

SIGNS OF MENTAL HEALTH

Emergency Plans

- Mitigation
- Preparedness
- Response

***Are You Prepared
For Emergencies?***





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Signs of Mental Health
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Editor's Notes:



What a remarkable spring this has been. Our staff has been incredibly busy with special events ranging from workshops with local community groups to presentations at national conferences. They have been on crisis calls and, of course, their usual heavy schedule of seeing regular clients. Their work is not going unnoticed! Throughout this issue you will find short features about various awards and honors collected by the staff. We are a proud of them as can be.

Of course you will find all the usual features this month, such as Focus on the Staff, The ODS Bookshelf, and others. Several of our readers wrote back to tell us that they liked the new design. Roxanna Bender, writes, "What a wonderful bulletin. I love how you are focusing on recognizing the staff and also what they do for such a special population." Rev. Jay Croft tells us that he, "very touched by your review of John Doe #24 in ODS' newsletter. Thank you!" To our readers we say, Thank you for taking the time to tell us what you think. *✍*

LOZYSKY NAMED COSDA PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

Region I Coordinator, Wendy Lozynsky, was named *Professional of the Year* for 2007 at the annual meeting of the Council of Organizations Serving Deaf Alabamians. Steve Hamerdinger was on hand to make the presentation. In his presentation he said,

"Wendy Lozynsky is one of those people whose compassion shines through her work daily. I cannot count the times she has gone to bat for her consumers, going the extra mile, doing far more than is necessary. It is this compassion that keeps people coming to her. It is this compassion that compels her to explore every possible avenue to help the consumer, even when all doors appear to be closed. It is this compassion that inspires all of us in ODS to do better at our jobs."



Steve Hamerdinger presented Wendy Lozynsky her COSDA Professional of the Year Award

Lozynsky, who has been Region I coordinator since April 2006 has made a tremendous impact in Northern Alabama. Congratulations to Wendy. *✍*

ON THE COVER:

Master Sgt. John Garner, of the Illinois State Police talks about how First Responders think and react in emergency situations at the Emergency Responders and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community training on March 30th.

ODS, CEPIN TEAM UP FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAINING

The Office of Deaf Services and the Community Emergency Preparedness Information Network, part of the Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Incorporated, teamed up to conduct a day long training joining the Deaf Community and First Responders in the Gulf Coast area. More than 50 people were in attendance.

hard of hearing community to identify issues and understand each others perspective as it related to disaster preparedness.” She praised the work of the presenters and the participants. “I was very impressed by the openness of the workshop participants and their genuine desire to work together to make sure the deaf



**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)



An overflow crowd of more than 50 participants packed the conference room at the Alabama Institute for the Deaf Blind—Mobile Regional Center. Attendees represented five states and numerous organizations at the Federal, State and local levels.

The March 30th program, “Emergency Responders and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community: Taking the First Steps to Disaster Preparedness,” was held at the Mobile Regional Center of the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind. The course, taught by Master Sgt. John Garner, of the Illinois State Police and Lise Hamlin, Director of Access and Advocacy at the Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons, is designed to get the First Responder groups and the Deaf Community to understand disasters and disaster preparedness from each other’s perspectives. According to Tammy Adams, State Coordinator for Deaf Services at the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, “The workshop provided a unique opportunity for emergency responders and the deaf and

and hard of hearing communities are included in emergency preparedness process.”

The participants, roughly half of whom were deaf or hard of hearing, represented Alabama Departments of Public Health, Mental Health, and Rehabilitation Services. Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi had representatives at the training. The agencies were very diverse as well. Both the Federal and Alabama State Emergency Management were represented as were numerous first responder, including, Port of Mobile Police, the Federal Tribal Police for the Creek Indians, and several rural county and Parish Sheriff Departments.

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FOCUS ON THE STAFF:

SANDRA REESE



My name is Sandra Reese, and I live in Birmingham, AL. I started working for JBS MH/MR Authority on August 16, 2006, as a Mental Health Technician. I currently work at the deaf-blind group home providing direct care to the consumer.

I was born in Thomasville, AL on November 8, 1966. I became severely ill at the age of 3 and became hearing impaired (deaf). I was raised by Marie Dixon, my grandmother.

I started school at the age of 6 and went to a public school named Thomasville Elementary until my ninth grade year. At that time, I transferred to the Alabama School for the Deaf in 1982 and graduated with a diploma. I also got a certificate for commercial sewing in 1986 from E.H. Gentry Technical Facility.

After I learned a few things about the outside world, I spent a few months with my family in Thomasville before moving to Montgomery in August of 1986. While in Montgomery, I lived in the dorms at Elks Memorial Center and attended training at the Janice W. Capilouto Center. After receiving my certificate, I began working and became independent within a few months.

In 1987, I moved to Birmingham and I have been working different jobs ever since. I really enjoy my work with the consumer as I take him out to various activities and help him to his activities of daily living. I have learned about the consumer's unique sign language and copy his language while working with him. This is a source of happiness for the consumer. He loves for me interact with him and cook good homemade meals for him. This makes the consumer very happy and playful. Through my work with the consumer, I have a deep sense of joy. This is the life of an independent and hard working woman.

"I have learned about the consumer's unique sign language and copy his language while working with him. This is a source of happiness for the consumer. He loves for me interact with him and cook good homemade meals for him."

MARREN WINS RESPECT AWARD AT RECOVERY CONFERENCE



Alabama's consumers and survivors recognized Dawn Marren with the 2007 RESPECT award at the 15th annual Recovery Conference in Shocco Springs, Alabama.

