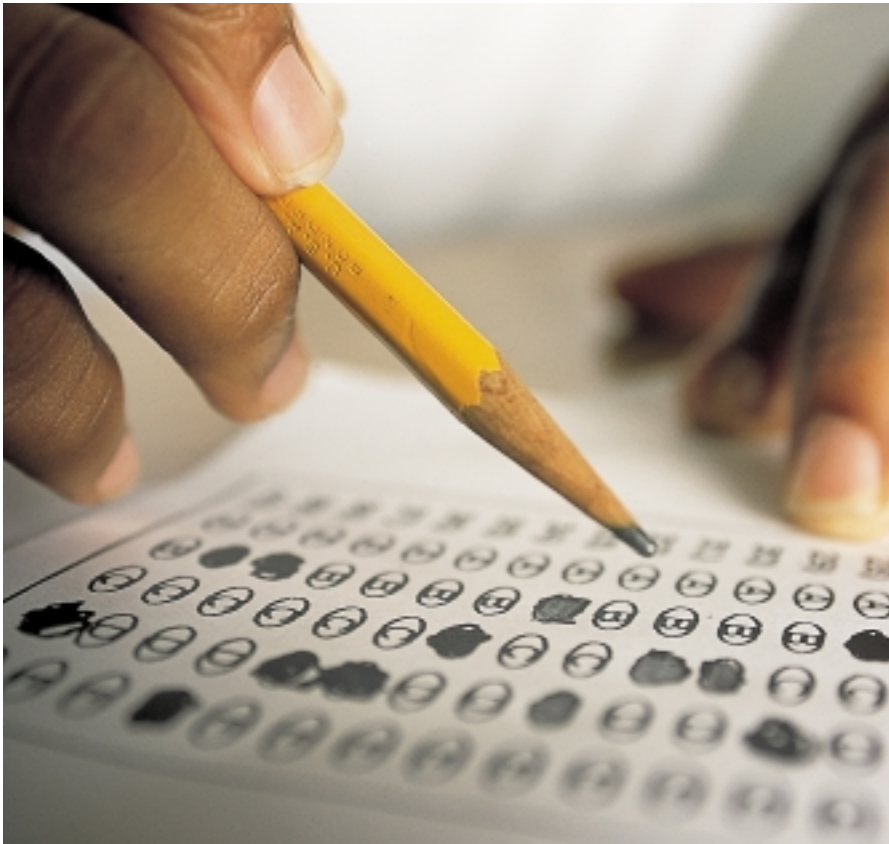
AND DEAF STUDENTS: SOME RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

By Robert Clover Johnson

If the ever-widening reach of statewide testing proceeds as forecast, it is likely that one of the most significant changes affecting the transition of deaf and hard of hearing students will be the tendency of states to link “high stakes” decisions to students’ scores on these tests. As a result of this increasingly pervasive use, or misuse, of state competency tests, students (deaf and hearing alike) who perform below certain “cut levels” may be held back a grade or allowed to complete high school without a standard diploma. In some states, like New York, even IEP (Individualized Education Program) diplomas for special education students are at risk of being eliminated, meaning many students may leave high school with nothing to show for their hard work, even if they stay in school through their senior year. Already, large numbers of low-scoring students in at least one state, Texas, are dropping out of school, reportedly because they feel it is unlikely they will ever be able to pass these tests (National Center for Fair & Open Testing, 2000-2001).

Photography by John T. Consoli
Illustrations by Robert Clover Johnson

Model: Harry Carter



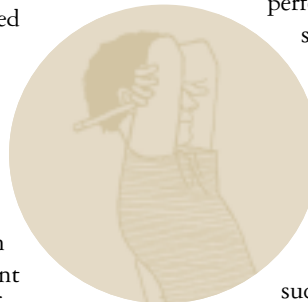
“Deaf and hard of hearing students are [being] placed in positions of vulnerability unparalleled by those of the general school population.” Corbett goes on to describe the current use of state tests as “accountability run amuck” (Corbett, 2000).

I have been trying to formulate a reaction to the current situation that is grounded in research. For the purposes of this article, I will mention some of what I consider pertinent research under the following broad headings: studies showing low achievement on standardized tests; studies showing high hopes; and studies describing alternative paradigms.

Studies Showing Low Test Achievement

In the 1970s, when widespread dissatisfaction with the overall educational results of oralism led to the incorporation of signing into roughly two thirds of educational programs for deaf students, many positive changes occurred. But average results for deaf students taking standardized tests did not rise significantly. In fact, Stanford Achievement Test results, compiled periodically by the Gallaudet Research Institute, have remained stubbornly persistent over the years. On reading comprehension, 18-year-old deaf and hard of hearing students continue to place on average at about a 3.9 grade level. Many educators, consequently, hold out little hope that deaf and hard of hearing students, on average, will perform significantly better on state competency tests.

Standardized tests tend to be designed in ways that favor test-takers with a grasp of the subtle nuances of spoken language. On the reading comprehension portion of such tests, for example, where students read passages, then select among numerous multiple choice items intended to check comprehension, test designers deliberately include distractor



The advent of nationwide testing through state departments of education can be traced back to the 1983 government report *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, which featured data showing that American students were falling behind students from other nations on numerous educational measures. The report advocated the development of standardized tests as a mechanism for assessing how students were learning broadly agreed-upon educational goals and for making teachers and school administrators accountable for student success or failure. In 1989, the accountability movement and the trend toward statewide testing were reinforced at an education summit, America 2000: An Education Strategy. In 1999, President Clinton urged the passage of an Education Accountability Act to make federal support of school systems contingent on satisfactory student performance on state tests. President George W. Bush is promoting similar

legislation.

Statewide tests, which are intended to measure student achievement uniformly and objectively, are seen by some as the best way to determine what needs to be done to increase students' educational levels. For educators of deaf and hard of hearing students, the tests can be valuable as yardsticks for comparing these students' achievement levels to those of hearing students and for getting valuable clues concerning needed curricular changes. But if used inappropriately, as already appears to be the case in some states, they can become the single measure to earning a high school diploma—and this could have a devastating impact on the academic and employment prospects of deaf and hard of hearing students. In the words of Ed Corbett, president of the Conference of the Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf,

items that may be correct in all but a single word or phrase. These items are presented without context and often contain idiomatic expressions that may puzzle or mislead a bright deaf student. Although many deaf students manage to become proficient readers, educators have yet to formulate educational procedures that predictably yield these exceptional results.

Studies Showing High Hopes

Performance IQ tests designed to assess basic intellectual potential have long suggested that deaf students' aptitude for learning covers a range from low to high that is very similar to that of hearing children. Such findings add incentive to educators seeking ways to take full advantage of this potential. The fact that deaf and hard of hearing students are now facing the same assessment as their hearing peers can be regarded as a triumph for those who have worked for years to ensure that deaf students are given access to the same challenges as hearing children.

Several new approaches rarely have been tried effectively and consistently, let alone been fully implemented in the U.S. on a large scale. In *Unlocking the Curriculum: Principles for Achieving Access in Deaf Education* (Johnson, Liddell, & Erting, 1989), researchers at Gallaudet argued that what was missing in deaf education was the use of a first language for deaf students that was fully accessible visually: American Sign Language (ASL). Early fluency in American Sign Language, the authors contended, could put deaf children developmentally on a par with hearing children. This fluency could provide a cognitive and linguistic base upon which English as a second language could be taught through comparisons and contrasts with American Sign Language.

There are a few programs trying this approach, but the testing results

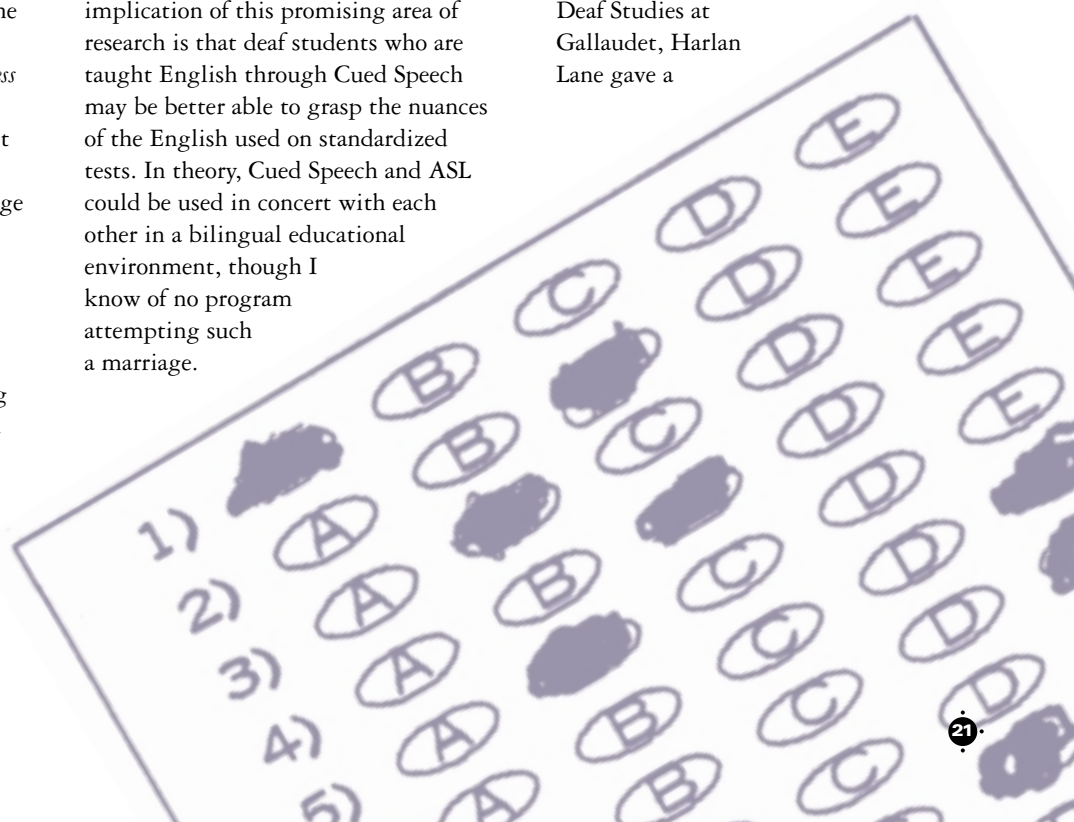
for these children are not sufficient to allow for a definitive evaluation of their effectiveness. Nevertheless, there may be cause for optimism in the fact that teachers in some of these programs believe their deaf students are so fully engaged intellectually by this approach that they may ultimately "achieve at rates comparable to their hearing counterparts" (Johnson, 1999).

