President’s Updates

I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving. Now Christmas is just around the corner with all of the decorating, parades, parties, and family gatherings. This is a blessed time and season. As we enter the New Year, we will be getting closer to renewing permits and licenses. Be sure to take advantage of the many different opportunities for earning CEUs.

In November, Region 4 had some awesome workshops with Chris McGaha on Cognitive Processing and Sports. There was a great turnout with a lot of attendees, but if you missed out on these workshops you will be able to catch them again in January in Mobile. To register or get more information, contact Lisa Gould at gould.lisa@aidb.state.al.us.

I’m looking forward to an exciting and productive new year, as we work together to make ALRID better and more informative.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

The Louise Wohlford Memorial Scholarship

The purpose of the Louise Wohlford Memorial Scholarship Fund is to provide payment of registration fees for conferences or workshops providing RID CEUs. Interpreters may request a scholarship for the “Early Bird” registration rate. A total maximum of $2,000 may be awarded per calendar year from this fund. Multiple scholarship applications from an individual will be accepted, however primary consideration will be given to applicants who have yet to receive funds. An individual may not exceed $400 in scholarships awards in any one calendar year.

For more information on how to apply, please go to www.alrid.org and click on Scholarships and click on Louise Wohlford Memorial Scholarship.

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ALRID Region 4 updates

Region 4 of the Alabama Registry Interpreters for the Deaf hosted a workshop Saturday, November 1st in Tuscaloosa. The workshop topics were “Are you Full? Managing Your Process Capacity” and “Get In the Game: interpreting Sports” by Chris McGaha. The workshop was well attended and very informative. Region 4 planning committee members for the workshop shown with Chris McGaha were: Tina Brown, Liz Mc Kelvey-Spiller, Susan Gordon, Teresa Mello, Vickie Brown, Cathy Day, Ellen Bowman, Cindy Collins.

Region Representatives

Region 1: Kim Smith  
Region 2: Chaeney Miller  
Region 3: Diana Wagoner  
Region 4: Vickie Brown  
Region 5: Jodie Jernigan  
Region 6: Lisa Gould  
Region 7: Judy Robertson

ALRID Region 6 workshop

Do not miss out on the wonderful workshop in Mobile, Alabama! You can earn some CEUS attending the workshop.

The workshop in the morning is on processing while interpreting and the afternoon is on sports. This should be very beneficial for the upcoming school year.

Please see the flyer and register early.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

"Sign language is useful to the deaf but vital to the Italians” - Paul Carvel quotes

| Presenter: | Chris McGaha |
| When: | Saturday, January 31, 2015 |
| Time: | 9:00 AM– 2:30 PM |
| Where: | Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind  
1050 Government Street  
Mobile, AL 36604 |

Contact Sophia Nelson to register or to request accommodations  
251-709-1740(v) or sophiasn1@yahoo.com
"Are You Full? Managing Your Processing Capacity"
&
"Get in the Game: Interpreting Sports"

Presenter: Chris McGaha
Saturday, January 31, 2015
8:00 am – 2:30 pm

ALRID Members: $30.00
Non-members: $40.00

0.6 CEU’s (Pending)

Where: Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind
1050 Government St. Mobile, AL 36604

Light Lunch will be provided.

Contact Sophia Nelson to register or to request accommodations
251-709-1740 or sophiasn1@yahoo.com.

Deadline for accommodations is December 28, 2015.

The Alabama Department of Mental Health is an approved RID CMP Sponsor. This activity has been awarded 0.60 possible CEUS in the area of Professional Studies by The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf at the "some" Content Knowledge Level for CMP and ACET participants. Activity #

Please return registration to Sophia Nelson at 2555 Pecan Pointe Dr. Semmes, AL 36575. In the case of cancellation, you will be notified by email.

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A while ago the Office of Deaf Services (ODS), under the Alabama Department of Mental Health, offered a training by Robyn Dean about Peer Supervision. It uses the principles of the Demand Control (DC) theory by examining interpreting scenarios and coming up with solutions or alternatives to the choices we made in them.

