Maine Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
Maine Department of Labor

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

MAINE-LINES

19th Deaf Culture Annual Tea
State House, Hall of Flags
September 16, 2010

The Deaf Culture Annual Tea took place on September 16, 2010, at the Hall of Flags in the State House. Welcome remarks were given by John Shattuck, Director of the Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened; Laura Fortman, Commissioner for the Department of Labor and State Representative Emily Cain.

The keynote speaker was Janis Cole and she was very well-received by all. In the words of a Tea guest, “Janis Cole’s speech was very informative in terms on what the Deaf have accomplished and also what we need to do to be successful and effective in a world where the majority of people are hearing.”

The refreshments were provided by Richard Desjardins, operator of the Cross Café, located at the Cross State Office Building, which were delicious. The Cross Café is part of the Business Enterprise Program, Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI).

The annual awards were given out by Jonathan Connick, Chair of the Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened. This year’s award recipients are as follows:

**Clifton F. Rodgers Award**
A Lifetime Achievement Award

This award is named for Clifton F. Rodgers, a resident of Maine all of his life. He attended the Maine School for the Deaf and lived in Belfast for over 30 years with his wife Dorothy. Cliff was a member of the Division of Deafness Advisory Council for many years and also worked for the Division of Deafness as a rehabilitation assistant.

Quotes that describe him are: "He made an indelible impression on everyone he came in contact with, for his style always created good will and warm feelings;" "His knowledge of Maine and its Deaf Culture were immense;" and "He passed through this world making it a better place."

This award is unique in that nominations for the award must be made by a Commission member. The award is given to an individual in recognition for their outstanding service in a professional or voluntary capacity to the Deaf and hard-of-hearing communities in the state of Maine.

The award is presented to an individual who has worked in or with the Deaf community for many years. It is given in recognition of a "lifetime of achievement."
This year’s recipient of the **Clifton F. Rodgers Award** is J. Roderick “Rod” MacInnes

There were several Commission nominations for Rod to receive this award. Here are the comments below:

“Rod has worked in and with the Deaf community and on behalf of people who are deafened in more capacities than I can count on my fingers and toes. He is an amazing storehouse of knowledge and is always willing to offer that knowledge to anyone who asks. He has tirelessly joined many efforts ranging from community-based recreational events, to senior citizen support, to legislative efforts. It isn’t easy for a person to win the kind of approbation that Rod is afforded within Maine’s Deaf community. In fact, you can’t “win” it, it has to be earned.”

“I have worked directly and indirectly with Rod for over 20 years. He has worked and advocated for Deaf people with mental health and mental retardation long before it was popular. He served on the board at the Maine Center on Deafness, worked with SPEAK UP, worked in group homes, Camp Sign-A-Watha, Vocational Rehabilitation, the list goes on and on. Not to mention the hours and hours he volunteered on many fronts! Rod has worked behind the scenes as a silent leader. It is only that he is no longer doing this that we will all learn all that he has been involved with.”

“Rod has worked in the Deaf community in Maine for almost 25 years; most recently as a Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf (RCD) in southern Maine for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). He retired from that position this summer. Rod is known for being very tenacious…some may call it stubborn…but he has always been very committed to, and a strong advocate for, our community. Aside from VR, Rod also taught at the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf, has worked with Deaf people with mental illness and/or mental retardation in different capacities.

He worked at the Maine Center on Deafness and is now a valuable Board member for that organization. While a VR counselor he was able to get the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services involved in Disability Mentoring Day which grows by leaps and bounds every year.”

Rod was always one to try the latest technology and advocate for its use. He was one of the first to advocate for text pagers and videophones for Deaf state workers.

Something that many don’t know is that he was the original founder of the concept of Safer Place, the survivor/provider group who worked to get services and compensation for survivors of abuse from the Maine School for the Deaf and Governor Baxter School for the Deaf. He was the first to bring information to Maine about the program from Vancouver, British Columbia that was established to compensate survivors of abuse from their school for the Deaf. Rod most often maintained a back seat and stayed out of the spotlight. He would start things, then step back and let others accept the credit and glory…never complaining, just smiling as the outcomes in benefits to the community were more important to him than personal recognition. It’s a good time now to honor him and give him some of the personal recognition he so richly deserves.