Another educational approach that has received increased study in recent years is Cued Speech. Invented by Dr. Orin Cornett, a professor at Gallaudet in the 1960s, Cued Speech consists of a set of handshapes produced near the mouth by a speaker so that such speech sounds as "B" and "P" can be visually discriminated by a person reading the speaker's lips. Numerous small studies of deaf students educated by teachers who use Cued Speech and whose parents use Cued Speech at home suggest that this approach provides exposure to English usage that significantly helps students recognize and understand printed English vocabulary, idioms, and syntactic structures (Coryell, 2001). One implication of this promising area of research is that deaf students who are taught English through Cued Speech may be better able to grasp the nuances of the English used on standardized tests. In theory, Cued Speech and ASL could be used in concert with each other in a bilingual educational environment, though I know of no program attempting such a marriage.

Another approach to teaching deaf students that shows considerable promise is the mediated learning, cognitive strategies approach. In this approach, teachers work closely with students to develop cognitive skills that will help the students adapt to a broad spectrum of academic challenges. Students are taught to reason, draw inferences, analyze, and think in response to carefully planned educational experiences. Because this approach relies on continual assessment of students to gauge where more learning is needed, it is well attuned to the testing environment now being implemented by state governments. At the Lexington School for the Deaf in New York, this approach has been used for over a decade. Reading comprehension levels have been significantly higher among students who participated in the program from elementary through high school levels than among students who entered the program after elementary school (Lexington School for the Deaf, 2000).

Studies Supporting Alternative Paradigms

In 1988, during his tenure as Powrie V. Doctor Chair of Deaf Studies at Gallaudet, Harlan Lane gave a



presentation in which he offered a startling debating point. He said that since deaf people can flourish in signing environments but have great difficulty learning and fluently using English, perhaps they should not be compelled to devote too much of their energy to struggling with English. Lane argued on behalf of a “pluralistic society” in which deaf people would be allowed to be different.

The audience at that presentation consisted primarily of educators of the deaf and highly successful, literate deaf professionals. My perception of the general reaction to Lane’s debating point was that no one agreed.

In fact, few people would disagree with the notion that deaf and hard of hearing students, in spite of their varying degrees of ability or inability to hear spoken English, need to find ways to develop as much mastery of English as possible. In America, most curricular material is presented in English texts and the scope of life for anyone lacking facility in English is significantly narrowed. It is largely for these reasons that in a recent letter to the editor of the *American Annals of the Deaf*, officials from the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind argue against any attempt to make deaf students exempt from standardized tests. Doing so, they state, might suggest that deaf education is “a form of alternative education rather than an educational

program designed to prepare students for participation in society (Randall et al., 2000).”

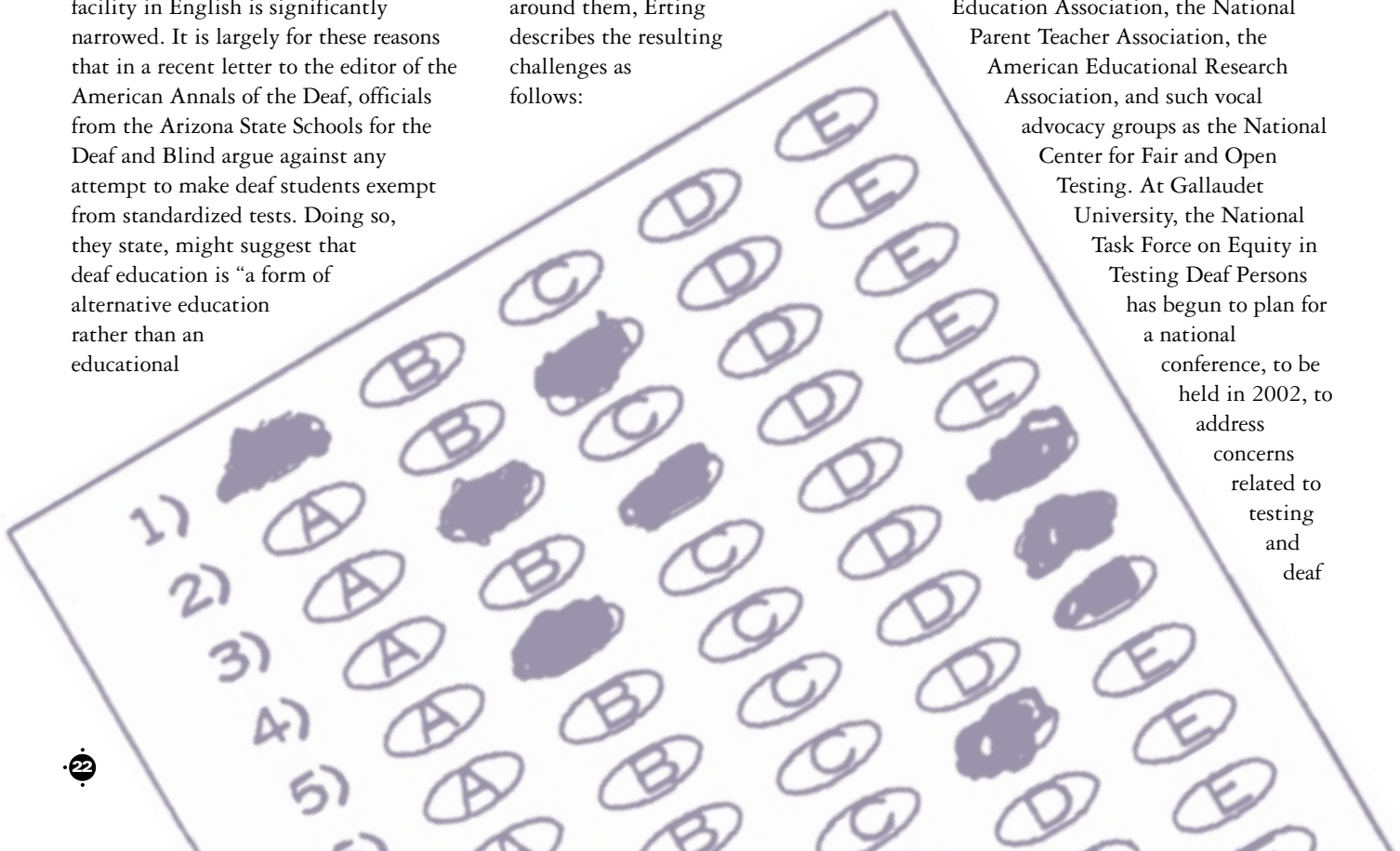
Still, it could be argued that devoting too much time to preparing deaf and hard of hearing students for standardized tests may hijack attention and energy needed for important social and linguistic

challenges unique to deaf individuals. In her 1994 book, *Deafness, Communication, and Social Identity: Ethnography in a Preschool for Deaf Children*, Carol Erting observed that deaf children, who for the most part come from hearing families, often encounter other deaf people for the first time in school. Erting points out that deaf students have a legitimate need for interaction with other deaf children and adults, from whom they can learn linguistic and social skills important in the formation of a deaf identity. Since school is also obviously an environment in which deaf students learn to read and write, do math, work on computers, and learn about the larger world around them, Erting describes the resulting challenges as follows:

This basic contradiction between the deaf individual’s social identity, constructed, in part, out of the need for community with others who share fundamentally similar experiences and can communicate them, and the deaf individual’s personal identity, resulting, in part, from the physical and emotional bonds between parents and children, very often manifests itself as ambivalence toward both deaf society and hearing society. The challenge to integrate these two identities and resolve the tension these competing and conflicting categories and their symbols generate is perhaps the greatest and most constant challenge faced by the deaf individual. (Erting, 1994)

Educators Taking Action

Educators of deaf and hard of hearing students are increasingly joining forces with other groups who believe that such use of testing is unfair and discriminatory to many students. These organizations include the National Education Association, the National Parent Teacher Association, the American Educational Research Association, and such vocal advocacy groups as the National Center for Fair and Open Testing. At Gallaudet University, the National Task Force on Equity in Testing Deaf Persons has begun to plan for a national conference, to be held in 2002, to address concerns related to testing and deaf



students.

Some members of the National Task Force are concerned about the growing tendency of educational programs to devote too much time to preparation for end-of-year testing, believing that elevating the importance of test score results in an atmosphere of anxious preparation is counterproductive to creativity and optimal learning. Supported by position papers of the above-named organizations, these National Task Force members have advocated that tests be used for diagnostic purposes but not for making high stakes “all or nothing” decisions regarding deaf and hard of hearing students.

