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Steve Hamerdinger, Editor

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Signs of Mental Health



DEAF CARE WORKERS HIRED FOR BAILEY DEAF UNIT



Bailey Deaf Unit Deaf Care Workers. Back row: Tony Overstreet, Yvonne Sankey. Front Row, left to right: Margo Hutto, LaShawn Washington, Denise Hugie

Four new direct care workers have been hired at the Bailey Deaf Unit, it was announced recently, bringing the total to 6 with two more positions remaining to be filled. With addition of the new workers it is projected that unit operations will expand to 12 hours a day, 7 days week sometime in December. Full 24/7 operations will commence upon filling the final two positions.

"Finding and hiring staff with the requisite skill level in language fluency has been a major hurdle that we have had to clear before the Bailey Unit can become an around the clock program. We are getting very close now to full-

time programming capability," said Allen Stewart, Director of Greil Psychiatric Hospital. It is projected that operations 12 hours a day, 7 days a week will commence by the end of the year. Stewart went on to comment that, "The Bailey Unit and its programs are ushering in a new era of treatment opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing psychiatric patients in Alabama."

The newly hired Deaf Care Workers are Denise Hugie, Margo Hutto, Tony Overstreet, and Yvonne Sankey. LaShawn Washington was also transferred

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DEAF CARE WORKERS HIRED FOR BAILEY DEAF UNIT

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from Mental Health Worker to Deaf Care Worker. Additionally, Jennie Reeves was hired to fill the remaining Licensed Practical Nurse position.

The Deaf Care worker position was created to address the problem of recruiting a pool of acceptable candidates for working on the deaf unit under the Mental Health Worker job class. Among the differences

between the two classes was the inclusion of a higher pre-requisite skill for American Sign Language. According to Acting Program Director Steve Hamerding, "The higher ASL fluency requirement effectively means that we are attracting more native signers. This is not saying that you have to be deaf to work on BDU, but you do have to be fluent."

The recent hires bring the total BDU staff to 18. In addition to two more Deaf Care Workers, one more nurse position needs to be filled. 

FORMER REGIONAL COORDINATOR TAPPED TO DIRECT BDU



Scott Staubach

Scott Staubach will become the Program Director of the Bailey Deaf Unit officials announced recently. He will begin his duties December 18th.

Staubach, who was the Region 1 Coordinator of Deaf Services from 2003 - 2005, has been the program director of the mental health program at Journey in Charlotte, North Carolina for the past year. Before that he was the Clinical Coordinator for Deaf Services at the Community Council of Nashua. He decided to return to Alabama to be closer to his three children.

Staubach left ODS at the end of 2005 to help set up a new program in Charlotte. "Working in a community – based program and building it from scratch taught me a lot about organization, policy making, and overseeing the daily operations of a program," he remarked. "I realized, however, that I would better use my skills and experience working in a structured and tight knit environment such as BDU.

It is because of the growing national reputation of ODS that Staubach is excited to return. "It's not only because of the anticipated success in programming at BDU and its commitment to providing the BEST mental health services, but also the expressed desire of Mr. Hamerding and Mr. Stewart to develop a national model for other deaf units. Ultimately, this will be a professional goal that will drive me in leading this program.

Staubach received his baccalaureate degree from Gallaudet University (Class of 1992) and his master's degree in counseling psychology from Antioch University in New Hampshire. He is also an instructor of American Sign Language



DEAF SERVICES REGIONAL CENTERS

Region 1: Northern Alabama

Wendy Lozynsky

Mental Health Center of
Madison County
4040 South Memorial Pkwy
Huntsville, AL 35802
(256) 533-1970 (Voice)
(256) 533-1922 (TTY)

Region 2: Central Alabama

Shannon Reese, Coordinator

J-B-S Mental Health Center
956 Montclair Road, Suite 108
Birmingham, AL 35213
205-591-2212 (Voice)
205-591-2216 (TTY)

Region 3: Wiregrass Region

Liz Hill, Coordinator

Montgomery Area
Mental Health Authority
101 Coliseum Boulevard
Montgomery, AL 36109
(334) 279-7830 (Voice)
(334) 271-2855 (TTY)

Region 4: Southern Region

Beth Metlay Coordinator

Mobile Mental Health Center
2400 Gordon Smith Drive
Mobile, AL 36617
251-450-4353 (Voice)
251-450-4371 (TTY)



ODS, BRITONS FIND COMMON GROUND IN MENTAL HEALTH INTERPRETING

Finding that programs had more in common than they differed was the lesson of a day-long consultation between the Office of Deaf Services and the deaf program at the Alpha Hospital in England. Clare Shard, interpreter coordinator for the renowned program for the deaf in the Bury, Lancashire, came to Montgomery to consult with Charlene Crump, the mental health interpreter coordinate for Alabama.