**Ginny Hewes Advocate for the Needs of the Deaf Community Award**

Patricia A. Sarchi

This award is presented to honor the legacy of Ginny Hewes. Her continued advocacy with the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation ultimately led to signing group homes, Camp Sign-A-Watha, an increase in qualified interpreters and signing therapists.
Patty’s nominations came in with passion, because Patty has been using her passion to advocate for people with dual sensory loss for many years. Here are a couple of comments made by the community:

“Patty Sarchi has served on many committees representing the Deaf-blind community in Maine. She has felt the need and effectively conveyed the need for service support provider (SSP) services here in Maine. Her constant reminders of this need kept the issue fresh in the minds of numerous agencies so that when funds became available, this priority jumped into the minds of those able to act upon it. Once SSP training became a reality, Patty immediately volunteered her services during that training as well as after to serve as a support to those individuals wanting to learn more about working with individuals with dual sensory loss.”

“For her push for much needed service support provider (SSP) training in Maine. It resulted in the establishment of the Deaf-blind immersion week on Mackworth Island. She continues to remain committed to seeing SSPs trained, available, and connected to those who need their services, keeping in touch with the workshop leaders and attendees in order to establish a network of SSPs in Maine.”

**Promoting American Sign Language, Deaf Culture and Deaf People Award**

**Sherry Van Wickle Walrath**

Sherry had several nominations with many kind words from community members. Here are comments we heard from people:

“For her years of tireless work to promote American Sign Language working as an interpreter and a teacher. Farmington and Franklin county are lucky to have her!!!”

“Sherry has been active in the Deaf/signing community in Farmington for many years teaching students and the public about American Sign Language and Deaf culture.”

“Despite trying to RETIRE for many years, the complete lack of Deaf friendly signing resources in the Farmington area had Sherry for many years tirelessly interpreting, teaching and mentoring the next generation so that her corner of Maine can better serve the Deaf and signing, gesturing, adults with mental retardation in the community.”

**Special Commendation Award**

**Jane Gallivan**

A special award was given to Jane Gallivan, Director for the Office of Adults with Cognitive & Physical Disabilities for her life time contribution.

“Jane has done so much for people with intellectual disabilities who are deaf, hard of hearing or have communication barriers. Jane’s dedication to communication is the direct result as to why Maine has communication consultants to serve the citizens of Maine.”

Another positive comment about Jane: “Jane has gone out of her way to give welcoming remarks at one of the annual Deaf Conferences, and worked miracles to find funds to support several clients to attend Camp Sign-A-Watha several years ago when funding began to get tight. She has supported the Visual Gestural Communication (VG or VGC) initiative getting VG services to be MaineCare reimbursable and funding VG training to agency staff through the Maine Center on Deafness.”

**Special Commendation Award**

**Debbie & Mark Myers of KEWL ASL**

Debbie & Mark Myers
“For many years this couple has been committed to raising awareness of Deaf people, their language and culture.

Whether they are at work, volunteering or socializing among hearing and Deaf communities, their approach has always been to recognize the need and educate with the deepest respect to all, both hearing and Deaf parties. They have interfaced with employers/employees, students/teachers/administrators, medical professionals, interpreters/interpreting students, families of Deaf and Deaf individuals with a unique blend of professionalism, sensitivity and honesty. However, much of what they do has for the most part gone unnoticed. I personally have seen them positively impact the lives of many, one individual at a time.

Debbie and Mark Myers have not become complacent. They search continually for a deeper understanding of Deaf people and culture through Deaf literature, being in and among Deaf people, participation in local, regional and interstate events while serving in small and large ways to broaden their experiences. At all times their stance reflects the state of a "mission" of respect, education and elevation of understanding where it concerns Deaf people and those whom they interface with here in the state of Maine.”

Outstanding Citizenship Award

Gloria S. Bernier, President of Maine Alumni Association for the Deaf

Some people just like to give back to their community and Gloria Bernier is one of those people. She is President of the Maine Alumni Association for the Deaf but she’s also a friend, a Deaf community member who cared enough to host the 50th Anniversary Party for our friends, Pat & Bill Nye from the Deaf community. She included e-flyers and was a great party planner. The party took place on July 11th, 2010 and it was a great party!