The National Task Force members advocate that decisions regarding advancement in school and granting of diplomas take into account students’ grades and portfolios of materials showing progress in meeting school assignments, as well as test results. At minimum, National Task Force members state, deaf students should be granted signed interpretation of all audible events when tests are administered. The National Task Force also believes that deaf

students should be allowed to appeal for extra time in taking the tests if it is known that they generally process English text more slowly than other students.

The most difficult issue the National Task Force confronts, however, may be the problems deaf students tend to have with the English used in multiple choice testing. Basing their views on reading research on deaf students, many National Task Force members would prefer to modify the nature of the tests themselves, providing, for example, more richly contextualized and unambiguously written multiple choice items. Opinions differ on this, and

David Martin, the retiring chair of the National Task Force, reports that he looks forward to inviting test designers, politicians, school administrators, and special interest presenters to the 2002 national conference so that conflicting perspectives can be constructively debated (Task Force, 2001).

A Final Thought

In 2002, Deaf Way II will occur in Washington, D.C. Thousands of deaf people from many nations will come to our nation’s capital to discuss the struggles and celebrate the achievements of deaf people. The year 2002 is also the year in

which many states are planning to make statewide competency tests mandatory for all students.

I would urge that as we gear up for the testing due to occur, we keep in mind that many of the social and linguistic skills important to deaf students are not measured by standardized tests. I hope that some time in deaf students’ busy schedules can be allowed for the development of sign language skills, for creative expression in the visual and dramatic arts, for sports, and for all the activities generally associated with youth and the pursuit of happiness.



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Harry C.

Anderson is president of the American Association of the Deaf-Blind and a former counselor at the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind in St. Augustine, Florida.

the time is high school; the resource is the community

SELF-DETERMINATION, TRANSITION, AND DEAF-BLIND STUDENTS

By Cynthia L. Ingraham and Harry C. Anderson

The community of persons who are deaf-blind is diverse and deaf-blind individuals possess commonalities that are unmatched by any other disability group (Ingraham et al., 1995). As educators struggle to meet the needs of deaf-blind students, it may be well to remember that the responsibility for ensuring successful transition from secondary education to adult services does not rest solely on the educational system. For successful transition, concerned adults need to involve community service agencies, and deaf-blind students need to develop an understanding of self and skills in self-advocacy.

Foster Self-Understanding and Advocacy

Without a clear understanding of their own strengths and areas of challenge, deaf-blind students may be fated for a future of shopping for services at a “one size fits all” service delivery market. Students can be their own best advocates as they increasingly participate in the drafting and implementation of their own Individualized Education Program (IEP). However, many students are not prepared to do this—partly because they are unaware of their own capabilities and needs. Once these are clear, it is essential to create an atmosphere where communication is open and welcomed. When students sense their words carry import, they begin to build a solid self-advocacy mentality that will carry them through their adult lives. If students are not encouraged to speak up during the high school years, it is highly probable that these skills will not develop until much later or they may not develop at all.

Explain Technical Vocabulary

One reason that students may hesitate to advocate for themselves in meetings may be their lack of familiarity with the vocabulary of professionals. Most educators are accustomed to using acronyms and other abbreviations for agencies, professions, services, and resources. This common practice, while time efficient, can represent an entirely new language for deaf-blind students and their families. Listed on most IEPs for deaf-blind students are equipment, support services, and communication needs. These, along with words like “technology,” “language deficits,” “employment training,” “adjustment recommendations,” and “residential



and transportation needs” should be carefully explained. Drafting a list of commonly used vocabulary is a direct way to ensure full participation in meetings. As counselors and educators work with deaf-blind students to prepare them for IEP meetings, these vocabulary lists can be created and discussed.

Take Full Advantage of IDEA

Many families and students are not aware of the Family Needs Test employed to determine the family’s contribution toward paying for services and equipment purchased for deaf-blind consumers through Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). Often in two-income families, contributions of \$5,000 or \$7,000 are commonly expected—an amount that is staggering. In rare cases, VR accepts appeals to reduce or extend payment plans.

But while the student is in school, the VR professional can function as a member of the IEP team and services can be requested under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) without cost to the family. Deaf-blind students frequently require knowledge outside of academics. They need to know about specific adaptive technology, develop independent living skills, and acquire knowledge of community resources. They need to know how to use the bank and the cleaners, the details of dressing, and how to handle utility bills. VR counselors can help.

Involve VR

High school students who are deaf-blind would be better served if their instructors and the team that develops and implements the IEP would invite a VR counselor or adult service provider from the lead agency servicing the deaf-blind student to team meetings. The VR counselor can begin to attend IEP meetings when a student reaches age 14 and a transition plan is developed as part of his or her IEP. The VR counselor, a repository of valuable information regarding adult service options, employment trends, and essential technology, can provide the educational team with a myriad of resources for deaf-blind students.

In addition to sharing information, the VR professional can recommend and assist with some aspects of funding. While VR

Growing to Independence

Left: Krista Caudill, age 5, in her preschool program in the Wilmington Public School System.

Right: Caudill, today, working toward a BS in computer science at the University of Delaware.

Photos courtesy of Cynthia Ingraham, Helen Keller National Center.

may not be able to actually purchase equipment for the student, VR can finance tours of rehabilitation programs and the student’s participation in local or national conferences. Attendance at these conferences is often important for students because there they meet other deaf-blind students and older deaf-blind individuals. Having the opportunity to learn from others who have similar support needs is invaluable. While students are invaluable as friends and peers, older deaf-blind individuals—who have gone further through the educational system and

are possibly employed—can be accessed as role models and mentors.

From High School to Independent Living

By opening a student’s case in high school, the VR counselor is able to take full advantage of a comprehensive support team in making recommendations for training and services. Many of the areas that potentially cause difficulties later in life can be addressed most effectively while the student is still in high school. At this time, the transition plan of the IEP enables the involvement of social workers and VR counselors who can work with educators. Making use of local community and national resources to enable students to decide upon employment goals has proven to be a very good tool (Ingraham et al., 1998). In addition, students must come to an understanding of themselves, their needs, and their capabilities and they must learn skills in self-advocacy. The transition plan of the IEP is the most efficient and logical place to start.

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Thomas M. Pierino, Ed.D., CVE, NCC, has been a vocational evaluator, counselor, and school psychologist at St. Mary's School for the Deaf, in Buffalo, New York, for 14 years. A graduate of the State University of New York at Buffalo, and a nationally certified vocational evaluator, nationally certified counselor, and state certified school psychologist, Pierino is also an adjunct professor in the graduate program for educators of the deaf at Canisius College.

assessment-based transition

matching student, curriculum, and career

By Thomas M. Pierino

The young girl shrugged her shoulders. At 12 years old, she rarely planned for the weekend. Now we were looking at test results and asking her to begin planning for a lifetime. By starting a dialogue on transition with students at a young age, we hope to make the process easier and, more importantly perhaps, help students target the work and careers that are most rewarding for them. At the same time, we respond to the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and comply with the state testing requirements of New York, where special education students are tested every three years and three levels of tests are used to evaluate transition-related skills.

Level One: Learning Styles, Life Skills, and Interests

At St. Mary's, we use level one testing not to make decisions but to initiate conversations. To make conversations more meaningful, we administer additional tests—a preliminary interest inventory, a learning styles assessment, and an adaptive behavior/life skills evaluation. This girl's tests showed that she, like many of our students, was strong academically but not at the top of her class. In addition, she demonstrated a strong interest in spatial concepts and math.

When she was asked about carpentry work, she smiled. Her father was a carpenter, she said, and she enjoyed watching him. She decided to take a woodworking course in addition to her academic work. All courses are open to our middle school students and this decision did not bind her to any curriculum. But a carpentry class would enable her to explore her skills and see if she wanted to develop them further.

Level Two: Standardized Assessment

When our students are in eighth or ninth grade, they take the level two vocational assessment. Level two testing uses specialized and standardized instruments and formal and informal observations to measure students' vocational interests as well as aptitudes in verbal, numerical, spatial relations, clerical speed and accuracy, and mechanical reasoning. In addition, other tests measure motor functioning, including fine and gross manual dexterity, speed, and strength. Finally, specific learning styles and perceptions, life skills and adaptive behavior functioning, and simulated and on-the-job work performances are evaluated.

By the time students are 15 years old, their test results and work in class enable us to have transition plans incorporated into their Individualized Education Program (IEP)—as



required under IDEA—and target appropriate curriculum. Perhaps this young woman, like many St. Mary's students, will work in nearby Sisters Hospital as part of our Career Readiness Program. Perhaps she will participate in our on-campus summer work program. What we hope most of all is that she will gain enough work experience to be comfortable thinking and planning for her career.

Level Three: Alternative Assessment

Students who are unable to be meaningfully evaluated with the standardized tests take a functionally and observationally oriented vocational assessment, called level three testing. This assessment relies primarily on work evaluation, involving both simulated and real work samples and job tasks. Input from both the students' classroom teachers and school job coach is extremely important.

The Curriculum

In recent years, we have expanded our vocational programming, and we are currently in the process of adding more. We now have comprehensive programs in Culinary Arts, Graphic Communications, and Building Trades/ Building & Grounds Maintenance. In addition, proposed programs in Commercial Art/Advertising Design, Computer-Assisted Drafting, Computer Information Technology, and Horticulture/Floral Design are currently being investigated. All middle school students are exposed to entry level vocational courses in addition to academic offerings. These courses include Introduction to Technology, Computer Applications, and Home & Career Skills. More advanced courses follow when the student enters high school.

