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Maine-Lines: A Newsletter for People who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Late-Deafened, Winter / Spring 2010

Maine Department of Labor

Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

Maine Division of Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and Late Deafened

Nancy Melanson

Maine Department of Labor, Nancy.A.Melanson@Maine.gov

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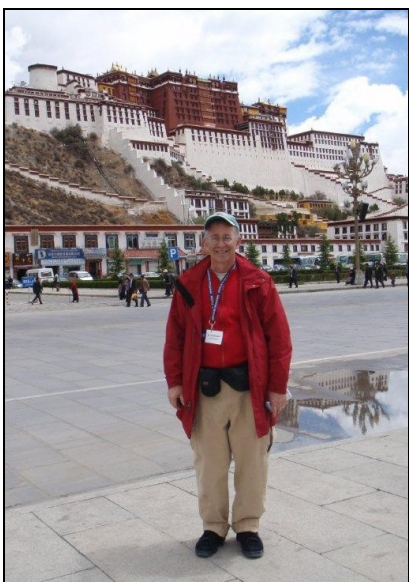
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**THE DIVISION FOR THE DEAF, HARD OF HEARING &
LATE DEAFENED**

MAINE-LINES

Deaf Employment

Editorial from Rod MacInnes



Rod MacInnes, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf, standing in front of the Potala Palace, home of the Dalai Lama, in Lhasa, Tibet.

In my many years as a deaf worker, I have seen many positive changes in the workplace which I think make it possible for today's deaf to succeed in a job/career if he/she has the motivation and will.

When I started working in an office at the Bureau of the Census in 1970, I had to depend on hearing people to make phone calls for me, ask for written notes from fellow workers at staff meetings and wrote many memoranda to my supervisors and fellow workers. It was very important for me to have friends at work because they would keep me informed as to what was happening in the office. In a way, it was an "alien" world to me because I was a bit shy around people. How things and I have changed since then!!!

Today I have sign language interpreters, video remote interpreters or Communication Access Real-Time Translation (CART) at meetings. I have both a TTY and a videophone that enables me to talk with anyone on the phone. All of these were made possible by an increased awareness of how inaccessible the world had been for those with hearing loss and the passage of civil rights laws (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Americans with Disabilities Act).

TVs have decoders which open up captions, allowing me to have access to the world besides newspapers. Also, many hearing people today make an effort to learn finger spelling and signs that enable me to communicate with them. My point in saying all this is that many deaf are able to get almost any job today due to the positive changes.

In my ten years as a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselor, I have learned about the many efforts by the government and social agencies to encourage deaf/hard of hearing/late deafened to work and also to have the employers hire deaf people. Those deaf, who receive Social Security benefits and want to work, can utilize work incentives including [Ticket to Work](#), [Plan to Achieve Self Support](#) (PASS), or [Impairment Related Work Expense](#) (IRWE). Google them and learn about these amazing benefits. As VR clients, they can also receive services such as job development, job coaching, interpreting and educational funding in order to achieve their employment goal. Recently, Maine VR has added the five-day Career Exploration Workshop that allows clients to become aware of what jobs/careers are a good fit for them and also what steps they need to take to become a successful worker.

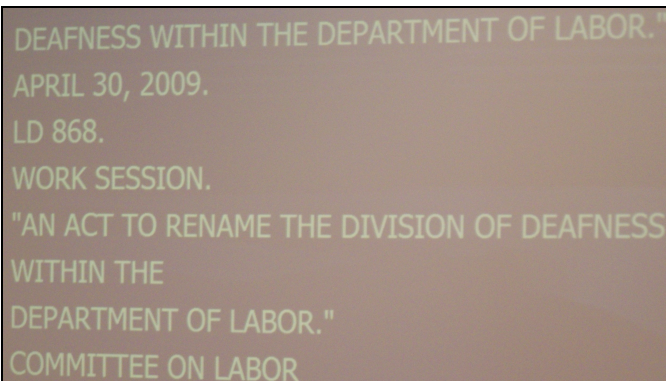
As for the availability of benefits for employers who hire deaf persons, they can consider tax deductions (Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), Disabled Tax Credit (DTC) or Architectural/Transportation Tax Deduction) and they also have access to the wonderful Jobs Accommodations Network (JAN) for suggestions on accommodations. The VR counselor can provide disability awareness training for employees to help them become more comfortable working with the deaf. Of course, the two civil rights laws (Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Civil Rights Act of 1973) mandate the access by people with disabilities into the community, including workplaces.