The RESPECT award is an honor that goes to consumers, family members or professionals who stand out in their advocacy for consumers and the respect with which they treat them. Marren was nominated by David Giudice, a consumer who saw first hand her commitment to helping deaf consumers in

their recovery. "Ms. Marren is a hard-working, dedicated, talented and highly-respected interpreter for deaf mental health clients. She also shows great sensitivity and concern for her clients, going out of her way to help those in need of an interpreter."

Marren, who joined ODS in May, 2005, has been an integral part of the development of consumer focused services in the Northern part of the state. 

ODS STAFF HONORED AT AAD CONFERENCE



“In an unusual night that had people thinking of the 2004 Academy Awards when the Lord of the Rings swept so many Oscars, three of AAD’s top award went to Deaf Services staff”

ODS Staff has been recognized for outstanding work by several organizations this Spring. Seated, right to left: Steve Hamerdinger, AAD Outstanding Service; Charlene Crump, AAD Citizen of the Year; Standing, right to left: Dawn Marren, Office of Consumer Relations RESPECT Award; Liz Hill, Certificate of Appreciation, President of Montgomery Chapter of AAD; Shannon Reese, AAD President’s Award; Wendy Lozynsky, COSDA Professional of the Year.

Full Story on Page 9

NOTES AND NOTABLES

BDU Director **Scott Staubach** married **Ileen Moore** of Atlanta, GA on Saturday March 12th. Congratulations.

ODS had a significant presence at the **American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association Conference** in St. Louis where they provided interpreter support and exhibited. **Dawn Marren, Brian McKenny, Beth Metlay** and **Liz Hill** represented ODS. **Steve Hamerdinger** is the out-going President of ADARA.

Charlene Crump, Liz Hill and **Brian McKenny** have all had papers accepted for presentation at the RID national conference in San Francisco in August.



Beth and Liz at ADARA

Liz Hill was tapped to chair the Mental Health Subcommittee of the National Association of the Deaf.

Region I Coordinator, **Wendy Lozynsky**, was nominated for the Heroes in the Fight award this past spring. She attended an awards banquet, along with several ODS colleagues, on May 22nd.

Charlene Crump was elected to the Board of the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association in their Recent Election.

NATIONAL DEAF HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATED IN BIRMINGHAM



LaShawn Washington, BSW, one of the presenters at the Legacy and Literacy Conference, is a Deaf Care Worker at the Bailey Deaf Unit

“The individuals she spoke about were clinical people who were deaf themselves and who had invested a lifetime of work into building better mental Health services for people who are deaf.”



Dr. Scoggins confers with ODS Director Steve Hamerdinger about Mental Health Services

Advocates, students, and other interested people gathered in Birmingham April 13th and 14th to mark National Deaf History Month with “Celebrate Deaf Legacy and Literacy”, a two – day conference. The event was organized by Paul Ellis of the International Institute on Deaf Studies in cooperation with the Birmingham Public Library, the Alabama Association of the Deaf, Alabama Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Alabama Black Deaf Advocates and the Office of Deaf Services.

Director of the Office of Deaf Services and President of the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association, Evon Black, Sprint Account Manager for Relay Alabama and others.

Approximately 70 people were on hand at the McWane Center on Saturday, April 14th to hear speakers talk about topics ranging from technology in the future to famous deaf mental health professionals. Paul Ellis, the Founder/



NAD President Bobby Beth Scoggins addresses advocacy issues with the audience at the “Celebrate Deaf Legacy and Literacy” conference in Birmingham.

The conference, which organizers hope will become an annual event, was developed to reach out to a diverse community increasing their awareness of the rich deaf history. It was billed as an occasion to celebrate the legacy and many contributions made by people who share the personal, familial or societal deaf experience and to develop within young deaf or hard of hearing students a sense of their own legacy and their self worth.

On Friday, April 13th, a large number of American Sign Language students from the Birmingham area joined members of the Deaf Community to hear from key deaf leaders, including Bobby Beth Scoggins, President of the National Association of the Deaf, Steve Hamerdinger,

CEO of the International Institute of Deaf Services, chaired the program and gave the closing address. Other speakers included: Bobbie Beth Scoggins, National Association of the Deaf President, who talked about advocacy, Pamela Kay Baldwin, Historian/ Presenter who spoke about famous Black Deaf people, and Shawn Richardson, Graphic Artist who examined art history and deaf artists.

On the mental health side of things, Terry Dahlgren, Interpreter/Graphic Artist, explained what “deaf interpreters” are and how they work. A Deaf Interpreter is a native or native – like user of American Sign Language

As I See It




The other day I happened to read an article from the Stuff.com.nz website that caught my attention. The story was about an experimental procedure to insert an auditory brainstem implant. Trumpeted the sub caption, "A Christchurch girl left deaf by meningitis is due to undergo pioneering and risky surgery today, in an operation her surgeons and parents hope will restore her hearing and also her independence." OK, I'm hooked. Let see what else the story had to tell us.

We find out that the three year old girl, named Jorja, had already had a cochlear implant, which did not help her. To be fair, she was deafened by meningitis at about age one, thus has some exposure to sound in her first 11 months or so. This would have made her a good candidate for a CI. Fine so far.

Then we read that the surgeon has done only 20 of these procedures and none on children – let alone some one as young as Jorja. For those of us who are innately averse to going under a knife in the first place, the idea of having a risky surgery conducted by a surgeon who has limited experience with the procedure is disquieting. "Whilst we hope that the procedure will be quite safe for Jorja there is a small possibility of very serious complications," said surgeon Robert Briggs, head of otology at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital. You mean like snipping the wrong nerve or something like that? *Nota Bene*: this isn't the cochlea we are talking about – this is the brainstem.