Ms. Shard, who learned of the Mental Health Interpreter Training program while attending the World Congress on Mental Health and Deafness in Madrid, Spain was in the United States on holiday and wanted to see for herself what all the excitement was about. In turn, she shared with Ms. Crump her experiences working as a mental health interpreter in England. Two things quickly became obvious.

Britain has been very progressive in providing direct care to deaf people with mental illness. Their inpatient services have well over 100 beds in addition to a very good network of outpatient services. They lack, however, adequate training for interpreters.

Secondly, no matter what language interpreters are using – and British Sign Language is completely “foreign” to Americans – their problems and frustrations are remarkably similar.

It is certainly hoped that this visit will be the beginning of a fruitful partnership with sister agencies across the ocean, one that will allow



FOCUS ON THE TEAM

LaShawn Washington

My name is LaShawn Washington and I am one of the Bailey Deaf Unit Deaf Care Workers. I have worked for Greil Memorial Psychiatric Hospital since March 2006. I basically supervise and assist the patients while they are working toward their goals of stabilizing their mental health and managing their medication once discharged from the hospital. This is my first experience working with people with mental illness. I have no regrets of my decision of working in this field. I have come to enjoy my job and it is a pleasant to work with the patients.

Prior to working at Greil, I had a couple of jobs in the Washington, DC metro area. I love working with children so one of the jobs was as a Child Care Provider at Kendall Demonstration Elementary School. There I supervised infants, toddlers and school age children while their parents took American Sign Language class.

I was born and raised in Richmond, VA, going to mainstream schools where I took classes with hearing students. My first deaf culture experience was when I entered Gallaudet University in 1996. I was treasurer of Delta Zeta Sorority. I graduated in 2001 with a BA in Social Work. I moved to Alabama with my husband and two little boys right before Hurricane Katrina hit. Lots of people say Alabama is a “boring country state” but I have grown to love living in Montgomery. There are a lot of family events and it’s the perfect environment for my sons, one of whom has Autism.

In my spare time, I enjoy reading novels by various authors, shopping, photography, exploring the state and spending time with my family.

each to profit from the expertise of the other. Our British cousins can teach us quite a bit about direct services, and we can teach them as much about interpreter training.



Charlene Crump and Clare Shard discussing American and British Interpreting at an all day visit to ODS programs in Montgomery.

As I See It

By Steve Hamerdinger



The other day I was thinking about the journey of the past three years and its culmination with the opening of the Bailey Deaf Unit for full operations. The “Long and Winding Road” came to me as an apt analogy.

For those dear readers who are of a certain age, the reference will resonate on several levels. Not only does the lonesome melancholy of the lyric itself speak to us, but also the process by which the song became ingrained on our collective consciousness also reflects many of the same emotions that those of us who have labored thus far have experienced.

First, a bit of history, for those who for cultural or chronological reasons would have no background from which to understand the reference. The phrase is the title of a song from the Beatles album “Let It Be.” The covert and overt strife among the Beatles during the production of this album led to their break up in 1970. The catalyst of this was the remixing of the song to incorporate elements that Paul McCartney had never intended. He was frankly flabbergasted that such liberties would be taken with his composition by the producer without consulting him.

The song was written sometime in 1969. McCartney, despondent over the tension that then existed among the Beatles was in retreat on his Scottish farm. There he took great solace in the peace of the highland countryside, and often enjoyed motoring along the twisting roads there. There are two distinct “storylines” in the song. One, the obvious one, laments an unrequited love. But the sublime storyline is how life is never a straight line. To get where you wish to go you must indeed travel the “long and winding road.”

And so it was for Deaf Services. From those bright and sunny days in January 2003 when everything seemed easy and success was just around the corner, through the dark days of mid – 2005 when it seemed we would never get the Bailey Deaf Unit off the ground, it has been a very long and winding road indeed.

The simple concept of opening a unit staffed with people who are able to effortlessly communicate with the residents seemed to be such an easy thing for people to grasp. Easy that is, except for the keepers of the state’s convoluted rules about who can be hired to do what jobs. It took nearly 18 months to convince state personnel that it would not be possible to hire people who were fluent signers, who could meet merit system rules for mental health workers who were and would be willing to work for the entry-level pay the position affords. To this we had to add the dearth of professionals who were qualified to take the key clinical positions and who

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ODS HIRES NEW ASSISTANT

The Office of Deaf Services was granted its own Administrative Support Assistant this fall in recognition of the rapidly expanding duties that are performed by the Central office and regional staff. Mary Joyce Carvana joined the staff in this role on November 1st.