Citizenship Youth Award

Yuri Clarisa Shepard-Kegl

These are the words that were used to describe a very special young woman:

“Yuri Shepard-Kegl, a native of Nicaragua who moved to the United States only four years ago, was the only graduate of Governor Baxter School for the Deaf/Portland High School this past year. Over her four years in high school, while challenged with learning both a new signed language and English, she distinguished herself as a budding Deaf artist, producing numerous works in sculpture, drawing, painting, and poetry. Her work was exhibited in a one-month show at the Starbucks in Northgate Plaza in Portland. She won an award at the Marie Jean Philip Poetry competition at the Veditz Festival in Boston last year. Her accomplishments were chronicled in the Portland Press Herald.

Perhaps most notably, after graduation she completed her first college course at the University of Southern Maine by taking the Deaf-blind Support Service Provider training course offered this past June and then immediately after she volunteered two months of her time to return to her native country of Nicaragua to work as an itinerant Deaf teacher in collaboration with her former Deaf teachers in Nicaragua to bring language and education to isolated deaf children on the island of Omotepe in Lake Nicaragua.

She has substantially contributed to not only her new Deaf community here in the United States, but she has also given back to the Deaf community that nurtured and educated her in Nicaragua.”
This year’s theme was “A Holiday Every Day” featuring a different holiday for each day of the week. There were activities for everyone, tractor hayrides, boat rides, fishing trips, swimming, t-shirt tie-dying, and arts & crafts and even a campfire with s’mores! Campers made photo albums for themselves to bring home the great memories. ASL News met one night and Peer Support Group on another. Everyone was very busy and very happy!

Willie Tarr was Camp Director this year and he did a fantastic job coordinating the very busy week. Willie’s contact information at Lutheran Social Services is wtarr@lssne.org.

Once again people gathered at Camp Cobbossee on Lake Cobbosseecontee in Monmouth for good times with friends, staff, signers, and gesturers of all kinds. It was a five-day overnight camp program for deaf adults with cognitive disabilities. One thing that was new this year is that the camp went from Wednesday to Sunday, which made it easier for people to volunteer. It was great to see old and new friendly faces and smiles. Campers came from all over, some from Lutheran Social Services homes, Goodwill Industries homes and private homes around the state. Approximately forty campers with sixty staff members attended and enjoyed the week-long event.
Another year, another Deaf Culture Festival! The day started out at 10 AM, earlier for others, and continued throughout the day and night; great fun for children, adults, Deaf and hearing. It truly was inspiring to see everyone gathering together to celebrate Deaf Culture. Visitors from out of state came to renew friendships and enjoy the day and evening with loved ones.

The kids had all kinds of activities to keep busy and happy. There was a bouncy house, making “boo-boo” bunnies, fall leaf pressing, face painting, temporary tattoos, hula hoops and even making “I Love You” magnets with Perler Beads.

The food was fantastic again this year. Pizza Hut donated half their profits back to the Festival. Poland Spring gave out free water, and the ice cream social in the afternoon was yummy.

There were display tables from MANY organizations, too many to mention them all! In the afternoon, they had workshops taking place for people who were interested. Examples of the workshops were Managing your Money, Employment, Adaptive Equipment, Deaf Pride, and Deaf community and interpreter’s discussion. They even had an Interpreter Auction. Interpreters “sold” two hours of their time to provide interpreting services to the winning bidder.

The evening ended with a Dance Party. A live disc jockey played “dance beat” music and ear plugs were given out to our hearing friends in the audience. Smile.
On July 26, 2010, a celebration took place at the Gracie Theatre, Husson College in Bangor. It was hosted by the ADA Coalition formed in 2009 under the leadership of Alpha One. This group includes Alpha One, Husson University, Technical Exploration Center and Very Special Arts of Maine. The special guest speaker was Governor John Baldacci. The Governor presented six awards on behalf of the Maine ADA Coalition:

- **Bowdoin College** for promoting accessibility;
- **Bangor Police Department** for model compliance efforts by a State or municipal agency;
- **Hilton Garden Inn** in Lewiston for model delivery of goods or services by a public accommodation;
- **Aroostook Mall Staff** for an organization working for improved service for the public;
- **Gracie Theatre, Husson University**, in Bangor for Honorary Award, is a model for public accommodations; and
- **Jan DeVinney**, former Director of Maine’s Division of Deafness and current member of the Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened, for an individual working for improved service for the public.