The parents felt pressured to make a decision in a short time frame. "Not having the luxury of time had made the decision to go ahead with relatively new surgery with little documented results all the more difficult. Basically they said to us, if we don't do this operation now, there won't be much point in doing it two years down the track," the story quoted Jorja's mother, Megan Steele. "On the one hand we have a very healthy, happy child who is doing really well and is intelligent. On the other hand there is a possibility we could make it better for her, but unfortunately it is not a guaranteed thing..."

"The procedure is far more risky than, say, placing implants in the cortex to try to restore some vision. "If you damage the cortex it's not that big a deal. But at the brainstem level every neuron you damage could damage function," says Bob Shannon of the House Ear Institute in Los Angeles, the surgeon who pioneered the procedure. "We took 15 years to convince ourselves that this could be done safely."

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NATIONAL DEAF HISTORY MONTH

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who has training in working with very dysfluent people through the use of visual-gestural communication. LaShawn Washington, Deaf Care Worker at the Bailey Deaf Unit, talked about several pioneers of mental health services to deaf people. The individuals she spoke about were clinical people who were deaf themselves and who had invested a lifetime of work into building better mental Health services for people who are deaf.

The conference was the result of a collaboration of organizations working together. The Alabama Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf provided interpreters, as did the Office of Deaf Services. ODS also underwrote Ms. Washington's talk. 



Ms. Washington discusses the role of deaf leaders in the development of mental health services for deaf people

NATIONALLY REOWNED MHIT CELEBRATES 5TH YEAR WITH LARGEST CROWD EVER

The fifth annual mental health Interpreter Institute was held in Montgomery, June 4 – 8, 2007. It was attended by 56 participants from 20 states. This is largest attendance ever and the most diverse geographically. It was again guided by Mental Health Interpreter Coordinator Charlene Crump, with assistance from several ODS staff members.

A large group of Deaf Interpreters was on hand this year. Deaf Interpreters are people who are deaf themselves and function as intermediary interpreters with individuals with severe language dysfluency. This year we had seven “DIs” attending.

Many of the previous year’s faculty returned, led by Dr. Robert Pollard and Robyn Dean, both of Rochester, NY.

of interpreting in general and mental health interpreting in particular.

Roger Williams, the Director of Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People at the South Carolina Department of Mental Health, anchored the training with his work on practical application of theories and approaches.

The Faculty was rounded out by Carter English, Pharm. D., Kathy Seifried, Charlene Crump, Brian McKenny and Steve Hamerdinger.

A special session was conducted for the Deaf Interpreters led by Shannon Reese. The session was focused on building a communication “toolkit” for working with individuals with minimal

“I haven’t learned so much in such a short amount of time since cramming for finals in college. Thank you for making it such a wonderful experience.”



Dr. Pollard makes a point during the Interpreter Institute as Lee Stoutamire interprets.

Their Demand – Control Schema is considered by many to be the state of art in understanding how best to frame the task language skills.

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ODS STAFF HONORED AT AAD CONFERENCE

At the closing banquet of its 47th biennial conference in Birmingham on June 16th, the Alabama Association of the Deaf honored several ODS staff members.

In an unusual night that had people thinking of the 2004 Academy Awards when the Lord of the Rings swept so many Oscars, three of AAD's top award went to Deaf Services staff. This came on the heels of Dawn Marren's RESPECT award in May and Wendy Lozensky's Professional of the Year award a few days before.



Charlene Crump accepts AAD's 2007 Citizen of the Year award from FI Vance and AAD President, Judith Gilliam

Charlene Crump, Mental Health Interpreter Coordinator, won the 2007 Citizen of the Year Award for her work over several years in the field of interpreting. She was cited for several accomplishments with an overriding theme of staying the course in times of adversity. "Over the past four and a half years I have been privileged to watch her "stick with" her beliefs and move them forward with determination to produce the best possible outcomes for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. At times, it has been a thankless and heartbreaking process. She has been alternately praised and vilified,

with the latter far more common than the former. She has stayed true to her beliefs



AAD President, Judith Gilliam presents Shannon Reese with a President's Award for her service to the Association

and to her principles, even when others have been willing to "sell out" for political expediency," said Steve Hamerdinger.

AAD President, Judith Gilliam presented Shannon Reese, Region II Coordinator with the *President's Award* for outstanding service to the Association and the Deaf Community. Reese was also the Chair of the Conference Planning Committee and was credited with pulling together a successful conference. Hamerdinger commented that, "Shannon's work at ODS certainly has not been negatively effected by her involvement with AAD, and probably this involvement has translated into positive acceptance of mental health services by the community at large."

ODS Director Steve Hamerdinger was presented with the *2007 Outstanding Service Award* for his work in building mental health services for people with hearing

"Over the past four and a half years I have been privileged to watch [Charlene] "stick with" her beliefs and move them forward with determination to produce the best possible outcomes for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. At times, it has been a thankless and heartbreaking process."

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DEPARTMENT MEDICAL DIRECTOR PRAISES DEAF UNIT



Dr. Richard Powers
Medical Director,
ADMH/MR

Dr. Richard Powers, the medical director for the Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, toured the Bailey Deaf Unit on March 22nd to see what they were doing and how they did it. He was impressed. Below is reproduced his memo to Commissioner John Houston.

Greil Director, Alan Stewart says, "This very high praise from the Department's top medical officer comes as no surprise to me, in view of the very high caliber of professionalism that characterizes the Bailey Unit staff."