Work Experience

During their freshman year, students are provided with an initial off-campus work experience. Through our Career Readiness Through Education and Work Experience Program, they are placed in one of several departments at Sisters Hospital. There they work in the hospital's dietary/food service, central supply, receiving and distribution, medical records, business, mail room/copying, laundry service, and housekeeping departments. Their assignments rotate and students are provided with a variety of exploratory work experiences. Our job developer, with the assistance of our job coach who supervises the students, sets up the program. Additional work experiences are provided through the on-campus work-study program, the Summer Youth Training and Employment Program, and part-time community employment.

At work in school. St. Mary's students prepare for careers in a variety of areas. Top to bottom: Culinary Arts, Graphic Communications, Building Trades. Photos courtesy of St. Mary's School for the Deaf.



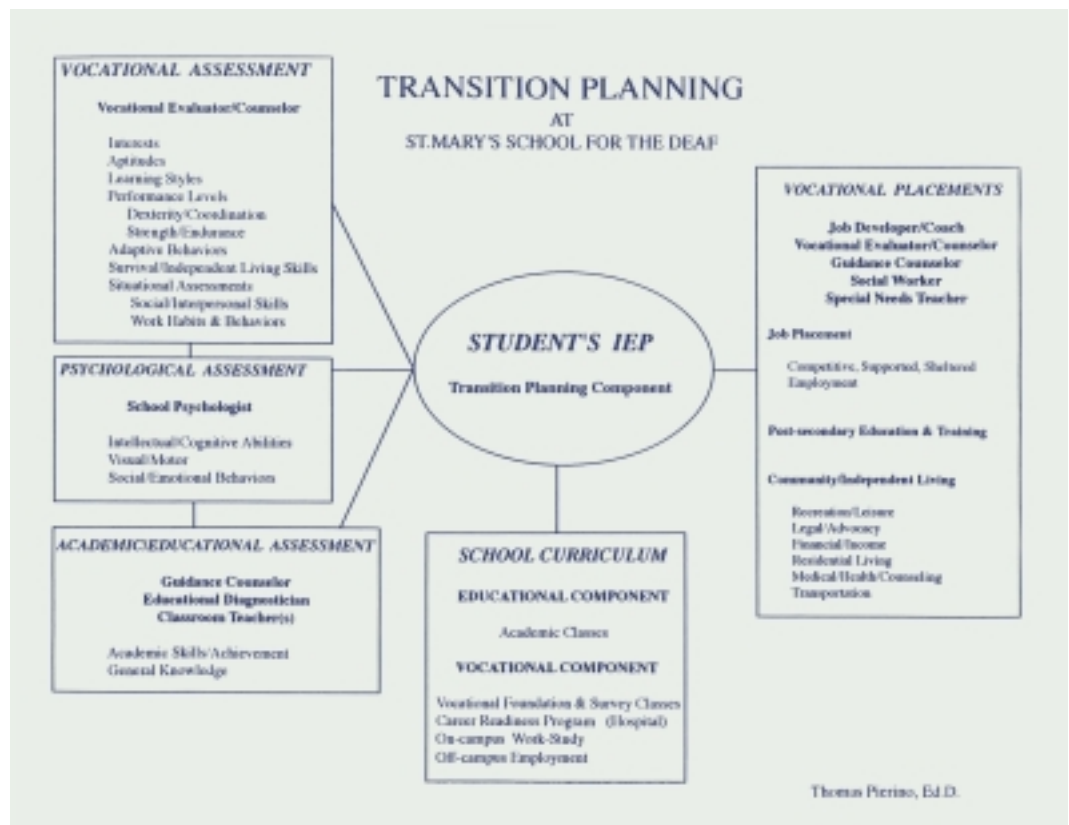
A Range of Offerings

We ensure that academic preparation remains strong for all of our students. In conjunction with the school guidance counselor, post-secondary options such as two- and four-year colleges, technical schools, and vocational training programs are thoroughly investigated. When the student is within two years of graduation, the New York State Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities, as well as other pertinent vocational rehabilitation placement agencies, are contacted and students are registered. This enables a close relationship between the school and other primary agencies of transition. Early in the student's senior year, applications to colleges and training programs are submitted. The complete transition plan includes provisions for further education, vocational training, employment, and community living. The final plan affirms that the following arrangements, as needed, are in place:

- **postsecondary/continuing education**
- **vocational training/job placement (competitive, supported, sheltered employment)**
- **community/independent living**
- **recreation/leisure**
- **legal advocacy**
- **financial/income**
- **residential living**
- **medical/health/counseling services**
- **transportation**

Matching Student and Work

Assessment is the cornerstone of transition planning and assessment results are directly incorporated into the students' IEPs. When we supplement these results with a battery of other academic and psychological evaluations and counseling, we are able to place students in courses that are useful for



Assessment is the cornerstone of transition planning and assessment results are directly incorporated into the students' IEPs.

At St. Mary's School for the Deaf, assessment results drive the IEP, which then drives the student's curriculum and placement.

their future careers. Prior to expanding our curriculum, we found that despite emphasis on academics, some of our students hit a plateau academically that they would not surmount. As a result, these students graduated but they found themselves without skills and with little inclination to pursue any additional education. However, with an assessment-based approach to curriculum and transition planning, these students are able to succeed.

Parents and students have met the new course plans and on-the-job options with enthusiasm. Still, for us as educators, the most important aspect of our program is that we are able to match students with appropriate curriculum through effective assessment. We believe that this approach should provide a model for other schools. Only when we know students' aptitudes, skills, and interests can we provide a meaningful program.

Testing for a Career

In addition to the vocational tests, the following tests are used at St. Mary's School for the Deaf to help develop students' profiles and assist in their school-to-work transition.

- WISC-III or the WAIS-III, depending on age, performance section only
- Test of Non-Verbal Intelligence-3 (TONI-3)
- Bender Visual Motor Gestalt Test
- Beery Developmental Test of Visual Motor Integration
- Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement
- Wide-Range Achievement Test
- Brigance Inventories of Basic and Essential Skills
- Stanford Achievement Test
- Gallaudet Diagnostic Test
- New York State Regents Exams

TESTS USED TO ASSESS STUDENTS AT ST. MARY'S SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

- Interest Inventories
- Reading-Free Vocational Interest Inventory
- Geist Picture Interest Inventory
- Self-Directed Search-Form E
- Aptitude Batteries
- Differential Aptitude Test
- Occupational Aptitude Survey
- Performance Tests
- Crawford Small Parts Dexterity Test
- Minnesota Rate of Manipulation Test
- Minnesota Paper Form Board Test
- Minnesota Spatial Relations Test
- Pennsylvania Bi-Manual Work Sample
- McCarron Assessment of Neuromuscular Development
- Learning Styles Assessment
- Learning Styles Inventory-Primary Version
- Adaptive Behavior Assessment
- McCarron-Dial Street Survival Skills Questionnaire
- Dial Behavior Rating Scale
- Situational Assessment
- Becker Work Adjustment Profile
- St. Mary's Work Experience Rating Form
- Functional Assessment
- Functional Assessment Inventory
- Work Sample Assessment
- Sorting Work Samples
- Packaging Work Samples
- Assembly Work Samples
- Transitional Assessment
- Transitional Behavior Scale (school version)

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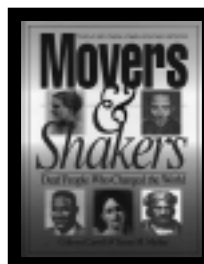
Find everything from books on deaf culture to learning sign language. Be sure to browse the novelty section for fun gift ideas!



*Information to help
enhance the community
surrounding deaf children.*



*Friends Are
Forever Angels.*



*Collection of 26
deaf success stories.*

ODY401



Shared Reading Book Bags Expand to Holiday Book Titles

Coming this fall, the popular Shared Reading book bags from the Clerc Center will add 30 new titles. The titles, all based on holiday themes, represent a variety of different cultures and traditions from around the world.

The Shared Reading book bags are designed to teach parents, caregivers, and teachers how to read to deaf and hard of hearing children using American Sign Language and strategies to make book sharing effective.

Each book bag contains a popular children's storybook, a videotape of the story signed in American Sign Language, an activity card with fun story-related ideas, and a bookmark with tips for reading to deaf children.

For more information on the Shared Reading Project, visit: <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/Literacy/order.html>.

Sharing Results Series Publishes First Two Titles

The Clerc Center recently published the first two papers in its Sharing Results series, *Shared Reading Project: Evaluating Implementation Processes and Family Outcomes*, by Linda Delk, Ph.D., and Lisa Weidekamp, B.S.W., and *A Look at Rural Families Weighing Educational Options: Identifying the Factors that Influence Parents as They Make Educational*

Placement Decisions for Their Children Who Are Deaf, by Vicki L. Wolfe, Ed.D.

Sharing Results is a series of occasional papers that describe the results of activities undertaken by the Clerc Center. These activities are determined through an extensive public input process involving parents, educators, service providers, and researchers throughout the country. Sharing Results papers may include descriptions of critical needs in

the priority areas of literacy, family involvement, or transition and the processes used to identify those needs; descriptions of the results of collaborations between the Clerc Center and other schools and programs to develop and implement innovative approaches to some of the persistent challenges in the

Clerc Center priority areas; and extensive descriptions of the evaluation of selected innovations.