I also have learned that there are many reasons why people work, and I know if they know what they are, they are likely to become more motivated to get a job/career. Of course money is the biggest reason, but there are many other good reasons.

While the deaf and the employer can utilize the above benefits/incentives for successful placement in the workplace, the deaf sometimes need additional support to decrease social isolation, including loneliness and communication cut off. As for myself as a deaf worker, I teach my co-workers finger spelling and some basic signs. I try to have a sense of humor, which I found often reduces the fear of hearing people in approaching or interacting with me and also puts me at ease with others. Also, I find I have to go more than half way to approach hearing people to initiate discussion or even small talk. I've made a few friends that way. I ask fellow workers to take notes for me if the interpreters are not present. I have never been refused notes in my 40 years of working. As for work frustration sharing, the deaf can set up job clubs in deaf organizations or set up informal groups at coffee places. If it is not possible, then find a friend to share your feelings.

I can say that the work world for a deaf person has improved enormously during the past 40 years in terms of accessibility. I encourage deaf persons to enjoy these advantages/benefits and become a successful worker because there are so many rewards brought to them by work.

Communication Access Real-Time Translation (CART) & the Maine Court System

A screenshot of a CART (Communication Access Real-Time Translation) system. The text is displayed in a green, monospace font on a dark, semi-transparent background. The text reads: "DEAFNESS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR." followed by "APRIL 30, 2009.", "LD 868.", "WORK SESSION.", and "AN ACT TO RENAME THE DIVISION OF DEAFNESS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR." followed by "COMMITTEE ON LABOR".

DEAFNESS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR."
APRIL 30, 2009.
LD 868.
WORK SESSION.
"AN ACT TO RENAME THE DIVISION OF DEAFNESS
WITHIN THE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR."
COMMITTEE ON LABOR

Example of CART

If you are hard of hearing or late deafened, and have to appear in court, you have the right to have Communication Access Real-Time Translation (CART) in all Maine court rooms as an accommodation for anyone with a hearing loss.

CART is a word-for-word, speech-to-text translation service, using closed-captioning technology, for people who need visual communication access. Unlike computerized note taking or abbreviation systems, which summarize information for consumers, CART provides a complete translation of all spoken words, which allows consumers to decide for themselves what information is important to them.

A CART provider uses a steno machine, real-time software, and notebook computer to render instant speech-to-text translation on a computer monitor or other display to benefit an individual consumer or a larger group in any number of settings: classrooms, business, government, educational functions, **court rooms**, hospitals, religious, civic, cultural, recreation, or entertainment events. Text files are available. Services may be performed on site or from a remote location via the Internet.

CART providers can be found on the Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened's web site at http://www.maine.gov/rehab/dod/resource_guide/captioning.shtml or contact the Division's office at 623-7958 (V) or 1-888-755-0023 (TTY) for the information.

Meet Ryan Banger High School Student & School Board Member!



Ryan Banger

Where do you attend school and what year in school are you?

I am in the 10th grade at Morse High School in Bath, Maine.

As a student with a hearing loss, how do you communicate with your teachers & your peers?

With my hearing loss, I communicate with my teachers by myself, speaking, and also with my cueing transliterator. I communicate with my peers by myself.

Do you play sports? Which sports?

Yes, I swim on 2 swim teams, I compete year round for the Long Reach Swim Club with the Bath Area Family YMCA, and during the winter, I am a member of the Morse High School swim team. I was selected for the Kennebec Valley Athletic Conference Class A Swimming All-Conference team this past high school swim season. I am also a member of the Morse High School Tennis team.

How has your hearing loss affected your education and/or social life?

My hearing loss has not affected my education or my social life at all.

Do you plan on attending college?

Yes, I plan on attending college, hopefully at Wentworth Institution in Boston.

What career path are you on?

I would like to become an architect.

Do you work part-time?

Right now, I don't work part-time, but I do plan on working part-time over the summer and during my junior year in high school. I volunteer at the Patten Free Library in Bath where I facilitate a Boys Book Club.

I understand you're on the Maine Educational Center for Deaf & Hard of Hearing School Board. That is quite an accomplishment, how did you do it? Has it been difficult?