As interpreters, no matter the setting, we often work alone. We have no colleague to turn to in the moment when we have decisions to make and there are a lot of them. How many times have you, as an interpreter, thought back on an assignment and thought that it could have gone better? Do you then discuss the situation with another interpreter, a peer or a mentor or maybe a supervisor? Does that seem sufficient?

The process of Peer Supervision allows an interpreter to describe in detail (not using specific names, places, etc.) an interpreting scenario. Ideally there would be a small group of 3 - 5 interpreters actively listening to the description. One person would write down the description sentence by sentence on a large pad of paper for all to see. When the interpreter is finished, they all go back to the beginning and examine each statement classifying it as a demand or control. After that, they go back again to determine which of the demands or controls caused the identified "problem". A discussion then ensues to determine what other control options the interpreter had available to use so that in the future this "problem" could be avoided.

This type of discussion about our work can be extremely helpful and applicable to future assignments. It’s not about finding fault, but instead realizing the multitude of choices we have in the work we do and sharing those with each other for everyone’s benefit.

Are there any groups like this happening in Alabama? If not, and I am not an expert in Demand-Control theory, but if this sounds intriguing to you and you would like to attend a Peer Supervision meeting in your area, I am willing to help get one started. Initially, the group can use hypothetical scenarios because it is scary to open up to peer “criticism” even though everyone benefits from the discussion. Once the participants feel comfortable, they can start sharing their own experiences.

Robyn Dean and Bob Pollard published a book just last year called dc-s The Demand Control Schema: Interpreting as a Practice Profession. In it they describe in detail how we use demands and controls in our work. They get very detailed into descriptions of the various types of demands and controls as well. In the final chapters they discuss peer supervision and how critical it is for us to grow individually and as a field. I have this book so we could use it as a resource for the groups once we get started.

Please contact me at Thumbsupinterpreting@gmail.com if you are interested in joining or starting a peer supervision group. It is open to any and all skill levels. We can all learn from each other if we’re willing to share and be open with one another.

Since it’s been several years from the time Robyn Dean gave her presentation on this topic, it may be beneficial to bring her back for a refresher course. Let me know if that is something you are interested in. In the meantime, check out the Facebook page for more information on her theory and current training opportunities. Demand Control Schema: The Practice Profession of Interpreting.

Thank you from Troy University ITP class of 2015

To all of the outstanding interpreter mentors, service learning project mentors, and Deaf community members that have supported us during this Practicum semester.

All of the hard work, precious time, and incredible advice you’ve given has contributed to the growth of the interpreting profession and to the peace of mind of students trying to graduate.

You are unendingly appreciated.

We look forward to working with you during internship and beyond!

Peer Supervision by Nancy L. Hayes, CI/CT
Information on DeafBlind workshop by Bethany Miller

Reintroducing the world to Deafblindness, Transforming Expectations

Alabama native Helen Keller introduced the world to deafblindness through American Sign Language (ASL) and teacher Anne Sullivan.

Fast-forward almost 50 years to Pro-Tactile (PT) Communication and Support Service Providers (SSP), pioneered – in part – by Jelica Nuccio and aj granda. Both presented to approximately 120 professionals and the DeafBlind community, September 24 and 25, respectively, on the campus of the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind’s (AIDB) E.H. Gentry Facility. These trainings were provided through partnership with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) and Troy University Interpreter Training Program under the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, State Technical Assistance Projects to Improve Services for Children who are Deaf-Blind, for which AIDB’s Alabama Initiative for Children and Youth who are Deaf-Blind is coordinated. Continuing Education Units were provided in collaboration with the Alabama Department of Mental Health, Office of Deaf Services, and Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

“Want we want to extend our “Thank You All” regarding your interest in the SSP training events,” stated Alabama Association of the Deaf-Blind Co-Presidents Robb Gatchell and Phyllis Clopton in a joint statement. “This is a much-needed effort to meet Alabama’s deaf-blind’s needs towards independence and freedom. This is not only meant for the enjoyment of the deaf-blind, but also you as SSPs. Wishing you all well in your training along with your future work with the deaf-blind community.”