The Sharing Results series may be found at: <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/Products/Sharing-Results/>.

Printed copies are also available. The first printed copy is available for \$3.00 to cover postage. Additional printed copies are \$5.00 each, plus shipping and handling. To request a printed copy, call 800-526-9105 or 202-651-5340 (V/TTY).

The Shared Reading Project: Evaluating Implementation Processes and Family Outcomes, by Linda Delk, Ph.D., and Lisa Weidekamp, B.S.W.

The Shared Reading Project (SRP) is built on the premise that hearing people can learn



MSSD Wins Again! Model Secondary School for the Deaf students won their second straight title in the Annual National High School Academic Bowl for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students, held at the Gallaudet University Kellogg Conference Center in April. Members of the winning team include: (front row, l-r) Robert McConnell, Michael Higgins, (back row, l-r) President Jordan, Coach Mike Peterson, Rachel Burton, Earl Mikell, Coach Bo Acton, and Teresa Ezzell, Mid-Atlantic Academic Bowl coordinator and coordinator of outreach programs and publications in the Office of Enrollment Services.

to read storybooks to deaf and hard of hearing children by observing how deaf adults do it. The evaluation of the project focused on the implementation of shared reading in diverse settings, the populations served, and the short-term outcomes for families. Information was evaluated to support SRP training courses and to lay the foundation for evaluating the long-term impact of the project on children's reading.

A Look at Rural Families Weighing Educational Options: Identifying

the Factors that Influence Parents as They Make Educational Placement Decisions for Their Children Who Are Deaf
By Vicki L. Wolfe, Ed.D.

The goal of this work is to increase understanding among educators, families, and other professional service providers about the concerns of parents and the information they need in making educational placement decisions for children who are deaf. Research addressing the factors that contribute to the placement choices made by parents remains extremely limited. Educators and professional service providers, as well as parents, can greatly benefit from information that focuses on the personal experiences and concerns of parents facing the task of making choices about their children's education.

Gallaudet National Essay Contest Winners

Reveal Turning Points in Their Lives

By Susan M. Flanigan

Five students—

Jessica

Bonagofsky, from Bethel High School in Spanaway, Washington,

Jeffrey Y.

Mansfield, from The Learning Center for Deaf Children in Framingham, Massachusetts, **Marcie Johnson**, from Chico Senior High School, in Chico, California, **Sadie RedBear** from South Dakota School for the Deaf in Sioux Falls, **Chris W. Miller** from Louisville Male High School in Louisville, Kentucky—won

top awards in the Gallaudet University National Essay Contest for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students.

Each year Gallaudet University, through its office of Enrollment Services and the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, sponsors a national essay contest for deaf and hard of hearing teenagers.

This year's contest theme of "A Life Turning Point" attracted 110 entries. The winning essays are published in the May/June issue of *World Around You*, the magazine published by the Clerc Center for

deaf and hard of hearing teenagers and online at the *World Around You* Web site: <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/WorldAroundYou/>.

This year's top contributors

covered a variety of topics, from learning from an innovative grandfather, to

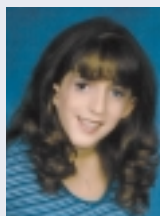
defying physical disabilities to become an athlete, to facing racism, to discovering a cultural identity as a result of a trip to Vietnam, to learning to get along with

co-workers and speaking out at

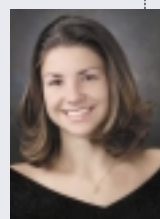
conferences. This year's scholarship prize winners were: first place, **Jessica**

Bonagofsky won \$1,000 for her essay, "Krista"; second place, **Jeffrey Y. Mansfield** won \$500 for his essay "Basement of Knowledge"; third place, **Marcie**

Johnson, won \$300 for her essay, "My Disability Cannot Stop My Feet." Two honorable mentions of \$100 were awarded, one



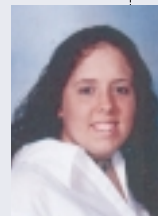
Jessica Bonagofsky



Marcie Johnson



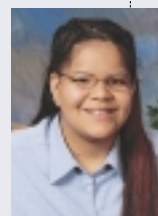
Chris W. Miller



Kelly Burdick



Jeffrey Y. Mansfield



Sadie RedBear



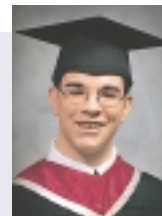
Johannah Bendall

to **Sadie RedBear** for "My Life Turning Point" and the other to **Chris W. Miller** for "Every Day of My Life."

Commendable awards were given to **Ann Pham** from Loveland High School in Loveland, Colorado, for "The Experience of a Life Time"; **Ann Nguyen Ngo**, from North High School in Torrance, California, for "My Turning Point"; **Johannah Bendall**, from Homestead High School in Ft. Wayne, Indiana, for "Grandma's Secret"; **Kelly Burdick** from Oswego High School in Oswego, New York, for "About-face"; and **Andrew M. Paluch**, from Northeast Catholic High School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, for "The Right Direction."

Butte Publishing, Inc. and **Gallaudet University Press** made generous donations of books related to Deaf culture to the winning students. The judges for this year's contest were: **Nancy Kensicki**, professor of

English at Gallaudet University, and **Jane Nickerson**, associate professor and **Karen Kimmel**, assistant professor of English at Gallaudet. Nickerson and Kimmel have written the *World Around You-Teacher's Guide* for several years.



Andrew M. Paluch



Ann Pham



Ann Nguyen Ngo

KDES to Participate in Star Schools Distance Learning Project

Kendall Demonstration Elementary School (KDES) has been selected as one of five schools to participate in the Star Schools Project. The Star Schools Project is a multi-state distance learning project that is funded by a five-year U.S. Department of Education Star Schools grant and is sponsored by the New Mexico School for the Deaf.

The purpose of the grant is to implement and test a proposed bilingual/ESL model for deaf students acquiring and learning two languages, ASL and English. The project, through a convergence of satellite, Internet, and CD-ROM technologies, utilizes an engaged learning approach to improve: instruction in math, science, and reading; teacher pre-service and staff development; and literacy development for adults, deaf children, and others who are typically underserved.

Two teachers from KDES, Katie Breedlove, lead teacher for Team 1/2/3, and Maribel Garate, ESL teacher/researcher, will participate in training sessions this summer to become mentors for seven teachers and staff members from KDES over a two-year period.

"I look forward to the exciting results this project will bring," said Katherine Jankowski, interim dean for the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center.

Transition Workshop Features MSSD Student Portfolios

Five seniors from the Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD) shared their knowledge on how to create personal portfolios at a workshop entitled, "Decision Making Time! Are You Ready?: Transition Planning and Making Informed Choices," sponsored by the Metropolitan Committee for Hearing and Speech Health. Ninety-five deaf and hard of hearing students from Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia, including 40 juniors and seniors from MSSD, attended the workshop.

The workshop focused on ways students can learn to make informed decisions about their lives after high school. One of the ways students can do this is by documenting their areas of strengths, interests, and experiences in a personal portfolio. The portfolios typically include samples of academic work, writing samples, resumes, descriptions of technology-related projects, and information on extracurricular activities and leadership experiences.

"This workshop was important because our focus on transition skills will help students successfully progress from high school to other higher educational programs or employment. All the knowledge students acquire while in school becomes less important if they do not have the transition skills that assist them in becoming independent and productive contributors to society," said Stephanie Marshall, audiologist at the Clerc Center and one of the workshop organizers.



New York Times Cites Clerc Center Web Sites

In an article called "Web sites for the Deaf are Really for Everyone," the New York Times acknowledges the role of Gallaudet University in research and leadership, saying, "There is hardly a Web site intended for deaf people that is not an eye-opener for the hearing."

The article cites several of the Clerc Center Web sites, including *Odyssey* online (<http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/Odyssey/>); Info to Go, with information related to deafness and young people (<http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/InfotoGo/>); and KidsWorld Deaf Net, with discussion groups, access to experts, and a Web library (<http://clerccenter2.gallaudet.edu/KidsWorldDeafNet/>).

Left: A student presents information about his portfolio.



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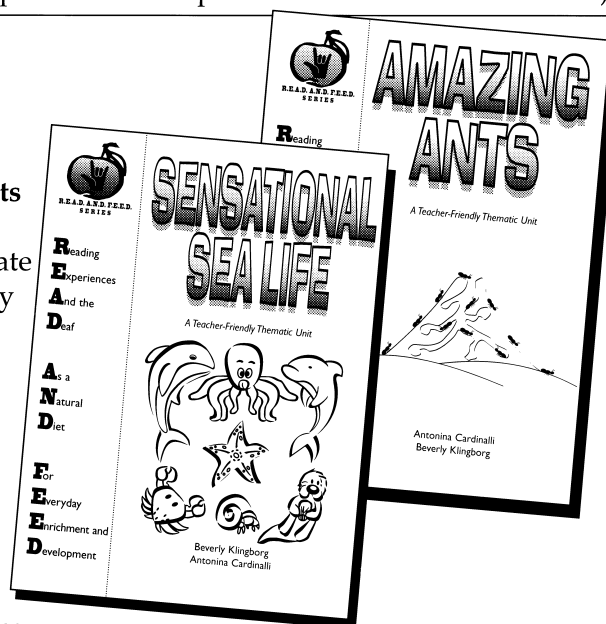
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These resources are thematic units, designed to incorporate language, math and other curriculum skills into the study of the ants and sea life themes. Written by teachers, the lessons provide unique opportunities to implement each of these elements. Students will be involved in several creative exercises, which the text outlines for the teacher in a cookbook fashion.