Congratulations to all award recipients, but a special “PAH” to Commission member Jan DeVinney.

This service award is named in memory of the life of Denis Pratt, who died unexpectedly on July 7, 2010. Denis was employed as an architect and access design specialist for eighteen years at Alpha One. His nickname was “Access Man” and he advised organizations on how to meet ADA accessibility standards. The Pratt awards were designed by Torren Gordon, 18, of Belfast. He created six unique awards, each of stained glass.

Sitara Sheikh is the new Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf in Augusta at Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), starting October 4, 2010. Sitara has a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in Social Work and a Master of Science (MS) degree in Human Resource Development. She graduated from the Rochester Institute of Technology and is originally from the province of Ontario in Canada.

Sitara has held positions both as a case manager and as a supervisor of case managers. She has experience as a training specialist and paraeducator. Sitara also worked in Nairobi Kenya as an United States Peace Corps volunteer for over three years where she developed course material and taught primary aged children, educated teachers utilizing computer programs and collaborated with teachers to develop sign language workshops for parents.

Other experience includes working with individuals utilizing employment and education plans, job training, job coaching, job assessment, and creating training material and then using it to instruct and train colleagues. Sitara has extensive experience working and closely collaborating with various agencies to ensure that her clients received the support they need.

In Sitara’s spare time she likes traveling, swimming, reading books and wants to learn how to kayak. She loves this beautiful state of Maine! Welcome to Maine, Sitara!
New Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Working with Hard-of-Hearing & Late-Deafened Clients in Portland
Welcome Carlton Ming!

The following is an interview that took place with Carlton on October 19, 2010.

When did you begin your job as a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor working with hard-of-hearing clients in southern Maine?

On September 6, 2010, I worked out of the Portland and Lewiston offices and started full time in Portland on October 1, 2010.

Where did you work prior to this position?

Originally I worked in the Augusta, Vocational Rehabilitation office from 1984 - 1989. Seeing the need for job coaching services, I later co-founded Central Maine Job Coaching. After enjoying that for five years, I then felt it was time to move on and accepted a position as the clinical director of a newer (at the time) style of residential facility for elderly people with psychiatric diagnosis. Next was a short contract, training all the staff at Augusta Mental Health Institute to de-escalate difficult situations.

After that contract ended, I took a position in the Saco/Biddeford area as the residential program director for an independent living non-profit that served both individuals with mental health issues and individuals with developmental delays. It was during this time period I was introduced to Deaf culture. After this agency closed, I spent some time away from human services and later came back refreshed as the director of a temporary living group home for children who were removed from their homes because of abuse or neglect. The next position brought me closer to my home, running four independent departments, providing housing for people with developmental delays.

After twenty years of being away from working with the state vocational rehabilitation system, I returned as a transition counselor in the Lewiston office, serving three schools in western Maine. The feeling of “being just where you need to be,” is incredible here. After spending a lot of time on the road and away from home, I interviewed and was hired in my present position and I’m really enjoying it here as well.

How many years have you been working in this field?

Thirty years in human services related positions.

Why did you apply for this particular position?

My present case load brings together two populations that I have a great deal of interest in. Half of it serves people who are hard of hearing and late deafened, the latter being one I can self-identify with more each year, assisting people with today’s technology so that they can retain their jobs or if they’re not working, assist in finding them one. The other half is working with Biddeford High School as their transition counselor. I indeed also have a passion for working with kids, guiding them and assisting them to be successful in reaching their goals.

What have you learned from working with hard-of-hearing people?

I'm learning more about all the areas it affects of life as we know it, the isolation, depression and miscommunication that can happen when someone experiences hearing loss.

Welcome back, Carlton!
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.

♦ Contact numbers for the Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors for Deaf and Hard of Hearing:
Joe Roquebecil……………...1-866-588-6360 (VP)
Ginny Pelletier……………...1-866-638-1058 (VP)
Sitara Sheikh……………...1-866-926-3321 (VP)
Carlton Ming……………...347-3200 (V) or 1-888-817-7113 (TTY)

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.

♦ 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 for the Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing & Late-Deafened 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 for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Late Deafened.