Unit Director, Scott Staubach was, "pleased about his response to our programming and response to an emergency situation. He saw how crucial language and culturally accessible response to deaf inpatients is [to] their treatment."

BDU is still operating on a 12/7 schedule due to the shortage of nurses making it very difficult to fill vacant nursing positions.

" Our department should be very proud of the unique services provided to this special population. The healthcare professionals deserve recognition and accolades for a job well done. "

MEMO

DATE: March 28, 2007
TO: Commissioner John Houston
FROM: Richard E. Powers, MD
RE: Griel Hospital

On March 22, 2007, I had an opportunity to consult on a deaf patient who received care on the unit for hearing impaired individuals at Griel Hospital. During that time I had an opportunity to observe the staff on the unit manage patients and deal with a behavioral emergency. You will be delighted to hear that the staff demonstrated the highest caliber of services and devotion for persons with hearing impairment. Their use of hearing impaired staff to interact with patients created a therapeutic environment. The staff was highly motivated, well informed, and extremely attentive to their responsibilities. Our department should be very proud of the unique services provided to this special population. The healthcare professionals deserve recognition and accolades for a job well done.

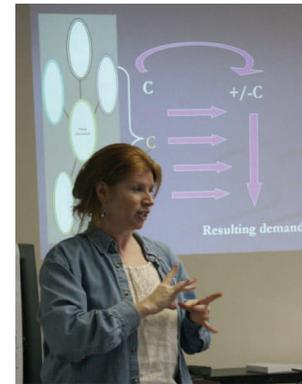
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MHIT EXPANDS REPERTOIRE

This year MHIT has sought to grow and expand beyond its previous Interpreter Institute. One of the goals of this year's training cycle is to improve the supervision of interpreters going through the mental health practicum segment of the Qualified Mental Health Interpreter certification process.

On June 1-2, 2007, Robyn Dean and Bob Pollard came to Montgomery, Alabama to train individuals to be supervisors for the practicum. The training focused on how

This training for supervisors/mentors of interpreters explored the use of supervision within the interpreting profession. Throughout the training, participants were introduced to new and structured dialogue that encompassed elements of an interpreting assignment and decision options of the interpreter. The training alternated between actual supervision sessions (where participants actually engage in case presentation and feedback) and the analyses of those sessions. Par-



Dr. Robert Pollard discusses supervision with participants at the Observation—Supervision Training

to supervise interpreters working in mental health following the Demand – Control Schema of supervision. The two day training was the first of its kind anywhere in the nation. Individuals who participated in this training were extremely positive about the training and felt that it was one of the most challenging and rewarding trainings that they had ever participated in as an interpreter.

ticipants learned how to listen for these interpreting elements, how to structure these elements for the group, and how to respond dynamically. The training looked to supervisory comments that used validation as an approach to behavior change and professional growth. ✎

**The two -
day training
was the first
of its kind
anywhere in
the nation.**



Mental Health Coordinator Charlene Crump works with participants Patti Wanta and Veronica Less

NEW STAFF JOINS DEAF SERVICES TEAM

Three people have joined the Deaf Services team since March. The Bailey Deaf Unit recruited an interpreter and a Licensed Practical Nurse, while the long vacant Region III interpreter was finally filled.

Teri Sweeney became the Region III interpreter and Interpreter Coordinator on March 5, 2007.



*Region III Interpreter
Teri Sweeney, CT*

Teri grew up in Wilmington, Delaware, then took off for the big city of Philadelphia, and Temple University. Her plan was to earn a BFA, then a master's degree in Psychology, and work as a counselor, while painting in her spare time. Alas, the best laid plans...

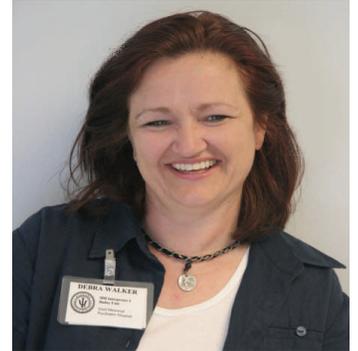
While at Temple, Teri was bitten by the acting bug, and spent the next 20+ years chasing that dream.

When her theatre company decided that it needed an ASL interpreter, she started classes at the nearby Pennsylvania School for the Deaf, and was on her way toward the perfect "real job", eventually earning an A.A.S. in Interpreter Education to complement her B. S. in Communications from 19 years earlier. After completing the Theatrical Interpreter program at the Juilliard School, she worked with New York Deaf Theatre during breaks from educational and freelance interpreting work in the Philadelphia area, meanwhile earning an Oral Transliteration Certificate from the national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

In 2002, Teri headed west to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where she again interpreted in a variety of settings, and earned a Certificate of Transliteration from RID. When sunset over the Sandias paled, and Teri got the urge to travel, she started filing applications. One was to the program that had so impressed her during September 2006's MHIT, the Alabama Department of Mental Health.

Deb Walker is no stranger to Deaf Services. She began working with the staff and patients at Greil Memorial Psychiatric Hospital as a Mental Health Interpreter on June 1st of this year.

For the past five years, however, she's been a familiar face to the Bailey Deaf Unit as a staff interpreter at the Janice Capilouto Center for the Deaf – a service provider to Greil. Deb began her interpreting career in 1993 as the Interpreter Coordinator for the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Regional Center in Dothan. There she obtained both the Certificate of Interpreting and the Certificate of Transliteration in 1997. In 1999 she left A.I.D.B. in order to start a small freelance business. That business continued until 2002 when the Janice Capilouto Center for the Deaf offered her a job in Montgomery. Deb was the Interpreter / Interpreter Coordinator for J.C.C.D. for almost five years. During those years, she earned the credential "Qualified Mental Health Interpreter" and is currently a candidate for taking a specialist certificate performance test that's for those who work in the legal field (as offered by the Registry of Interpreters of the Deaf, Inc.) She has also enjoyed being able to work as a Video Interpreter as time permits. The time to do so is limited, however, since she's a busy mother of three, with the youngest being three years of age. In her down moments, Deb is an avid reader.