Support Service Providers

Although called ‘teacher,’ Anne Sullivan may have been the very first Support Service Provider (SSP).

As Nuccio co-authors in Providing and Receiving Support Services: Comprehensive Training for Deaf-Blind Persons and Their Support Service Providers, “A SSP is a trained worker who has appropriate communication skills (typically this means at least a minimum level of fluency in sign language) and the ability to guide a blind person safely as well as skill in providing information about the visual environment.”

As the American Association for the Deaf-Blind cites, “Many deaf-blind people face challenges in all aspects of their lives. Simple tasks such as shopping, maintaining a home, and getting an education can be difficult for someone who cannot see or hear well. One way for deaf-blind people to overcome these barriers is through the assistance of trained people called SSPs. SSPs enable deaf-blind persons to access their communities and connect with other people, reducing communication barriers that otherwise would result in social isolation, incapability to live independently, and inability to participate as citizens within mainstream society.

“SSPs are not interpreters. They can provide communication assistance for short exchanges, but not for more complex situations. An SSP can help a deaf-blind person fill out an insurance form at a doctor’s office, but a sign language interpreter would be needed during the actual medical examination.”

“Through this training, it was rewarding to see my students who have dual sensory loss realize that there are DeafBlind educators and leaders,” explained AIDB’s E.H. Gentry Facility DeafBlind Program Coordinator Bethany Miller, who also coordinates Alabama’s ICanConnect project through AIDB and chairs the Alabama Deaf-Blind Coalition. “The participants who are DeafBlind saw aj and Jelica as role models and this training encouraged our students to open-up and welcome any communication techniques such as Pro-Tactile. You could feel the excitement through the various conversations, and I could see the feeling of isolation and neglect disappear from the participants’ faces.

“I strongly believe we need to develop more training. Without SSP support, DeafBlind individuals are often stuck at home and isolated, leading to frustration and depression at not being able to communicate, access information, participate in the community, maintain employment and vote,” continued Miller. “I have asked several community members who are DeafBlind and they informed me that SSPs are listed as the most important need in state of Alabama.”

Pro-Tactile Communication

Pro-Tactile Communication involves a system of feedback cues called “backchanneling” that provides communicators with information about each other, their responses to what is being communicated, and the environment. It is also an effective way to provide feedback to a presenter who has dual sensory loss about the audience’s responses and reactions to their presentation in real time.

In a recent vlog, granda states, “One way I like to explain PT is to compare it to using a TTY [Telecommunication Device for the Deaf]. You might remember what that was like when the person you were talking with would type and type and type, and you already knew what they were saying, you already had that information. In person, you would just tell them, ‘Yeah, I know that already,’ but the way the TTY was set up, you couldn’t interrupt, so you just had to sit there and wait until they were done. Finally, after what seemed like an unbearably long time, you would see the letters, “G-A” [Go-Ahead] at which point you would tell the person, ‘Yeah, I already knew that. You didn’t have to tell me.’ So the constraints of the technology made for some really frustrating and inefficient interactions.
Information continues from page 5

“Well, before PT, DeafBlind communica-
tion was like that. Interactions were
limited and we didn’t have access to all
of the cues that make things smoother
and more efficient. Pro-tactile communi-
cation is immediate. Turn-taking is
seamless. There are no awkward time
lags or frustrating constraints. Informa-
tion is received when it is produced,
and there is a constant stream of infor-
mation coming from the person you are
talking to...It’s fantastic!”

**Speaker Information**

Both Nuccio and granda have Usher
Syndrome – which, according to the
National Institutes of Health – is usually
a combination of hearing loss and an
eye disorder called retinitis pigmentosa
(RP), which causes night-blindness and
a loss of peripheral vision (side vision)
through the progressive degeneration
of the retina. As RP progresses, the field
of vision narrows, a condition known as
“tunnel vision,” until only central vision
(the ability to see straight ahead) re-
 mains.