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@mcdmaine.org

You Can Feel Better.
You are not alone.
Community Counseling Center’s Deaf Services Program

The Deaf Services Program at Community Counseling Center in Portland is the only program of its kind under an organization in Maine. As the supervisor for Deaf Services Case Management, Kristine Dach, LCPC, is excited to spread the word about the services she and her colleagues provide. Kristine is deaf and has been employed by the program for seven years.

“We offer counseling services and case management services that support individuals and families who have or are related to someone with hearing loss or a communication disorder,” Kristine explained.

While headquartered in Portland, the Deaf Services Program was developed to serve individuals and families throughout the state. The program currently extends to north of Augusta, but hopes to eventually serve Bangor and north if the need is apparent.

The Deaf Services Program provides several different services: Targeted Children’s Case Management, Adult Case Management, and Deaf Counseling Services.

“When there is someone who is deaf or hard of hearing in a family, there are unique communication challenges which can impact relationships within the family,” Kristine said. “It can also affect the sense of belonging and self worth of the deaf or hard of hearing individual.”

Targeted Children’s Case Management serves families where one or more family member is deaf or hard of hearing. Clinical case managers’ work with families of children diagnosed with mental illness, behavioral issues and other specialized needs to develop a plan tailored to the individual needs of the child. This includes coordination or services with a multidisciplinary team of professionals from schools, child welfare, mental health, other agencies, and other support people chosen by the parents.

Adult Case Management serves deaf and hard-of-hearing adults who have a mental health diagnosis. Like children’s case managers, adult case managers conduct assessments of an adult’s strengths and weaknesses, work with the adult to create an effective service plan to address their needs in the community, locate and develop resources, and monitor progress and effectiveness of established services.

Deaf Counseling Services offers outpatient mental health services for eligible deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind, and late-deafened children, adults, and their families.

This program also serves hearing clients who have family members with hearing loss and children of deaf parents. Individual, group and family therapy is provided by mental health clinicians who are skilled in American Sign Language and familiar with deaf culture as well as to others with hearing loss and/or communication disorder.

The Deaf Services Program accepts most third party insurance and managed care programs, as well as MaineCare and Medicare. Former students from Maine School for the Deaf and Governor Baxter School for the Deaf can access the counseling at no cost. A reduced rate is available to those who could not otherwise afford the services. This rate is set on a sliding fee scale, based upon income and certain expenses. No one is denied services because of their inability to pay.

For more information, call: 207-874-1030 Ext. 272 (V) to speak with Kristine Dach or (207) 874-1043 (TTY) or (866) 298-7410 (Video Phone) and ask to be connected with Deaf Counseling Services. If someone is not immediately available, your name and number will be taken and someone will return your call as soon as possible.

Hear In Maine
An Alpha One Program

Beth Mogan, Alpha One, Hear In Maine, Coordinator

Hear in Maine is an Alpha One program that offers people resources to find hearing aid services and financial aid. They maintain a list of audiologists, hearing aid vendors, and financial resources. They look at eligibility for funding supports and where to find them. Contact Beth Mogan at Alpha One to discuss the resources available. An application for Hear In Maine is attached.

1-800-640-7200 (Voice)
E-mail: bmogan@alphaonenow.org
127 Main Street, South Portland, ME 04106
Information Request

Hear in Maine is an Alpha One program addressing hearing aid need and acquisition within Maine.

Our primary goal is offering people resources to find hearing aid services and programs. We look at eligibility for funding supports and where to find them. We will maintain a comprehensive database of audiologists, hearing aid vendors, and financial resources. Based on the information provided, a list of available resources will be sent to you.

**PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY**

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**Do you live in an Assisted Living or Nursing Facility?**

| Yes | No |

**Do you have subsidized or Section 8 housing?**

| Yes | No |

**Are you employed?**

| Yes | No |

**Are you a Veteran?**

| Yes | No |

**Are you a Student?**

| Yes | No |

**Are you a Client of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)?**

| Yes | No |

**Could be employed if you had Hearing Aid(s):**

| Yes | No |

**Signature:**

Please return the completed form to Beth Mogan at the address below or e-mail it to bmogan@alphaonenow.org. 127 Main Street, South Portland, ME 04106; Telephone 1-800-640-7200; Web site: hearinmaine.org
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)
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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.