*BDU Interpreter
Deb Walker, QMHI*

Linda Sisson began working as a Nurse on the Bailey Deaf Unit as of April 2nd this year. She excelled in her studies of Obstetrics and Psyche during her training at Wallace Community College in Selma, AL; however, she decided to take on a very busy Medical Surgical floor position for a year after graduation. After that first year's experience, she worked in Recovery and Extended Recovery at a

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VERY SPECIAL CONSUMERS FETED AT VERY SPECIAL ARTS

Under the starry skies of Alabama, many people gathered on April 17, 2007 at the AT&T building in Birmingham to celebrate fine works of art created by people with very unique skills. It was the VSA (Very Special Arts of Alabama) annual show that provided opportunity and encouragement, for adult artists with disabilities to showcase their artistic excellence. Not only are they able to exhibit their art, but it also provides them an opportunity to be chosen as part of a traveling exhibit that will tour the state of Alabama. This year's theme, "**Creativity--Art in the Magic City**", featured 213 works of art by 116 different artists with various disabilities and chronic diseases.

Jefferson-Blount-St. Clair Mental Health Authority's Deaf Services Program was fortunate to have Laurie Kramer, art teacher, teach art for 30 weeks as part of a special grant by an anonymous donor. As a result, four clients submitted artwork and two of them won traveling exhibit awards! The other two received a Certificate of Participation. Another deaf artist, not affiliated with JBS, participated and skillfully demonstrated an ability to paint various landscapes, also winning a traveling exhibit award.



Various media, from oil on rice paper to acrylics and pencils, were evident in the show. Obviously, the statement that "What the mind can conceive can be achieved" was true for this group of very special individuals. The **Triumph of the Human Spirit** © was clearly in evidence!

"[Four Deaf] clients submitted artwork and two of them won traveling exhibit awards!"

NEW STAFF JOINS DEAF SERVICES TEAM

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**BDU Nurse
Linda Sisson, RN**

free standing surgical center. Linda then traveled to California for a year while working in the same field. She decided to move to Tennessee. Where she worked in a Cardiac Cath Lab for the next three and a half years. She enjoyed procedure nursing, so upon her return to Alabama she worked in Endoscopy. Upon her return in March 2007, Linda decided to do something different and so applied at Greil Memorial Psychiatric Hospital. She was invited to join the Bailey Deaf Unit staff and accepted the challenge of learning sign language to be able to provide direct communication with the patients in her charge.

Linda is a mother of four and a grandmother of two. This year she's taken up gardening to add to her other pleasures – sewing and reading.

✍

This feature, which we hope will be regular, will highlight books that are being read by ODS and Deaf Services staff members around the state. Not all the books will be strictly about deafness and not all will be strictly about mental health, but all will help increase knowledge and understanding of how deaf people living with mental illness can be better served. The editors welcome contributions of ideas and reviews from our readers as well. Send your contributions to ODS in care of: steve.hamerdinger@mh.alabama.gov.

ON THE ODS BOOKSHELF



Pederson, Darlene. (2005) *Psych Notes. F. A. Davis Company. Philadelphia, PA. ISBN-10: 0803612869*

Pederson's *Psych Notes* is a great resource for clinicians, interpreters and students. In one handy, spiral-bound, pocket-sized book one can find a highly practical reference to mental illness. There are many surprise features, such as "wipe free" pages that allow the user to make clinical notes right in the book and wipe them off later.

Baynton, Douglas C. 1998 *Forbidden Signs: American Culture and the Campaign against Sign Language. University of Chicago Press: Chicago. (ISBN-10: 0-226-03964-1)*

Baynton sets out to examine one of the foundational phenomena of the "deaf world," Alexander Graham Bell's crusade to banish American Sign Language. He examines it from a sociological perspective and along the way, exposes some of the more unsavory tendencies of the American Eugenics movement. The effects of this debate can still be seen in decision made about deaf children today—often to their detriment.

Through Deaf Eyes (2007) DVD

Through Deaf Eyes explores nearly 200 years of Deaf life in America. The film presents the experiences of American history from the perspective of deaf citizens. Interviews include actor Marlee Matlin, I. King Jordan, other community leaders, historians, and deaf Americans with diverse views on language use, technology and identity.

Hot Off the Presses: Important Articles You Must Read

Embry RA, Grossman FD. (2007) The Los Angeles County response to child abuse and deafness: a social movement theory analysis. *American Annals of the Deaf*. Winter;151(5):488-98.

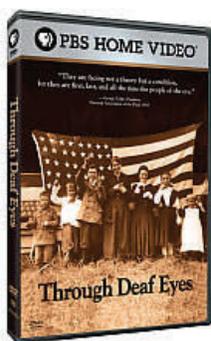
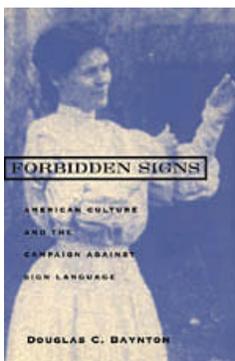
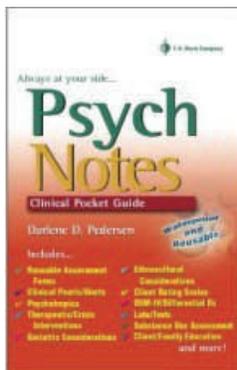
Fellinger J., Holzinger D., Gerich J., Goldberg D. (2007), Mental Distress and Quality of Life in Hard of Hearing. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica* March 115(3):243-5.