Language instruction is repetitive, visual, and taught in a myriad of contexts. Specific language goals are used repeatedly throughout the lessons. Pictures, drawings, objects, rubber stamps, stickers, labels, charts, transparencies, sentence strips, writing boards, slides, close-captioned programs, computers, photographs, and dramatizations can be used to make every aspect of a lesson visual.

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Software Review

By Rosemary Stifter

Literacy is an important component of every school's curriculum and it is hard to find software that integrates literacy within each of the curriculum subjects. These five titles do just that.

Low in Glitz; High in Conception

The Tracks and The Wise Stones

It does not have the glitz of commercial software but *The Tracks and The Wise Stones* is a well-conceived software program that addresses the needs of deaf and hard of hearing Hispanic students.

Lamar University, with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, has developed this CD-ROM in three languages: American Sign Language (ASL), English, and Spanish. The program takes a distinctive approach to building a bridge

are "hot words" one can click on to see the word fingerspelled and signed within the context of the story. The CD-ROM has games the students can play to reinforce vocabulary, grammar, sequencing, and reading comprehension skills. One game undertakes the difficult task of translating ASL to English. In this game, students watch a video in ASL and arrange corresponding words to make an English sentence. Also included are pages with information on Mexican fiestas.

What this program lacks in design, appealing colors, and graphics, it makes up for with its interactive activities that can be played after reading the folktale. There is no way to document each

individual student's progress, but a total score is given when the set of 50 problems is completed.

The Tracks and The Wise Stones, the first of the three CD-ROMs developed by Lamar University, has laid the groundwork for much needed bilingual/trilingual software programs.

Real Life Problems—and Solutions

Meet the Math Wiz

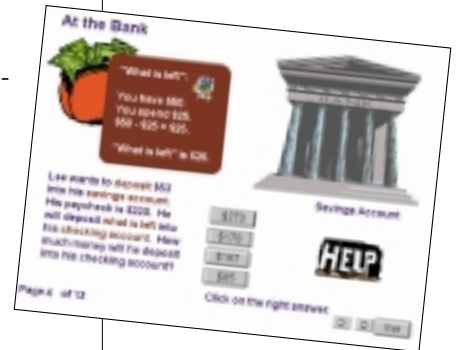
Meet the Math Wiz is the product of Lamar University's math literacy grant and is the first to use ASL to teach math concepts. The five-CD-ROM series is made up of five levels of math word problems ranging from grades 1.5 to 6.5. According to its developers, each CD corresponds to the Stanford

Achievement Test-9th edition math level on relevant grade-appropriate math topics. Each level has eight demonstration "real life" problems that can be accessed through English text and voice, Spanish text and voice, or American Sign Language, and 20 to 25 practice single-step word problems presented in English and Spanish text only.

This program has the same bilingual and trilingual features of the other materials from Lamar University. All of the directions are explained in American Sign Language, and students are presented with a four-point plan that they can use if they are stuck solving math word problems. In the eight demonstration problems, when solutions are incorrect, students can click the PLAY ME button to get an animated hint to the answer or click the SHOW ME button to get a signed explanation of the answer. When the demonstration problems are completed, the student can move on to the practice problems.

The program also includes a

glossary that lists a variety of math curriculum terms with definitions, but unfortunately, a separate videotape must be purchased at an extra cost for students to access these definitions in signs.



Integrating multicultural names and themes throughout the word problems increases the multicultural appeal. The design elements have greatly improved since Lamar University's first CD, but the inconsistency of format and fonts was a little distracting.

Overall, *Meet the Math Wiz* is a motivating and well-developed series of math CD-ROMs that can help deaf students who struggle with print become successful at solving math word problems and increase their literacy skills. The videos are well done and easy to understand and can benefit students who may not have American Sign Language support in their classrooms.

Also available is *Mexican American Folktales*, a set of two CD-ROMs that includes folktales such as "The Parrot that Could Speak Two Languages," "The Burro and the Wise Men," and "The Bilingual Cat."

To order *Meet the Math Wiz*, *The Tracks and The Wise Stones*, and *Mexican American*



between ASL and English, ASL and Spanish, and English and Spanish.

While learning about Mexican American culture through the two folktales, students can read the text in English or Spanish and then view the ASL translation. To emphasize vocabulary, there

REVIEWS

Folktales, contact Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse, a nonprofit organization out of Western Illinois University, at 800-322-3905.

Math Mysteries

Whole Numbers

Students explore exciting trips as they search for clues to solve the mystery in *Math Mysteries: Whole Numbers*, one of the titles in the Tom Snyder Production's Math Mysteries series.

Each program begins with simple, single-step problems and leads up to complex, multi-step operations. Students build skills in understanding each problem and collecting important information, solving the problem, and checking their results in the context of an exciting story.

By playing "Cruise Ship," students navigate around a virtual cruise ship in search of the Gruber chip. Along the

can also use the "Hints" tab for help.

Math Mysteries is innovative and highly motivating. It encourages kids to solve math word problems while solving a mystery and having fun. The two-CD set comes with a teacher guide and a Whole Class CD that can be used as a collaborative activity and for modeling the process of solving word problems.

For more information: <http://tomsnyder.com>, click on "products."

For Keyboarding Fun

Kid Keys 2.0

Knowledge Adventure designed *Kid Keys 2.0* to introduce keyboarding recognition and reading readiness to pre-K to second graders. This updated version includes closed captions that appear at the bottom of the screen. Though it may be difficult for most youngsters to understand the captions, they will be helpful for deaf teachers and deaf parents who assist them in using this software.

There are four levels within each of the five activities in this program. "Keystone Keyboard" teaches students beginning keyboarding skills such as key position and letter names. "Magic Mirror" introduces students to the home row position and incorporates typing skills previously learned. The only activity that may not be appropriate for deaf children is "Dragon Tunes," which uses music to teach students to type combinations of letters. "Castle Keys" is a

more advanced activity that requires students to type entire sentences with correct capitalization, spacing, and punctuation. My favorite activity is the "Mouse Chase." Here, kids click on mice to send them running to their holes, much to the relief of Keystone the Dragon, who is afraid of mice. In the higher



levels, students click and drag cheese to the dragon's mouth to feed him. It is a fun and challenging activity to strengthen mouse and keyboarding skills.

For more information: <http://www.knowledge.adventure.com>, type in key word "kids."

Grammar Practice for Adults

Skills Enhancer

Communication Service for the Deaf of Minnesota developed *Skills Enhancer* to provide an opportunity for deaf and hard of hearing adults to learn and practice reading, math, writing, and grammar skills necessary to succeed in postsecondary and employment settings.

Each of the four sections begins with simple concepts and tasks, builds to those that are more complex, and ends with a quiz that tests the skills the user has learned.

There is highlighted text throughout the sections that enables users to click on and pop up a definition, and sometimes a video, of the fingerspelled and signed words. I especially liked the math section, "Lee's Paycheck," which presents real-life word problems as Lee puts money in his savings account, pays bills, and goes shopping. A calculator integrated into the program would have improved the package. The reading section uses Aesop's Fables to teach reading comprehension and vocabulary. I wish the fables could be explained in American Sign Language instead of just using a limited number of English words.

The writing section has a very interactive lesson on how to write business letters, friendly letters, and resumes. The grammar section has a solid progression to teaching sentence structure but there is a lot of English text with little or no sign support for concepts that can be challenging for deaf persons. The design is simple and straightforward. The graphics and animations are good. The limited space on the CD-ROM does not allow for the inclusion of more American Sign Language in the videos; still use of it would have been an appreciated addition.

Developed to meet the needs of adult learners who are deaf or hard of hearing, this material could benefit English as a second language learners as well.

For more information: sdorn@c-s-d.org.



way, they interact with characters and face 17 word problems that provide clues to the mystery. Students can either listen to or read the captions for each character. Students follow steps, such as identifying the problem and solving the problem, using specific math operations. They

Literacy Training Program and Workshops

OPPORTUNITIES SPONSORED BY GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY
LAURENT CLERC NATIONAL DEAF EDUCATION CENTER

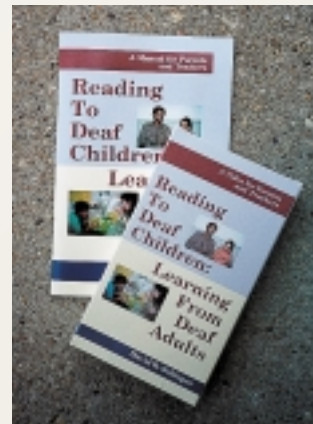
TRAINING PROGRAM

The Shared Reading Project: Keys to Success

This five-day training program is designed to prepare site coordinators to establish a Shared Reading Project in their own schools or programs. Of special interest to educators, administrators, and parent leaders, this workshop is based on the highly acclaimed program that matches deaf tutors with families and arranges regular visits to family homes where tutors teach parents and caregivers effective strategies for reading books with their children.

This training program teaches participants to:

- Use 15 research-based principles for reading to deaf and hard of hearing children
- Recruit, hire, and train deaf adults to be tutors
- Teach families how to participate in shared reading
- Work effectively with parents, caregivers, educators, and tutors
- Plan for and manage Shared Reading Project budgets, personnel, and evaluations.