Joyce Carvana at her desk

“My father named me Mary after his sister (whom he calls a Saint), said Carvana. “When I got older (in my 20s), I was surrounded by a whole lot of Mary’s, and I was not feeling very saintly so I started telling people to call me Joyce.”

Carvana started working for the state in October 1981, with Department of Youth Services. During her tenure at DYS she attended Court Reporting School, and graduated in June 1994. She came to Mental Health in October 1994, working with the Alabama Council for Developmental Disabilities, a position she held for 12 years.

“I think its exciting to be able to or to even want to make a change. I believe that working with ODS will

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CRUMP JOINS MENTAL HEALTH INTERPRETING EXPERT FORUM

Charlene Crump, Statewide Mental Health Interpreter Coordinator, was invited to join a core group developing a Mental Health Interpreting Expert Forum hosted by Northeastern University Regional Interpreter Education Center November 9-10, 2006. The conference was held at The Warren Center in Ashland, Massachusetts.

invited individuals from across the country to Massachusetts to participate in an expert focus group.

The forum which looked at effective practices in mental health and substance abuse interpreting, and the domains and competencies that will become the foundation for the program that will be developed. The panel included mental healthcare providers, mental health interpreters, and consumers to be part of this important step in an interactive process aimed at establishing a viable set of learning objectives for the graduate level

The intended audience for the certificate program will be certified interpreters who have a BA/BS and substantial community experience, and who need to know more in order to move into mental health interpreting.

As a follow-up, a core group attending this meeting was asked to hold a local expert focus group to involve more perspectives and to expand on and continue to solidify the product. Alabama DMHMR was selected as one of the core sites to continue the work beyond this November meeting. 



Forum Participants, left to right, Back row: Cathy Cogen, Steven Chough, Zarita Araújo-Lane, Rico Peterson, Neil Glickman, Charlene Crump, Dan Langholtz.
Front row: Arlyn Anderson, Sue Scott, Bob Pollard.

As part of the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Center's new Regional Interpreter Education Center plans, Northeastern University is putting together a four-course online graduate certificate program in mental health and substance abuse interpreting. As part of this process, Northeastern

certificate program.

Invited participants included: Arlyn Anderson, Zarita Araújo-Lane, Steven Chough, Charlene Crump, Neil Glickman, Dan Langholtz, Robert Pollard, and Sue Scott. Facilitators were Rico Peterson and Cathy Cogen.

ODS HIRES NEW ASSISTANT

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be a wonderful change, as I learn more ways of communicating," she stated. "When DMH/MR Personnel called me and told me that ODS wanted to hire me, I was so excited, because my prayers had been answered. In the interview, Mr. Hamerdinger said that I might have to dust off my Stenograph Machine, and that was music to my ears. Communication is a passion of mine, and to be able to use my court reporting skills would be a plus."

Carvana says that she is very family oriented. "I love the fact that I have a large and very supportive family." In addition to spending time with her son/family, she likes to go to estate sales, reading, writing, and planning fun and educational activities for her nieces and nephews. "I guess my greatest pleasure would be giving. I love the look on someone's face when you have taken the time and thought to match the gift with the person. It's an awesome feeling."

As I See It

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had the vision to look beyond the stereotype of what the uninformed think Alabama is like. In spite of a burgeoning reputation for excellence in mental health, people still seem to have the idea that Alabama is backward. It's gets old being the Rodney Dangerfield of states. Nevertheless, the people who are on the team are wonderful and by and large they have found Alabama is a great place to live. At the risk of badly mangling mixed metaphors, "My home's in Alabama, no matter where I lay my head... my home's in Alabama, southern born and southern bred."

While I'm thinking about that seminal Alabama hit, the lines, "Could it be the satisfaction of bein' understood/ When the people really love ya and let you know when it's good," serve as an appropriate entrée to recognizing the people who helped make it happen. It is unlikely that we would have reached the destination without the ongoing encouragement of Commissioner John Houston and Associate Commissioner for Mental Illness, Susan Chambers (both of whom, I'll wager, fully appreciate the analogies.) Allen Stewart, the Facility Director at Greil and Katrina Nettles, who was the interim director there have also been steadfast supporters and constant sources of encouragement. Of course, we have to acknowledge many others as well. DMH/MR Human Resources staff was always patient with us, even when we were not always patient with them. Henry Irvine, Marilyn Benson, Joan Owens, Tish Hendricks and others in Human Resources deserve a special hat tip. So does Otha Dillihay, Associate Commissioner for Administration,

who championed our cause through hidebound state bureaucracy.