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AN ODS BOOK REVIEW

I Was # 87

By Anne M. Bolander and Adair N. Renning

Review by Charlene Crump

"I'M NOT RETARDED AND I HAVE THE PAPERS TO PROVE IT!" These words became a rallying cry that allowed Anne Bolander to overcome the horrible childhood that she had endured. Raised by a variety of people, most notably by an oppressive and cruel system that misdiagnosed her hearing loss as mental retardation and behavioral issues, Anne nevertheless overcame a lost childhood and redeemed a life of promise and hope.

When Anne was three, her mother died following a long battle with cancer. Anne, considered a rebellious and troublesome child, was sent to live with her grandparents, who were unable to do much to improve her behavior. During this time, Anne's father remarried and, eventually, Anne was brought home to join the rest of the family. Her father and his new wife, however, had no luck in disciplining their young daughter.

In desperation, the family had Anne tested and it was concluded that she had mental and developmental retardation as well as difficulty hearing speech. Because of this diagnosis, the parents decided to send her away to a special school. The Stoutamyre School for Special Education in Bridgewater, Virginia would be Anne's home for the next five years.

Stoutamyre was a rigid environment that controlled how children sat, stood, interacted, and how they conducted themselves throughout the day's activities. Every chair, every fork, every child had to be perfect. When it wasn't the children were punished severely. To help enforce regimentation, children were assigned numbers rather than names. Anne was #87. This determined her place in line for the bathroom, meals, and bed. It identified her clothing and her time for punishment.

"All I knew at Stoutamyre was pain and fear and I saw a lot of things that a young child shouldn't have seen. I saw others being punished and Margie [Stoutamyre's] flushed face and evil expression as she tightened up to whip us. I saw the faces of the other children as they suffered. I saw how they tried to control their screams and hold back the tears. I saw how some tried to

run away or fight back. I saw when some of them disappeared. No one could win. No one could overpower Margie. She was everywhere, ready to attack any minute, and the vibration of her feet on the floor was enough to send chills up my spine."

At the age of eleven, Anne returned home where, without the regimentation of Stoutamyre, she had a difficult time adjusting. She had no idea when it was her turn to eat, to change clothes, to go to bed or to go to the bathroom. Making the wrong decision at Stoutamyre had severe consequences and so too, did it at home. The odd learned behaviors, so necessary for survival at Stoutamyre, only reinforced her family's belief that she was mentally retarded. One thing was consistent, though. Violations of rules – understood or not – were met as severely at home as they were at Stoutamyre.

Her hearing loss and lack of education at Stoutamyre resulted in tremendous fund of knowledge deficits. Her family was convinced that her bizarre rituals, poor social behaviors, apparent hearing loss were simply attempts to draw attention to herself, worsening already tenuous relationships.

Eventually Anne moved out on her own where she would face the challenges of a world who easily took advantage of an extremely vulnerable young woman. She was prepared from an early age to be an easy target. A series of co-workers and roommates ridiculed, used and manipulated her.

Out of desperation, Anne paid to have an intelligence test conducted. What she found was that she possessed above average intelligence. This set into motion a process of redemption of a life headed for utter despair. Not an easy journey, Anne, nevertheless, found healing, working, learning sign language – even a measure of self actualization.

A testament to strength and resiliency, "I Was #87" Anne wrote this book hoping that her experiences could help others to believe that they could create their own destinies. The reader just might be inspired to reach theirs. 

"I saw others being punished and Margie's flushed face and evil expression as she tightened up to whip us. I saw the faces of the other children as they suffered. I saw how they tried to control their screams and hold back the tears. I saw how some tried to run away or fight back. I saw when some of them disappeared."

CEPIN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TRAINING

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Tribal Police for the Creek Indians, and several rural county and Parish Sheriff Departments.

“I have always known that communication would be an obstacle, but not to the extent learned in this class. Prior to the class starting, I heard everything, but was unable to communicate with anyone. It was really an eye opening experience.”

**Rick Crosby,
Captain, Searcy
Hospital Police**



Master Sgt. Garner makes a point while Charlene Crump interprets

Deaf participants were exposed to how Police and EMTs think about emergency response and how very different their priorities are. For their part, the First Responders got a glimpse at how incredibly important communication is to people who are deaf and hard of hearing. Rick Crosby, Captain of the Searcy Hospital Police said, “I have always known that communication would be an obstacle, but not to the extent learned in this class. Prior to the class starting, I heard everything, but was unable to communicate with

anyone. It was really an eye opening experience. I really felt out of place. Sometimes, that is exactly what we need to experience, in order to understand some of the roadblocks in life that others have.”

The instructors used interactive activities to get deaf and hearing participants working together to overcome communications barriers. In one memorable exercise, the participants had to plan for a response to a mock disaster. As the groups worked through the process of communicating, the needs of the Deaf Community and the First Responders newfound respect to divergent world views seemed to emerge. Of course, the groups had to deal with real-life issues such as how to get interpreters or at the very least level the playing field so that everyone was using an equally assessable communication method.

One of the highlights of the training occurred during a sidebar of the training when Jimmy Peterson, the Executive Director of Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services of Northwest Florida described how he and his wife prepare for potential disasters. He described in detail what they have in their personal disaster kit and how, as a deaf family, the Petersons cope with communication issues and concerns. It was very inspirational to the participants. 