WORKSHOP

Reading to Deaf Children: Learning from Deaf Adults

This effective workshop teaches techniques known as “the 15 Principles for Reading to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children.” These principles were developed through research that identified the successful strategies that deaf adults use when reading to deaf and hard of hearing children. Highly interactive, the workshop is available in a three-hour or six-hour format. Participants learn to recognize and apply the 15 principles, practice the principles, and gain new skills that can be immediately applied with their own children in the home or classroom. This workshop is of special interest to parents, caregivers, and educators. It is available on request from the Clerc Center and offered regionally.

- September 27** Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Midwest Region
- October 3** California School for the Deaf-Fremont
Western Region
- October 13** San Antonio, Texas, Midwest Region
- October 19** Atlanta, Georgia, Southeast Region
- November 2** Worcester, Massachusetts
Northeast Region
- November 2** Kentucky School for the Deaf
Southeast Region
- November 9** Copper Mountain, Colorado
Western Region
- November 10** Indiana School for the Deaf
Midwest Region

WORKSHOPS

TRAINING PROGRAM

Read It Again and Again

"I want to read it again!" our children exclaim.

This urge to "read it again and again—and again" is part of the natural process of building skills in understanding narrative, an essential step that young children go through as they prepare to learn to read. The Clerc Center offers a workshop that teaches participants how to successfully read the same book to children over successive days, incorporating a wide array of learning activities. These activities deepen children's understanding of text and provide opportunities to improve their reading and writing skills.

Of special interest to classroom teachers and administrators, this workshop is the latest to be offered by the Clerc Center.

- September 28** Sioux Falls, South Dakota
Midwest Region
- October 20** Atlanta, Georgia, Southeast Region
- November 3** Worcester, Massachusetts
Northeast Region
- November 3** Kentucky School for the Deaf
Southeast Region
- November 10** Indiana School for the Deaf
Midwest Region



Video and printed manual for teachers and parents are sold separately and may be ordered directly from the Clerc Center.

For more information

CONTACT EITHER THE CLERC CENTER, AT THE ADDRESS BELOW, OR THE GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY REGIONAL CENTERS, AT THE ADDRESSES THAT FOLLOW.

MID-ATLANTIC REGION

Patricia Dabney
Laurent Clerc
National Deaf
Education Center
Gallaudet University
Washington, D.C.
(202) 651-5855 (TTY/V)
(202) 651-5857 (Fax)
training.clerccenter@gallaudet.edu

MIDWEST REGION

Mandy McElroy
Gallaudet University
Regional Center
Johnson County Community
College
Overland Park, Kansas
(913) 469-3872 (TTY/V)
(913) 469-4416 (Fax)
mmcelroy@jccc.net

SOUTHEAST REGION

Chachie Joseph
Gallaudet University
Regional Center
Flagler College
St. Augustine, Florida
(904) 829-6481 ext. 299 (V)
(904) 829-2424 (TTY/Fax)
chachiejos@aol.com

WESTERN REGION

Debbie Golos
Gallaudet University
Regional Center
Ohlone College
Fremont, California
(510) 659-6268 (TTY/V)
(510) 659-6050 (TTY)
(510) 659-6033 (Fax)
dgolos@ohlone.cc.ca.us

NORTHEAST REGION

Michael Wallace
Gallaudet University
Regional Center
Northern Essex Community
College
Haverhill, Massachusetts
(978) 556-3701 (TTY/V)
(978) 556-3125 (Fax)
michael.wallace@gallaudet.edu

PACIFIC REGION

Nancy Bridenbaugh
Gallaudet University
Regional Center
Kapi'olani Community
College
Honolulu, Hawaii
808 734-9210 (TTY/V)
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E-MAIL: *training.clerccenter@gallaudet.edu*

Transition Planning It's the Law!

By Celeste Johnson

Celeste Johnson, M.A., is the mother of three children, one of whom is deaf. She is an advocate for parents of deaf children, working independently and with an attorney. Her thought-provoking paper, "How the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Applies to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students" may be found at the Clerc Center's Web site: <http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu>.

Why is a transition plan important?

One of the most powerful, but under-used and poorly understood components of a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) is the transition plan. This plan—delineating the goals and activities that facilitate the student's transition from school to postsecondary life—is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for all students with disabilities. IDEA mandates that a coordinated set of activities to promote "movement from school to post school activities" be developed and implemented for disabled students. This plan may be developed for students as early as age 12 and must be developed no later than the age of 16.

Under IDEA, transition planning may include "post secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation." Transition planning may

impact directly on students' instructional plan, related services, community experiences, and his or her development of employment and other post school adult living facilities. In some cases, it may involve the acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.



As with every part of the IEP, the development team first needs to know a wide and profound variety of information about the student for whom the plan is being developed. Therefore, the team should arrange for the student to have testing in

advance of the development of the plan. In addition to the usual academic achievement tests, the team should consider aptitude testing, interest testing, a vocational assessment, a work-skills evaluation, or an on-the-job evaluation. Only with this information can team members have sufficient knowledge to develop an appropriate transition plan.

IDEA requires that the transition plan include "a statement of the interagency responsibilities or any needed linkages." This requirement contributes to the plan's power. Unlike other parts of the IEP, which are implemented exclusively by educational agencies, the student's transition plan may be implemented in whole or in part by state, local, or community agencies. Each

state's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency could be made responsible to conduct interest, aptitude, and vocational testing, as well as evaluations of work-skills and on-the-job evaluations. Other agencies, such as the Department of Health, Deaf

Unlike other parts of the IEP, which are implemented exclusively by educational agencies, the student's transition plan may be implemented in whole or in part by state, local, or community agencies.

Service Center, or an Independent Living Center, may also be responsible to implement parts of the plan. Representatives of these centers should be invited to participate on the transition team and be actively involved in the planning.

Another unique aspect of the transition component of the IEP is the amount of student input. The student and parent must be given written notice that a transition plan will be developed at the IEP meeting. The team must consider the student's preferences. Thus, if a student wishes to pursue post-secondary studies rather than employment, the team must consider this information in formulating the transition plan.

The transition plan may be a powerful influence in determining the student's academic program. An IEP team must first identify the level of academic performance a student will need to demonstrate in order to fulfill his or her post-secondary goals. Then if a particular academic area needs to be addressed, a specific plan must be developed and implemented to meet those needs. For example, if a deaf or hard of hearing student needs to improve reading and writing skills to make a successful transition from the school setting to his or her post-school goal or activity, the plan may require that the student receive tutoring from a deaf or hard of hearing adult.

Similarly, when the team addresses the student's independent living needs in the transition plan, it may be appropriate to involve community agencies to arrange services for or instruction in:

- driver's education,
- budgeting,
- use of public transportation,
- banking,
- voter registration,

- registration for the draft (which all males, regardless of disability must do by age 18),
- use of community facilities,
- handling insurance,
- making appointments,
- filling prescriptions, and
- other routine daily living skills that most hearing students acquire by incidental learning.

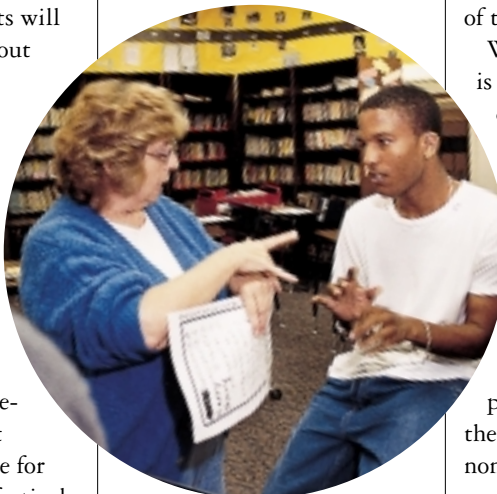
In addition, some deaf and hard of hearing students will require information about assistive devices, information, and services that are unique to deaf and hard of hearing individuals, including: use and maintenance of adaptive equipment, TTYs, closed captioning, wake-up systems, visual alert systems, how to arrange for interpreters, how to effectively use interpreters, how to use community service and referral agencies, keyboarding skills, and the use of fax machines and e-mail, as well as computer instant messaging and chatting.

Self-advocacy: Plan on It

A key component of the transition plan is the development of the student's self-advocacy skills. When a student reaches his or her majority, states may, with appropriate notice of intent, transfer rights under IDEA from the parents to the student. Training to fully exercise these rights, with the commensurate enormous responsibility, is critical. Often this training may be implemented most

successfully by adults who are themselves deaf or hard of hearing or arranged through a service agency for deaf individuals.

Employment is a major focus of transition planning, and employment for individuals with disabilities has been traditionally addressed by VR. Therefore, it



may be wise to ensure that the student becomes a client of the local VR agency. Some of the most common services provided through VR—resume development, job-seeking skills, and interview techniques—are often provided in group settings that are not designed for deaf and hard of hearing persons. Special programs or instruction may be necessary.

The principles underlying IDEA—that all students receive a free, appropriate, and public education—also apply to the transition plan. Programs and services required by the plan must involve no cost to the parents or student. IDEA assigns financial responsibility to the educational agency.

Finally, it is critical to remember that a student's right to free, appropriate, and public special education ends when the student graduates from high school with a regular diploma or reaches age 21. Whether or when a student will receive a regular high school diploma must be determined by the IEP team and may be addressed as part of the transition plan.

While transition planning is complex and requires in-depth knowledge of the student, it is one of the most powerful tools for addressing a student's needs. With effective transition planning, parents and students have the power to develop nontraditional programming and to use the resources and services of noneducational agencies.