Early BDU pioneers, Frances Ralston, Brian McKenny, Mona Nealy, Christine Giancola, LaShawn and Marcus Washington, Cindy McCall, Pat Howard, Renee King, and Marjorie Childs remained steadfast despite the fits and starts through much of late 2005 and early 2006.

Of course, true Beatles fans know that the dark melancholy of "Let It Be" gave way to the pure joy of "Abbey Road." In particular, George Harrison's signature "Here Comes the Sun" (even as it was then nigh sunset for the Beatles) seems to sum up the rewards of staying the course and completing the journey. "It seems like years since it's been clear," but, "Here comes the sun," and **As I See It**, "it's all right."

are currently over ten years old. The current SPPs can be found at <http://www.rid.org/spp.html>.

Committee Chairperson, Robyn Dean announced that Shannon Reese, Region II Coordinator, Charlene Crump, Mental Health Interpreter Coordinator and Brian McKenny, Bailey Deaf Unit Staff interpreter from the Office of Deaf Services will be joined by Roger Williams, Arlyn Anderson, Bob Pollard, and Sue Scott on this exciting project. They will be contributing authors to the future RID SPP.

Educational Interpreting Committee

In another important change, RID announced that it will recognize individuals who have passed the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) written and performance tests at the level of 4.0 or higher as certified members of the association. RID has also appointed the first members of the Educational Interpreting Committee to address a number of issues related to this initiative as well as a host of issues related to educational interpreting that need to be addressed by the organization.

From a large pool of excellent applicants, RID extended invitations to the several individuals to be on the new Educational Interpreting Committee. Liz Hill, ODS Region II Coordinator will join D'Mita Boyd, Pam Brodie, Susan Brown, Kim Corwin, Dr. Bern Jones, Lisa Schaefermeyer, and Donna Snyder.

ODS Staff Invited to Help Develop RID Standard Practice Papers

Recognizing the growing expertise of the staff of the Office of Deaf Services, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) invited several staff members to participate in two different committees charged with developing new protocols and standard practice papers.

Interpreting in Mental Health Settings

The Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation had several staff's name submitted to the RID Professional Publications Committee (PPC) as experts in the area of Mental Health Interpreting to revise the Standard Practice Paper entitled: "Interpreting in Mental Health Settings." The PPC was charged by the Board of Directors to update and revise the RID Standard Practice Papers (SPPs) that

FOURTH ANNUAL MENTAL HEALTH INTERPRETER INSTITUTE DRAWS NATIONWIDE INTEREST

The fourth annual Mental Health Interpreter Training Project Interpreter Institute was held September 12 – 17 in Montgomery, Alabama. A total of 50 participants from 21 different states took part of the 40 – hour training. Among the states represented were California, Hawaii, Wisconsin, Oklahoma, Ohio and Florida. Many of the participants expressed interest in attending after participating in workshops offered by ODS staff throughout the country.

Notable this year was a large contingent of Deaf Interpreters. While many people mistakenly use “Deaf Interpreter” to refer to hearing people working between ASL and English, this is a highly specialized niche in interpreting. Deaf Interpreters are people who are deaf (usually) and who have been specially trained to work with deaf individual with severe language limitations. Six Deaf Interpreters attended, including two from California.



Internationally renowned Bob Pollard returned for the fourth straight year.

As in years past, a nationally – renowned faculty was on hand, anchored by Bob Pollard and Robyn Dean, of Rochester, New York. Steve Hamerdinger and Charlene Crump of ODS were also on hand. New this year was Steven Hardy-Braz of North Carolina. Other faculty members included Shannon Reese, Brian McKenny, Kathy Seifried, and Lee Stoutamire.

This year’s training also included the addition of psychopharmacology taught by the Division of Mental Illness’

Coordinator of Pharmacology, Carter English. The quality of the faculty was well noted among the participants. “Top-notch speakers were engaging and encouraged us to think,” remarked one.

A great deal of behind the scene work was needed to make the training a success. Particular thanks are due to ODS intern Kristine Klopp.

The six-day training allowed participants to earn up to 4.875 CEUs. What was particularly impressive was this very high caliber of participants. There were



Much hands on practice was provided during the training. Here Charlene Crump gives feedback to participants.

also more applicants than slots available.