Lise Hamlin talks to First Responders about the concerns of deaf and hard of hearing people during times of disaster. The participants spent time working in various groups as they applied things learned during the lectures.

MHIT CELEBRATES 5TH YEAR WITH LARGEST EVER

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Carter English entertained and enlightened the participants with his down – home humor and easy to understand approach to psychopharmacology. One participant was heard to remark, “Where did they find a funny Pharm D?”

As in previous years, the “Hearing Voices” activity proved to be a real eye – opener to the participants. This activity simulates auditory hallucinations and allows the participants to gain insight to what consumers might be experiencing. One participant commented, “The “Hearing Voices” portion was amazing. I’m never making comments again when I see someone experiencing this. [It] brought things into perspective for me.”

MHIT is an intense experience, cramming in 40 clock hours of instruction over 5 days. Most days ran from 8:00 am to 6:30 pm. Cathy Cody, from Cincinnati, OH said, “I haven’t learned so much in such a short amount of time since cramming for finals in college.”



Roger Williams (r) shares a lighter moment with Lee Skupniewitz (far left) and David Letkiewicz.

The information is designed to be practical and can be put to use immediately. In one

case, it was. “Would you believe I came home and my first assignment on [the following] Monday for a Doctor appointment (new patient) revealed a patient history of schizophrenia, thought disorder, and paranoia. The patient’s father asked me to read a court report where the patient was declared incompetent to stand trial. WOW! I can’t tell you how much more prepared I was to interpret this situation,” Peggy Bosma from Mississippi told us.



Shannon Reese discusses working with consumers with severely dysfluent language skills during a special session for Deaf Interpreters.

MHIT keeps gaining respect around the nation and in Alabama as people return to their homes and share what they have learned. Diane Napper, of Mobile Alabama said, “I have told all I know how much I enjoyed it and will encourage others to go in the future.” This view was seconded by Katie Brader of Texas. “The interpreter training program that has been established in Alabama should be recognized as a jewel in the crown of the state. I rarely, if ever, have seen such an in-depth, comprehensive foundational training upon which an interpreter can begin -- or continue -- to develop her/his interpreting skills as they pertain to D/deaf consumers.”



Carter English makes psychopharmacology interesting.

“The interpreter training program that has been established in Alabama should be recognized as a jewel in the crown of the state.”

Katie Brader

AS I SEE IT

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Maybe it's just me, but why risk it when there is a perfectly reliable and, to borrow Ms. Steele's phrasing, "guaranteed thing" – teaching the child through Sign Language.

The story speaks to me on several levels. First is the pervasive and persistent pathologization of deafness. Throughout the story there is the spin that deaf people are incapable of being happy, fulfilled adults unless they are able to "hear". "Restore her hearing" and you will restore "her independence" the author seems to think. That would be news to most of the staff of the Office of Deaf Services in Alabama who are deaf. It's not about hearing – it's about communication and language development.

The second level on which this disturbs is the psycho-social level. How will Jorja feel about all this in, say, 10 or 13 years? Even if the surgery is without complications, it will not approach the level of effectiveness that a good CI in young children. It most certainly will not "restore hearing" no matter what the breathless lead paragraph implied. According to the Hear It website, "It is only a reduced hearing sensation and not a full hearing sense, but it relieves the involved persons from total sound isolation and also makes it easier to lip-read." (See "[Hear It](#)" website for more details.) This, of course, assumes there are no complications. What if something goes wrong? Wouldn't Jorja be much better off if that time and money was spent in developing her – and her family's – Auslan (Australian Sign Language) skills? What comment does it make about the family's acceptance of who Jorja is? Isn't she more than her hearing?

"[S]ome people do quite well with CIs, at least on an auditory level. Those folks aren't the ones that worry me. The ones who are not successful often come with a trainload of emotional baggage, all of which has been damaged by inacceptance of who they are."

Of course, this is an extreme illustration of societal view of deafness, and, not incidentally, mental illness. "We must fix it at all costs!" consequences be damned. Or equally bad, "Let's just ignore it and it will go away." Wouldn't a third way, one of accepting and embracing the child, as she is, and working with her in a language that is readily accessible to her be a far better path? How many surgeries does it take to assuage the guilt? How many times must a child be set up to fail before she will be allowed to experience success?

Now, I will be the first to recognize that some people do quite well with CIs, at least on an auditory level. Those folks aren't the ones that worry me. The ones who are not successful often come with a trainload of emotional baggage, all of which has been damaged by inacceptance of who they are. These folks are the ones that fill our programs and keep clinical professionals up at night worrying about whether their consumers will make it until the morn without hurting themselves.

I hope, of course, that little Jorja makes it through the surgery fine and that the results are at least as good as the gloomy prognosis put forth by "Hear It." I hope too, that the parents will get beyond their fixation with a medical cure for deafness. ***As I See It***, though, the cost is awfully high for a benefit awfully small. *✍*

POSITIONS AVAILABLE WITH DEAF SERVICES

OFFICE OF DEAF SERVICES

INTERPRETER,
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.

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

Steve Hamerdinger
Director Office of Deaf Services
ADMH/MR
100 North Union Street
Montgomery, AL 36130
Steve.Hamerdinger@mh.alabama.gov
(334) 353-4701 (TTY)
(334)353-4703 (Voice)

THE BAILEY DEAF UNIT

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

DEAF CARE WORKER (Continuous Recruitment)
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.