*Photographs by John Consoli
Models: Coletta Fidler, Hatem Zarrouk, and Harry Carter*

Guides on the Web

When parents and educators look at all of the required components, developing and implementing a transition plan may seem like an overwhelming task. People interested in transition planning may wish to reference:

<http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/sped/tri/TPGuideTP.html> for an excellent transition planning guide

<http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/sped/tri/TPWorksheet.htm> for a very helpful transition plan worksheet from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



Upcoming Conferences and Exhibits

September 28-30, 2001
Virginia State Conference for Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing Persons and Their Families and Friends, Williamsburg, Va.
 Contact: Alan Miller, Co-chair, gcsi@oasisonline.com; <http://www.gcsicom.com/>.

September 29-30, 2001
Maryland Deaf Festival 2001, Gaithersburg, Md.
 Contact: Deb Shaw, MDFExhibits@aol.com.

September 29-October 2, 2001
National Symposium on Childhood Deafness, Sioux Falls, S.D. Contact: Jay Innes, NAD Education Center Director, 814 Thayer Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20910-4500; (301) 587-1791 F; innes@nad.org; <http://www.nad.org>.

October 7-9, 2001
31st Annual Conference of the National Black Child Development Institute, Miami Beach, Fla.
 Contact: NBCDI, (202) 833-2220, (800) 556-2234; <http://www.nbcdi.org/>.

October 23-26, 2001
18th Annual Training Conference of the Region IX Head Start Association, Anaheim, Calif. Contact: Mariana Medrano, (800) 273-4110.

November 9-11, 2001
"Access in the 21st Century: Issues and Challenges," The Colorado Symposium on Deafness, Copper Mountain, Colo. Contact: Marybeth, (719) 578-2225 T/V; mberens@cldb.org.

December 2-4, 2001
17th Annual DEC International Early Childhood Conference

on Children with Special Needs, Boston, Mass.
 Contact: DEC Conference Office, (410) 269-6801, (410) 267-0332 F; pfaff@gomeeting.com or lechner@gomeeting.com.

2002
46th Biennial National Association of the Deaf (NAD) Conference, Washington, D.C. Contact: Anita B. Farb, NAD Headquarters, (301) 587-1789 T, (301) 587-1788 V, (301) 587-1791 F; nadinfo@nad.org.

April 4-6, 2002
BreakOut VII: A National Conference on Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Deafness, Raleigh, N.C.
 Contact: Brad Trotter, (919) 420-7968 T, (919) 571-4980 V, (919) 571-4984 F; brad.trotter@ncmail.net; <http://angelfire.com/nc2/BreakOutVII/index.html>.

July 8-13, 2002
Deaf Way II, Washington, D.C. Contact: GUKCC 3117, Gallaudet University, 800 Florida Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20002-3695; (202) 651-6112 T, (202) 651-6064 V, (202) 651-6113 F; info@deafway.org; www.deafway.org.

July 29-August 4, 2002
National Convention of the American Association of the Deaf-Blind, Columbus, Ohio.
 Contact: (301) 588-6545 T, (301) 588-8705 F; aadb@erols.com.

2004
7th International Congress of Hard of Hearing People, Helsinki, Finland. Contact: International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH); cshaw@compuserve.com.

COMING UP!

The next issue of *Odyssey* will focus on:

Family Involvement

In a world of change, encouraging the involvement of the family is the only way to ensure that students maintain an ongoing sense of themselves and their self-worth. In the next issue we explore ways that the Clerc Center has found to systematically involve families in our students' lives.

HONORS

MSSD Athletic Scholar Honored

The Women's Sports Foundation recently presented Bellamie Bachleda, a senior at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD), with the Scholar Sportswoman Award for her athletic and academic achievements. Bachleda was one of only two winners among the 23 female athletes honored by the Foundation at a ceremony held in conjunction with National Girls and Women in Sports Day.

Bachleda's athletic prowess extends from volleyball to softball to basketball.

"Bellamie is one of our hardest workers. She always strives for the best," said Michael Weinstock, athletic director at the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center. "I wish we could have 100 Bellamies here. It's a big time honor—and she very much deserves it!"

Bachleda has been a key member of MSSD's three consecutive national deaf championship

volleyball teams.

Next year, she hopes to play volleyball for Gallaudet University.

Bachleda also shines in the classroom. She maintains a 3.4 grade point average and was a member of MSSD's champion Academic Bowl team.

In 1999, Bachleda placed second in the Miss Deaf Teen pageant.



Bellamie Bachleda
Scholar athlete

MSSD Teacher Recognized as Leader in Distance Learning

By Susan M. Flanigan

Mary Ellsworth, science teacher/researcher at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD), has won recognition as a leader in distance learning. The United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA) recognized Ellsworth for the innovative SOAR-High Earth System Science project that she developed with representatives of University High School in Irvine, California, and the Indiana School for the Deaf in Indianapolis.

The USDLA Distance Learning Award for Excellence in Distance Teaching is given annually in recognition of outstanding individuals who have creatively used distance education technology to inspire learning. The recipient must have taught a course, series, or unit in a distance learning format using an imaginative approach, well-designed instructional strategies, and demonstrated rapport with the program participants.

Ellsworth developed the course work for the project on Web pages. Students and teachers in distant classrooms shared the on-line curriculum and interacted with each other via on-line discussion and videoconferencing.

"The students learned to do science as scientists do it—a process that involves reading, learning, experimenting, analyzing, writing, collaboration, and sharing information," said Ellsworth. "They conducted background research, developed a question and a testable hypothesis, used visualizations of data, and published their findings on the Internet. The classes used the Internet to access the on-line curriculum and exchange information with each other."

Ellsworth wishes to express her appreciation to her SOAR-High colleagues for their support of this project: Sarah Raymond, MSSD science teacher; Teresa Huckleberry, Indiana School for the Deaf science teacher; Chris Gonzales, University High School science teacher; and David Synder, professor in the Chemistry and Physics Department at Gallaudet University.

"I'd also like to extend a special thank you to all the wonderful MSSD students for their participation and assistance, and their willingness to investigate collaborative distance learning as a new learning style," said Ellsworth. For more information about the SOAR-High project, visit the Web site at: <http://csc.gallaudet.edu/soarhigh>.



Mary Ellsworth, Teacher Extraordinaire

An international conference and festival reflecting the past and imagining the future.

Wow! No one had ever seen anything like it before - more than 5,000 people assembled from around the world for a celebration of the lives of deaf people. It was instant kinship with people from other countries; it was exhilaration in the common bond; it was strength in numbers; it was The Deaf Way. -*Gallaudet Today* magazine, regarding the first Deaf Way event in 1989.

Deaf Way II statistics

- Thousands of participants
- 400 performers, actors, dancers, and artists
- 250 conference presentations, featuring deaf leaders, sports figures, educators, and scholars
- 200 exhibitors and vendors
- CEUs offered

Plenary Speakers

- Rune Anda, adoption advocate, Norway
- Barbara Brauer, psychologist, USA
- Danny Delcambre, chef/businessman, USA
- Clark Denmark and Frances Elton, sign language educators, United Kingdom
- Laurene Gallimore, educator/civil rights advocate, USA
- Kritsana Lonluea, student leader, Thailand
- Joseph Murray, youth specialist, USA
- Wilma Newhoudt-Druchen, member of Parliament, South Africa
- Elena Silianova, educator/researcher, Russia
- Maria Tanya de Guzman, mental health counselor, Philippines
- Heidi Zimmer, rock climber/adventurist, USA

Cultural Arts Venues

- D.C. Convention Center
- Gallaudet University
- Kennedy Center
- Smithsonian
- University of Maryland
- Local art galleries

Back by popular demand

- INTERNATIONAL DEAF CLUB - at the D.C. Convention Center
- Admittance limited to officially registered participants only
- Interior designed by deaf artist Chuck Baird
- Multiple large video screens
- Excellent sightlines
- Entertainment every night
- Air conditioning
- Disc jockey
- Large dance floor
- Plenty of comfortable seating

Register Now Save Money!

Full registration includes:

- Admittance to all conference sessions
- Cultural arts activities, exhibits, and showcases
- Opening performance and tickets to THREE theatrical performances
- International Deaf Club
- Vendor exhibits
- Kids Fun Center
- Shuttle bus service between D.C. Convention Center, Gallaudet University, Union Station, and all cultural arts events venues
- Conference program book
- DWII bag

Hotels

Hotel reservations may be made by contacting the Deaf Way II/Washington Convention Center and Visitors Association (WCVA) Housing Bureau at: 108 Wilmot Rd., Suite 400 Deerfield, IL 60015 USA
U.S. Phone: (800) 492-7886 (Voice only)
U.S. Fax: (800) 521-6017
International Phone: (847) 940-4211
International Fax: (847) 940-2386

Grand Hyatt Washington

1000 H Street, NW
Rate (per room/per night): \$159 single/double; \$184 triple/quad
Deaf Way II Headquarters and located across the street from the D.C. Convention Center

Hyatt Regency Washington, D.C. on Capitol Hill

400 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Rate (per room/per night): \$120.00 single/double; \$145.00 triple/quad
Closest to Gallaudet University and the site of some DWII cultural events

Renaissance Washington, D.C. Hotel

999 9th St., NW
Rate (per room/per night): \$107 single/double
Located across the street from the D.C. Convention Center

Online Now!



**July 8-13, 2002
Washington, D.C.
USA**

www.deafway.org

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