My mom suggested I go to one of the meetings to see what it was like and if I was interested. After I went to the meeting, I thought it would be cool if I filled in for one of the student positions on the board. It hasn't been difficult at all; I can suggest ideas to people when they need it to make things better for people who need it.

Are you satisfied with your school administration, teachers, peers and cueing transliterators?

I am satisfied with my school administration, teachers, and peers, but the transliterator situation is different. I have one who is struggling to keep up with the speaking, but I do have another one who has no problem, so they switch off, so I get the experience of two totally different cueing transliterators.

Are you satisfied with the education you have received? How could it be improved?

I am really satisfied with my education because right now I'm in high school. There are many choices for classes, and we get to learn about what we want to learn about. One way it could be improved is to offer an American Sign Language class for kids who want to learn the language because I know some who would like to.

Do you have any advice for younger students who are Deaf or hard of hearing?

Never let your disability stop you from doing what you love, especially sports. Many people don't expect deaf people to swim, but that didn't stop me, and now I am one of the top swimmers among other swimmers.

What is Cued Speech?

Cued Speech is a mode of communication that uses the mouth and hand that makes a spoken language visually accessible. Hand shapes, hand placements, and hand movements combine with the mouth movements to clearly show the stream of consonants and vowels that represent the words and thoughts of a cuer.

This highly effective speech reading system can be used with children from birth allowing parents to provide their child with access to the home language. Cueing skills improve with consistent and accurate usage in natural communication settings. Research results have confirmed that children and adults of all ages benefit from the use of Cued Speech as it eliminates the confusion associated with lip-reading and allows a person with a hearing loss to know exactly what someone is saying to them when they are cueing.

Strong speech reading skills allow people to lip-read better than speaking to others who do not use cues, thereby facilitating smooth and effective conversations. Reading and language levels are statistically on par with hearing children when cueing is provided by excellent role models in the home and in educational settings.

The Cued Speech Association of Maine is a nonprofit organization affiliated with the National Cued Speech Association. They provide information, support, and cue classes for families, professionals and individuals with and without hearing loss. Contact them to find out more about Cued Speech and its benefits for language and literacy development with children of all ages.

Cued Speech Association of Maine

45 Glenwood Road
Wells, ME 04090

Nicole Dobson, President
752-0417 (V)

E-mail: info@cuedspeechmaine.org or
NiCueSSS@gmail.com

Web site: www.cuedspeechmaine.org



GBSD/PHS signing the National Anthem in the House of Representatives chambers

The students then watched the House members discuss LD 1626, "An Act To Amend the Unemployment Compensation Laws Regarding Vacation Pay". After a great lunch at the Cross Cafeteria, they were educated on the history of Governor Percival Baxter by Representative Herb Adams. To end the day, a tour guide from the State House gave them the very interesting history of the State House. It was a delightful day for everyone. Thank you to Representatives Leila Percy and Herb Adams for their hospitality!

A Day at the State House!



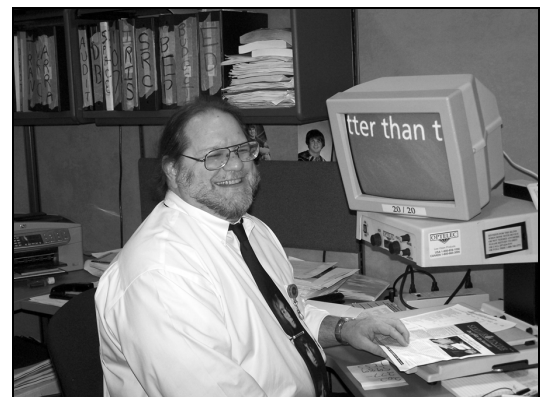
Governor Baxter School for the Deaf/Portland High School students at the State House

On February 25th, eleven Governor Baxter School for the Deaf/Portland High School (GBSD/PHS) students and 3 school staff members enjoyed the day at the State House in Augusta. Representative Leila Percy invited them into the House of Representatives to learn how state laws are made and the legislative process. The day started with the opening ceremony at the House of Representatives. The National Anthem was sung by Representative Leila Percy and signed by 4 GBSD/PHS students. It was beautiful and everyone really enjoyed the experience.



GBSD/PHS students with Representative Leila Percy & Representative Herb Adams

Deaf-Blind Training for Interpreters & Support Service Provider's (SSP)



John McMahon, Director of the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired

The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS), Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI), the Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened (DDHHLD), and the University of Southern Maine (USM) Interpreter Training Program are working together to develop a program to achieve professional level training in deaf-blind interpreting, as well as create a volunteer support service provider program in Maine.

