



DIVISION ON DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

## DODHH E-Newsletter for the Week of December 1, 2012

### New Federal Program Set to Distribute Communications Technology to People With Vision and Hearing Loss



#### Bureau of Services for Blind Persons Will Lead Michigan's iCanConnect Campaign

Watertown, MA – Many thousands of Americans who have combined loss of hearing and vision may soon connect with family, friends, and community thanks to the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program. Mandated by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act (CVAA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) established this new program to provide support for the local distribution of a wide array of accessible communication technology.

The FCC is also funding a national outreach campaign to educate the public about this new program. The iCanConnect campaign will be conducted jointly by Perkins, located in Watertown, MA, and the Helen Keller National Center in New York City.

The iCanConnect initiative seeks to educate people about the availability of communications technology – from screen enlargement software and video phones – to off the shelf products that are accessible or adaptable. In Michigan, the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons has been certified by the FCC to distribute equipment to citizens who are low-income and suffer from combined hearing and vision loss. Through the website [www.iCanConnect.org/Michigan](http://www.iCanConnect.org/Michigan), individuals, their family members and caregivers will find information about the program including who qualifies, what equipment is available, how it is being distributed and installed and how to receive training. This information is also available by calling 1/800 825-4595.

The National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program was created to ensure people who are blind and deaf-blind can remain safe and healthy, hold a job, manage a household, and contribute to the economy and the community.

“With the right technology, people with disabilities can link to information and ideas, be productive, and move ahead,” said Steven Rothstein, President of Perkins. “Perkins’ most famous student, Helen Keller, exemplified the potential of a person who is deaf-blind. We are proud to have a role in this transformational program.”

The CVAA, championed by Congressman Edward J. Markey of Massachusetts and Senator Mark Pryor of Arkansas, acknowledges that advances in technology can revolutionize lives. Nearly one

million people in the United States have some combination of vision and hearing loss. Persons with combined loss of vision and hearing as defined by the Helen Keller National Center Act whose income does not exceed 400 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines are eligible to participate in the new program.

“The mission of the Helen Keller National Center is to enable each person who is deaf-blind to live and work in his or her community of choice,” explains Executive Director Joe McNulty, adding, “This critical technology access program accelerates those efforts, but only if people know about the resources. iCanConnect is poised to get the word out, coast to coast.”

Additional information is available through the FCC at [www.fcc.gov/NDBEDP](http://www.fcc.gov/NDBEDP).

**About the Partners: Perkins School for the Blind**, the first school in the U.S. for students with visual impairments, provides education and services to help build productive, meaningful lives for more than 200,000 children and adults in the U.S. and more than 60 countries worldwide. Founded in 1829, Perkins pursues this mission around the world, in the community and on its Watertown, Massachusetts, campus. Learn more at [www.Perkins.org](http://www.Perkins.org).

**Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults**, authorized by an Act of Congress in 1967, is committed to enabling each person who is deaf-blind to live and work in his or her community of choice. Headquartered in Sands Point, New York, the Center provides support services for youth and adults who are deaf-blind, their families and the professionals who serve them through a network of field offices throughout the United States. Learn more at <http://www.hknc.org/>.

**Michigan** – Bureau of Services for Blind Persons  
Cindy Caldwell, 201 N. Washington Sq., 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl.  
Lansing 48909  
(517) 335-7124 V/TTY  
[caldwellc@michigan.gov](mailto:caldwellc@michigan.gov)

The DODHH supports this program and worked with the Bureau of Services for Blind to obtain the funding.

## Detroit, Flint Deaf Students Receive Special Pre-Christmas Trip

*By Michael Wayland | [mwayland@mlive.com](mailto:mwayland@mlive.com)*

Dearborn–Morningstar Kennedy wasn't in school Thursday, but it most likely won't put her on Santa's naughty list.

The 9-year-old from the Michigan School for the Deaf in Flint was on a unique field trip to Dearborn to visit the man in red himself and receive a few other surprises.

Kennedy was one of about 100 students, chaperones and teachers from the Flint school and Ralph J. Bunche Academy in Detroit to attend the pre-Christmas event to see Santa, who signed to them.



“Sometimes he signs, but that is cool he did this time,” Kennedy said through an interpreter at Fairlane Town Center. “I like it.”

The event was co-sponsored by Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment and Bloomfield Hills-based Taubman Centers, which owns Fairlane Town Center, 18900 Michigan Ave. in Dearborn, to promote a new movie technology.

Before the children saw Santa they also viewed the new movie "Ice Age: Continental Drift" that featured a new signing picture-in-picture feature by deaf actors Sean Berdy, star of ABC Family's "Switched at Birth," and stage and film actress Amber Zion.

The students also received a special performance from Detroit deaf hip-hop artist Sean Forbes.