Nuccio was the first DeafBlind Director
of the Seattle DeafBlind Service Center
(DBSC) and co-author of *Providing
and Receiving Support Services: Com-
prehensive Training for Deaf-
Blind Persons and Their Support
Service Providers*. Prior, Nuccio
worked as a research coordinator, advo-
cate and job-developer. Originally from
Croatia, raised in the state of Georgia,
Nuccio has a B.A. in Biology from RIT,
and an M.A. in Public Health from Emory
University. A national presenter, she
continues to be active and involved in
local and national DeafBlind communi-
ties.

granda is a teacher, social justice ac-
tivist, textile artist, and mom. Along
with Nuccio, she is also one of the con-
tributors developing curriculum on a
national project for training SSPs and
individuals who are DeafBlind. Active in
bringing changes and new ideas to Se-
attle’s DeafBlind community for over a
decade, granda has worked for the
DBSC and at Seattle’s Lighthouse for
the Blind as an advocate, trainer,
mentor and teacher.

“The training was amazing and
needed,” conveyed Alabama Depart-
ment of Mental Health Communi-
cation Specialist Vyron Kinison. “I al-
ready see the benefits to me and my
work and to those I represent in the
DeafBlind community."

“I greatly benefitted from this train-
ing,” echoed AIDB E.H. Gentry Facili-
ty Interpreter Bianca Perez. “It truly
opened my eyes to the potential of
greater connection for those with
dual-sensory loss by means of com-
munication by ‘touch.’ It helped me
gain perspective into the DeafBlind
experience, and I learned what it
might take to further empower those
who are DeafBlind. How appropriate
to gain such perspective and training
from those who are living the experi-
cence daily! The introduction to Pro-
tactile communication and Tactile
ASL, was also amazing! I’m grateful
to have a jump on learning this style
of communicating, as it continues to
swEEP the DeafBlind community
worldwide.”

“Internal and external feedback
has been exceptional with some call-
ing the experience,
‘transformational,’” noted AIDB Presi-
dent John Mascia, Au.D. “As illus-
trated throughout this article, there are
many ways to use the term
‘DeafBlind,’ dependent upon individu-
al preference. Similarly, there are
many faces of deafblindness – a sub-
tle, tangible educational component
of this training.

“In fact, providing statewide out-
reach and specific professional devel-
opment training to individuals with
sensory loss along with the profes-
sionals and paraprofessionals serving
individuals who are deaf, blind and
DeafBlind is of significant importance
to AIDB. We look forward to future
opportunities to partner with our
esteemed colleagues within ADRS,
Alabama Initiative for Children
and Youth who are Deaf-Blind

The Alabama Initiative for Children
and Youth who are Deaf-Blind’s goal is
to build capacity of state and local
agencies, parents, and professionals to
improve services and outcomes for
children and young adults who are
deaf-blind, and their families, by
providing innovative, technical assis-
tance, information and training on
early intervention, special education,
related adjunct services and transi-
tional assistance while collaborating
and sharing resources with partnering
agencies and all State and Multi-State
Deaf-Blind Technical Assistance Pro-
jects.

For more information on technical as-
sistance offered through the Alabama
Initiative for Children and Youth who
are Deaf-Blind or any of AIDB’s addi-
tional deaf-blind programs/
telecommunications distribution pro-
grams, contact Jessica L. Edmiston at
edmiston.jessica@aidb.state.al.us or
256.761.3207. To tour AIDB’s Tal-
adega-based programs or an AIDB
Regional Center, please contact Christ-
tine Roberts at roberts.christine@aidb.state.al.us or
256.761.3207.
Hi everyone!

Please do not forget to send me articles, stories, workshops, or any new information that you want ALRID to know about. You can send them to me at beth.overland@rehab.alabama.gov.

Thank you!