This training will begin to manage a critical need of persons in Maine who are deaf-blind by providing a way to get professional interpreter services so they can access public services, attend public meetings held by government agencies, and increase opportunities for employment, as well as using volunteer Support Service Provider (SSP) services to let them more fully participate in their community.

According to John McMahon, Director of the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the research that was done determined that there are no services in specially trained deaf-blind adult rehabilitation, and there is a critical need for deaf-blind interpreters and support service providers in Maine. The project will be paid with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.

The project has started and is making progress. Eleven participants recently went to the Helen Keller National Center for specialized training. The eleven consisted of faculty and students from the University of Southern Maine Interpreting Training Program and professional licensed interpreters. A contract has been completed with the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf to host a larger group for training on Mackworth Island in Falmouth. This will include the eleven that went to Helen Keller, staff from Helen Keller National Center, volunteer SSP's, and a group of deaf-blind subject participants. The University of Southern Maine Interpreting Training Program is offering this training as a 5-day credit course that specializes in deaf-blind interpreting.

What will this do for everyone?

- Faculty will be better trained in deaf-blind interpreting within the USM Interpreting Training Program.
- More trained professional interpreters in the area of deaf-blind interpreting throughout Maine.
- Deaf-blind interpreting will become an ongoing curriculum item within the USM Interpreter Training Program.

- An organized group of volunteer SSP's will be available to work with persons who are deaf-blind in Maine.
- A training manual for new professional interpreters and SSP's, consisting of information gained through all the training aspects of this project.
- A listing of trained SSP's, and an organized process for applying for and receiving their assistance.

For more information regarding this project, contact the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired
John McMahon, Director
150 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
Tel: 623-7949
John.M.McMahon@maine.gov



The Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened (DDHHLD) invites you to visit the DDHHLD web site www.maine.gov/rehab/dod to view the 5-Year Plan that has been created by commission members.

The Commission for the Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing & Late Deafened meetings are open to the public and take place at the Central Maine Commerce Center, Department of Labor, in Augusta, in the Frances Perkins conference room, 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM.

The next meeting date is June 10, 2010.

Did You Know?

◆ *Sign Net* is here!

John Dunleavy
Alpha One
127 Main Street
South Portland, ME 04106
866-760-1752 (V/VP)
800-906-5375 (TTY)
767-5997 (FAX)
E-mail: info@signnet.org

Sign Net is a mobile computer-training program for Maine's Deaf community. The free computer classes are taught by John Dunleavy in American Sign Language and will take 10-weeks to complete. The classes are statewide in local CareerCenters. For more information, contact John Dunleavy at Alpha One.

◆ **Joe Roquebecil, MA, CRC**, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing, will now be working in Bangor on Wednesdays 9:00 AM to 2:30 PM and not on Thursdays. Contact information:

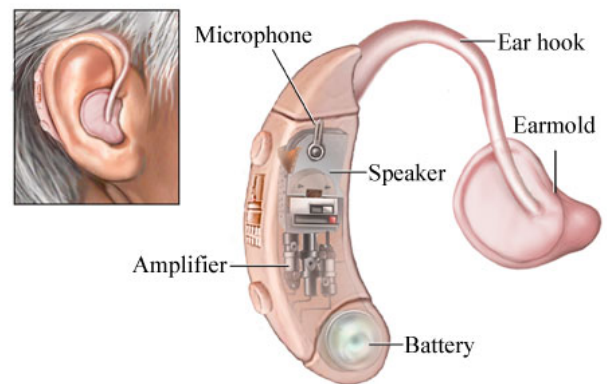
Maine Department of Labor
Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
21 Enterprise Dr, Suite 2
73 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0073
Joseph.Roquebecil@maine.gov
866-926-3321 (Voice, Videophone)
207-624-5111 (TTY)
800-633-0770 (TTY)
207-287-6249 (Fax)

◆ Contact numbers for the Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors for Deaf and Hard of Hearing:

Joe Roquebecil.....1-866-926-3321 (VP)
Rod MacInnes.....1-866-588-6360 (VP)
Ginny Pelletier.....1-866-638-1058 (VP)

◆ **ALDA-Maine (Association of Late-Deafened Adults-Maine)** is an all volunteer group for the empowerment of over 100,000 people in Maine and more in neighboring states who are deafened, hard of hearing, or have a hearing loss of any kind. New members and visitors to all events are welcome. Come talk with us. Read the new "*Hearing Loss Herald*" publication and join us soon for timely on-line information and discussions, whether you have a hearing loss, are hearing, or interested in equal rights for all people with disabilities. See www.alda-maine.mysite.com.