“I loved what I did today because growing up I was very fortunate to be in a family that always shared music with me,” Forbes said. “It was really nice to be here today to share that with these other kids.” Forbes sang “Santa Claus is Coming to Town,” “Jingle All the Way” and “All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth” as the children clapped and signed along.

Nikki Beaver, who teaches fourth and fifth graders at MSD, said all the events were great for the students – particularly the new movie technology and signing Santa.

“Having a signing Santa does mean a lot to them,” she said. “It’s a hearing world and having a Santa that can communicate with them is just awesome.”

Students at the Detroit school also enjoyed themselves, according to Julie Julien, who has taught deaf children for 13 years.

“They sponsored us to come here, so that’s awesome,” she said. “Especially since they closed our school ... it’s a neat experience.”

The Detroit Day School for the Deaf was closed earlier this year by Detroit Public School Emergency Financial Manager Roy Roberts. Many of the children and faculty, including Julien, are now at the Ralph J. Bunche Academy.

The private event for the students Thursday morning was part of “Signing Santa Day” at Fairlane Town Center and other Metro Detroit shopping centers. The private visit was followed by an open-to-the-public event that will continue until 8 p.m.

Catherine O’Malley, Fairlane Town Center general manager, said the mall was proud to have hosted the children, as well as Santa.

“I think it’s just wonderful to see the children and see their responses,” she said. “It’s a wonderful experience and we hope they keep it as a fond memory.”

Other public “Signing Santa Day” events in Michigan are being held until 9 p.m. at Great Lakes Crossing Outlets, 4000 Baldwin Road in Auburn Hills, and Twelve Oaks, 27500 Novi Road in Novi.

**United Artists Commerce Stadium Debuts Captioning Glasses**



Awesome! Cool! Fantastic! Accessible! are just a few of the words that can be used to describe Sony's Captioning glasses. United Artists Commerce Stadium, located in Commerce Township, recently acquired the new glasses.

No more months of waiting for a popular movie to come out with captions on DVD, no longer are deaf and hard of hearing people limited to seeing a specific movie being shown with open captions.

The glasses are a huge advancement in entertainment access for people that are deaf and hard of hearing. Options for seeing a captioned movie were limited to the middle of the week or at specific times with captioning. By donning these glasses, deaf and hard of hearing moviegoers have access to every digitally-encrypted movie being shown at the theater. Imagine being able to see any film you want, any time it's being shown.

The theater has 10 viewing units. The units not only provide captioning but also have audio descriptions for the blind. The glasses are capable of 3D viewing when a movie has 3D formatting.

Located at 3555 Haggerty Road in Commerce Township, the theater has a history of providing open captioning accessibility to deaf and hard of hearing moviegoers in the area.

The technology is like rear window captioning but the captions appear on the glasses lenses. The captions also move when the viewer moves, so captions may be viewed on the bottom or top of the screen. I also found it interesting when heading to the concession stand I could still see the captions if I didn't wander too far, a definite plus for not missing the conversation or sound while getting popcorn!

## Risky Business



The Division recently learned of a situation in court where a hard of hearing non-certified person was asked to interpret for a deaf person. Court interpreting is considered a high-risk situation. So, the possibility exists that harm could occur. The deaf person could lose their freedom or other rights.

The DODHH does not advise using non-qualified interpreters, nor in waiving your right to a qualified interpreter. If an interpreter is not available, tell the court you need an interpreter. The court can arrange for another date and it is your right to have an interpreter.

## Trix Bruce is coming to Lansing



**Saturday, February 9, 2013, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm**

ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS: Whoa! Train Zoom Gone. Did you see what she signed? What did she mean by that and how can I say it in English?

English Equivalents clarifies how idiomatic language may be effectively translated, and offers technical vocabulary associated with particular signs.

English Equivalents in ASL will help you confidently continue the flow of information exchange from ASL to English and from English to ASL.

Trix Bruce is an approved RID CMP Sponsor for Continuing Education Activities. This professional studies program offers 0.7 CEUs for Classifiers at the Little/No to Some Content Knowledge Level. (Demo: [English Equivalent: "Old Hat"](#)) (0.7 RID CEUs available)

This will take place at the Courtyard by Marriott in Lansing, located at 2710 Lake Lansing Road, Lansing 48912.

Handouts will be provided. The workshop will be presented in ASL. There will be a door prize! Lunch is on your own. There are only 25 seats left, so don't delay!

Registration Fee: \$75 per participant, postmarked by January 7, 2013; \$85 per participant at the door

\*\*\* School vendor/W9 Form processing: Please use the "at the door" price for your paperwork.

EARLY BIRDS: The **first five** participants for all workshops who register with payment before **December 15, 2012** will receive a free DVD.