Participants seemed to be enthused about the quality of the conference. “This was the BEST program I’ve ever seen. If I had known this program would be this good, I would have *shouted at the top of my lungs* encouraging other interpreters and counselors to join me!” said one participant. Another remarked that, “The tools and models you have provided are invaluable and will stay with me for the rest of my career.” 



2006 Interpreter Institute Participants.

POSITIONS OPEN WITH DEAF SERVICES

OFFICE OF DEAF SERVICES

INTERPRETER, Region III (Montgomery) Region II (Birmingham)

SALARY RANGE: 73 (\$33,241 - \$50,396)

QUALIFICATIONS: Combination of training and experience equivalent to a two-year degree plus three years of full-time experience interpreting in a variety of different settings. Must be licensed or eligible or licensure by the Alabama Licensure Board of Interpreters and Transliterators. Must be certified or eligible to receive certification as a QMHI (Qualified Mental Health Interpreter) or its equivalent. Certification must be obtained within 24 months of hire.

THE BAILEY DEAF UNIT

The following positions are based at Greil Memorial Psychiatric Hospital, 2140 Upper Wetumpka Road, Montgomery, AL. 36107

DEAF CARE WORKER (Two Positions)

SALARY RANGE: 50 (\$20,277 - \$28,682)

QUALIFICATIONS: High School Diploma or GED - Entry Level Position. Must have Advanced level signing skill in American Sign Language (ASL) as measured by a recognized screening process, such as SLPI. Thorough knowledge and understanding of Deaf Culture is required.

INTERPRETER

SALARY RANGE: 73 (\$33,241 - \$50,396)

QUALIFICATIONS: Combination of training and experience equivalent to a two-year degree plus three years of full-time experience interpreting in a variety of different settings. Must be licensed or eligible or licensure by the Alabama Licensure Board of Interpreters and Transliterators. Must be certified or eligible to receive certification as a QMHI (Qualified Mental Health Interpreter) or its equivalent. Certification must be obtained within 24 months of hire.

MENTAL HEALTH RN – I

SALARY RANGE: 73 (\$33,241 - \$50,396)

QUALIFICATIONS: Graduation from an accredited School of Nursing or graduation from an accredited four-year college or university with a degree in Nursing. Possession of or eligibility for a certificate of registration to practice nursing as issued by the Alabama Board of Nursing.

Preference will be given to candidates having some experience in working with the deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

Proficiency or willingness to learn American Sign Language to achieve an "Intermediate" level of signing skills as measured by a recognized screen process, such as SCPI within three years

For more information on any of these positions, or for application, please contact:

Steve Hamerdinger
Director Office of Deaf Services
Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation
100 North Union Street
Montgomery, AL 36130
Steve.Hamerdinger@mh.alabama.gov
(334) 353-4701 (TTY)
(334)353-4703 (Voice)

GROUP HOMES

Group homes in Birmingham and Mobile are always accepting applications for direct care staff and group home coordinators.

Mental Health Technicians (Birmingham)

(\$16,242.00 to \$17,904.00)

QUALIFICATIONS: High School Diploma or GED, valid driver's license and car insurance.

For more information about the Birmingham positions, contact: Malissa Cates, Program Director
JBS Mental Health Authority
956 Montclair Road, Suite 108
Birmingham, AL 35213
205-591-2212 (Voice)
205-591-2216 (TTY)
mcates@jbsmha.com

BEHAVIORAL SPECIALIST FOR DEAF HOME (Mobile)

QUALIFICATIONS: Bachelor's degree in mental health discipline. Must be deaf or proficient in American Sign Language and have a thorough understanding of deaf culture. Must have and maintain a valid Alabama driver's license. Must have knowledge of adult psychiatric service provision.

For information about the Mobile positions, contact:

Beth Metlay, Coordinator
Mobile Mental Health Center
2400 Gordon Smith Drive
Mobile, AL 36617
251-450-4353 (Voice)
251-450-4371 (TTY)
251 450 4323 (Fax)
Beth.Metlay@mh.alabama.gov

Mental Health Interpreter Positions in Alabama

Salary Range: \$33,241 - \$50,395

The Office of Deaf Services has several mental health interpreter positions available. A combination of training and experience equivalent to a two-year degree plus three years of full-time experience interpreting in a variety of different settings. Must be licensed or eligible for license by the Alabama Licensure Board of Interpreters and Transliterators. Must be certified or eligible to receive certification as a Qualified Mental Health Interpreter or its equivalent. Qualified MH Interpreter Certification must be obtained within 24 months of hiring date.

<http://www.mh.state.al.us/admin/downloads/ApplicationForEmploymentExemptClassification.pdf>



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