◆ WANTED, USED HEARING AIDS



Do you have a pair of hearing aids in a drawer?
Want to put them to good use? Mail them to the Warren Center. We will fix them, and pass them along to an individual in need.

Warren Center
175 Union Street
Bangor, Maine 04401
941-2850 (V)
Web site: www.warrencenter.org/

◆ New "*Resources: A Guide to Services for People Who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Late Deafened*" guides are available at the Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened. Contact information on back page of this newsletter.

If you attended the Maine School for the Deaf or Governor Baxter School for the Deaf (GBSD), counseling is available at no cost to you.

Signing mental health counselors are listed in the Division of Deafness Resource Guide www.maine.gov/rehab/dod/resource_guide/clinical.shtml they are trained to help deaf people who were abused. If you prefer **nonsigning** counselors with a qualified interpreter, it can be arranged at no cost to you. Insurance or MaineCare will be billed first (if you attended the Maine School for the Deaf or GBSD, no money will be charged to you for co-pay or deductible).

For more information, please contact:

Department of Labor-Division of Deafness
John Shattuck
866-760-8430 (VP)
623-7957 (V)
1-888-755-0023 (Toll free TTY)
E-mail: john.g.shattuck@maine.gov

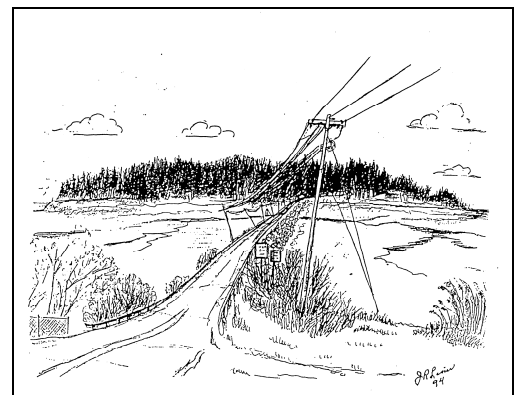
Maine Center on Deafness
866-971-9133 (VP)
797-7656 (V/TTY)
1-800-639-3884 (V/TTY)
24.97.54.29 (VP)
E-mail: info@mcmaine.org

Do you...

...have trouble sleeping?
...have bad dreams?
...still think of bad experiences from the past?
...pass along the hurt to your children, partner, wife, girlfriend, boyfriend or husband?
...find it hard to keep intimate (close) relationships?

You Can Feel Better. You are not alone.

**In Memory of James Levier
June 23, 1940-March 16, 2001
You are missed.**



*The causeway to Mackworth Island and The Governor
Baxter School for the Deaf
by
James Levier (1940-2001)*

Basic Communication Principles

- Communication with a Deaf person involves sensitivity, common sense, and courtesy.
- Effective communication is a joint responsibility of hearing and Deaf people.
- Always feel free to ask, "What can I do to make it easier for the two of us to communicate?"
- There are many ways to communicate; the situation determines the preference.

Maine Department of Labor
Division of Deafness
150 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0150

Return Service Requested

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

Jill Duson, Director

Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened

The Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened provides a program of services to Deaf, hard-of-hearing and late-deafened people in Maine, which includes information and referral, advocacy, and accessibility promotion.

John Shattuck, Director

Tel: 623-7957 (V)

1-888-755-0023 (TTY)

1-866-760-8430 (VP)

E-mail: John.G.Shattuck@maine.gov

Alice Crandall Johnson

Rehabilitation Consultant

Tel: 623-7964 (V)

1-888-755-0023 (TTY)

E-mail: Alice.C.Johnson@maine.gov

Nancy Melanson, Assistant to the Director

Tel: 623-7998 (TTY), 623-7958 (V)

1-888-755-0023 (TTY)

287-5292 (FAX)

E-mail: Nancy.A.Melanson@maine.gov

*The Maine Department of Labor provides equal opportunity in employment and programs.
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.*