Pay Pal and checks are accepted; please make checks payable to Trix Bruce and mail to:

Trix Bruce, 1429 D Ave PMB 362, Snohomish, WA 98290

For details on refunds, cancellations, and special accommodation policies, please send an email to [info@trixbruce.com](mailto:info@trixbruce.com).



RSVP to confirm your place before February 7: [Info@trixbruce.com](mailto:Info@trixbruce.com).

**DODHH NOTE:** Trix Bruce did not request BEI units for this event. BEI certificate holders that participate may present the certificate of attendance showing RID CEUs to DODHH.

# Third Annual Silent Weekend - February 22 – 24, 2013

## Workshops for ITP Students/Graduates

### **Less Sign is More!** - Jennifer Berrigan & Joanne Forbes

English adds and substitutes words to add adjectival and adverbial information to inflect the meaning. For ASL, inflection is seen in a different way. It can be found in changing the sign, itself, along with incorporating facial expressions. This workshop will focus on increasing the participants' awareness with relations to variations in the sign movements and also with incorporation of the non-manuals to add rich, complex meaning to the information to be portrayed... all without any additional signs!

### **"Train Go Sorry"...what does that mean?! ASL Idioms** - Erica Allen

Participants will learn the definition of idioms and how they are used in ASL. We will discuss frequently used ASL idioms, and how they can be accurately interpreted into English. Discussion will include the rationale for using ASL idioms in our interpretation, how to approach ASL and English idioms with conceptual accuracy and resources for further professional growth.

### **The Parameters of a Sign** - Brenda Dawe

Signing is more than just "manual (hands) communication." Dr William Stokoe proved that in his research back in the 60s when he observed and recorded in linguistic terms of "Dez" (hand shape and palm directions), "Tab" (location) and "Sig" (changing of the movement). But this notation is very complex and is often saved for advanced linguistic studies. It also omits the most important part of all, expression. In this workshop participants will learn a simpler method of notation to adopt as a tool for identifying and glossing new vocabulary without depending on English.

### **The ESL Learner and Consumer** - Teresa Venton

The participant will gain an understanding of the ESL/EFL (English as a Second or Foreign Language) population in Michigan as well as the effect it may have on interpreting to the Deaf and hard of hearing population. Participants will also discuss how this will ethically affect them in the classroom and in the community through given scenarios. We will also practice interpreting paragraphs in different ways, how an ESL consumer may understand.

### **Sign Olympics** - Kristin Dart, Scot A Pott and Katie Prins

ITPs and graduates will be split into teams and prepare different performances that will be given at each station, with a total of 10 stations. All interpreters will be assigned as judges to specific stations.

### **What is the Code of Ethics?** - Scot A Pott

This workshop will introduce RID's Code of Professional Conduct including the seven tenets will be introduced. Role plays, cases and arguments will be given.

**Actual schedules will be distributed when you check-in the first night of Silent Weekend.**

## Workshops for Certified Interpreters

### **50 Things Deaf Consumers Don't Tell Interpreters** - Brenda Boaz-Pond

This workshop will explain the interpreter's roles with various types of customers and focus on customers' education levels and backgrounds. The presenter had interviewed various Deaf customers why they do not share 50 obstacles with interpreters. This workshop will include activities to fulfill the answers to BICS/CALP. The interpreter will be able to assess, evaluate and measure the consumers' background, meet consumers' needs and develop critical thinking skills for effective interpreting.

### **How to Steal Deaf Children's Eyes While Interpreting** - Sandi Boomer

This workshop will focus on facial expressions, body language and handshapes when interpreting and it will help interpreters to meet their needs, including stealing children's eyes. Also, it will help you to understand why you need to interpret differently than you were taught.

### **ASL Idioms, Expressions and Phrases** - Tim Johnston

This workshop explores the various expressions we see and encounter in ASL and how to properly use and interpret them into the target language. It will be a hands-on workshop where the participants will learn the most used expressions and phrases in ASL.

### **Mentors for Sign Olympics Participants** - Kristin Dart, Scot A Pott and Katie Prins

This workshop will focus on mentorship for interpreters who want to become mentors with interpreters-to-be and they will be trained how to review, touch up and improve with a list of strengths and weaknesses.

### **Representing Consumers: How Does Your Inner CPC Come Out?** - Katie Prins

Intensive examination of CPC Tenets #1-4 about how interpreters exhibit their conscious and subconscious mind, behavior, and hands with the consumer while on the job.

## Workshop for Everyone

### **DINGO** - Scot A Pott

Dingo will be introduced to the participants as an ice breaker with new players at their table. They will understand why it is the most popular, all-time favorite game in the Deaf community.

**Note:** All certificates will be distributed on Sunday. Presenters will sign interaction sheets after 11:30 on Sunday morning. Sign in at each workshop so it matches your certifications and sheets on Sunday.