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

RECREATION/ACTIVITY SPECIALIST I
SALARY RANGE: 66 (\$27,962 - \$42,477.60)
QUALIFICATIONS: Graduation from a four-year college or university with a degree in therapeutic recreation, adaptive

physical education, or physical education. Other directly related education and/or work experience may be substituted for all or part of these basic requirements. **Must be in possession of, or eligibility for certification as a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) through the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation.**

Proficiency in American Sign Language at or exceeding "intermediate plus" level of signing skills as measured by a recognized screening process such as SLPI.

MENTAL HEALTH SOCIAL WORKER I
SALARY RANGE: 63 (\$25,956 - \$39,456)
QUALIFICATIONS: Graduation from an accredited four-year college or university including completion of a social work program with eligibility for license as a Bachelor Social Worker (BSW). **Must be in possession of, or eligible for licensure as a Bachelor Social Worker (LBSW) as issued by the Alabama Board of Social Work Examiners. Valid licensure must be obtained within one year of employment and maintained.**

Proficiency in American Sign Language at or exceeding "intermediate plus" level of signing skills as measured by a recognized screening process such as SLPI.

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

Letitia Hendricks
Director of Human Resources
Greil Memorial Psychiatric Hospital, 2140 Upper Wetumpka Road, Montgomery, AL. 36107
Letitia.Hendricks@greil.mh.alabama.gov
(334) 262-0363 ext. 231 (V)
334)834-4562 (FAX)

Scott Staubach
Director, Bailey Deaf Unit
Greil Memorial Psychiatric Hospital, 2140 Upper Wetumpka Road, Montgomery, AL. 36107
Scott.staubach@greil.mh.alabama.gov
(334) 262-0363 ext. 322 (V/TTY)
(334)834-4562 (FAX)

DEAF SERVICES 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 to \$17,904)

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

Continued on next page

DEAF SERVICES GROUP HOMES

HOME COORDINATORS (Birmingham) (\$30,618 to \$32, 148)

QUALIFICATIONS: Bachelor's degree in a social service or related curriculum, two years' experience working with deaf mentally ill population and supervision/ running a residential program. Must have near intermediate plus signing skills in American Sign Language (ASL) as measured by a recognized screening process such as the SLPI and have a thorough knowledge of Deaf Culture. Must have a valid Alabama 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

ODS STAFF HONORED AT AAD CONFERENCE

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loss who have mental illness. He was cited for, building Deaf Services into a "nationally known [program] and is seen by the Deaf Community as one of the few top – notch services provided to Deaf and Hard of Hearing people."

Liz Hill, Region III Coordinator, has served as the President of the Montgomery Chapter of AAD for the past year and she received recognition for that service. Liz was also on the conference planning committee.

Altogether ODS staff members have won six major awards this year and have received nominations for several more. This stands as a testament to the high regard in which the Deaf Community has for the work being done by the Office of Deaf Services and the Alabama Department of Mental Health.

ODS wants to thank AAD, COSDA, and the Consumer Relations office for their faith in our work and their gracious recognition. 

HAMERDINGER NAMED CENTRAL OFFICE EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

Commissioner John Houston named Steve Hamerdinger the Employee of the Quarter for the second quarter of 07. Steve was nominated by several of his fellow co-workers, and they said he, "Has managed to make the Office of Deaf Services one of the nation's recognized programs for its mental health care in just a few years. His work has been replicated in some states due to his creativity with budget costs and the ability to cut corners, while managing to keep the program running at full speed." Another goes on to say, "He is a role model for all who are interested in mental health work and is a pioneer in Alabama."



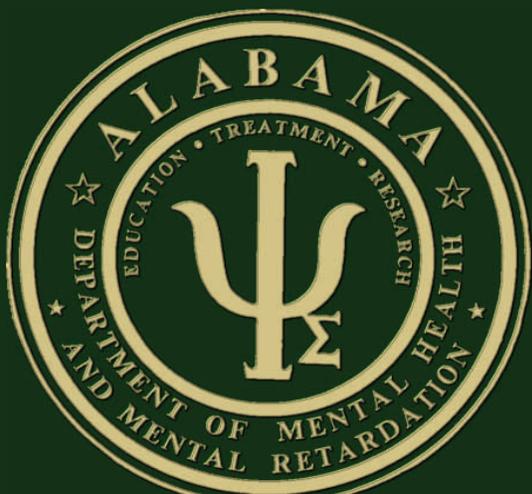
CURRENT QUALIFIED MENTAL HEALTH INTERPRETERS

Becoming a *Qualified Mental Health Interpreter* in Alabama requires a rigorous course of study, practice and examination that takes most people nearly a year to complete. It involves 40 hours of classroom time, 40 hours of supervised practica and a comprehensive examination covering all aspects of mental health interpreting.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Charlene Crump, Montgomery | Sue Scott, Mobile | Nancy Hayes, Hayden City | Brian McKenny, Montgomery |
| Dee Johnston, Oxford | Debra Walker, Montgomery | Lisa Gould, Mobile | Jill Farmer-Arley, |
| Dawn Marren, Huntsville | Wendy Darling-Prattville, | Pat Smartt-Sterett, Birmingham | Lee Stoutamire-Mobile, |
| Frances Smallwood, Huntsville | Cindy Camp, Jacksonville | Lynn Nakamoto, Hawaii | Jamie Garrison, Wisconsin |

Mental Health Interpreter Institute Part II

An Expansion of the MHIT Foundational Series



September 17-21, 2007
Montgomery Alabama

Training Limited to MHIT-I Alumni

A Presentation of
Mental Health Interpreter Training Project
Office of Deaf Services
Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation

For more information contact Charlene.Crump@mh.alabama.gov