



The Deaf Bee

July 2009

Volume 22, Issue 2

FREE

What is Cancer Awareness Recovery Education?

*Joelene Spires
Stephanie Flerchinger
Breast Cancer Educators*



awareness

For the second year DHHSC has been awarded a grant from Susan G. Komen for the Cure Foundation. DHHSC is pleased to welcome Joelene

Spires and Stephanie Flerchinger as Breast Cancer Educators for the Cancer Awareness Recovery Education (CARE) for Deaf and Hard of Hearing community of Fresno County.

Susan G. Komen for the Cure was founded in 1982 in Dallas, Texas by Nancy G. Brinker in honor of her sister, Susan G. Komen, who passed away from breast cancer. Nancy was determined to find a cure to get rid of breast cancer once and for all through the efforts of this organization.

As Breast Cancer Educators, we are looking forward

to continuing the work that was started by the former coordinator Michelle Bronson, who is now Executive Director of DHHSC. It is because of Michelle's diligent work over the past year that we are able to continue the CARE program. As of today DHHSC has a good relationship with The Central Valley Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen for the Cure Foundation. For more information about the Central Valley Affiliate we encourage you to check out their website www.komencentralvalley.org.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community members are strongly encouraged to attend the CARE workshops and events. All are welcome at our events whether male, female, currently battling against breast cancer, or friends and family members of survivors that have battled with breast cancer.

Workshop/event topics include the following: Tours of Mammogram facilities, Movie Night, Breast Cancer Panel Support Group, Race for the Cure, Mother/

Daughter Tea Party, Women's Conference, Men's Breast Cancer and much more. The workshop/event fliers will be available at the DHHSC website and are displayed in the DHHSC Headquarters lobby. You can also visit our [vlog](#) which provides updated information about Breast Cancer workshops and events in ASL. Not only will the workshops be educational, it will also be a fun and beneficial learning experience for everyone!

Our goals as Breast Cancer Educators are to increase your knowledge of breast cancer, encourage you to seek screening at the doctor office, teach you your rights according to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), provide you with local community resources, as well as to teach you to identify and overcome barriers to access through self-advocacy.

If you are interested in becoming involved in the fight against breast cancer, please contact us at joelenes@dhhs.org or stephanief@dhhs.org.



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NOTICE UNDER THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), the City of Fresno will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs, or activities.

Employment: The City of Fresno does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its hiring or employment practices and complies with all regulations promulgated by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission under Title I of the ADA.

Effective Communication: The City of Fresno will generally, upon request, provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities so they can participate equally in the City's programs, services, and activities, including qualified sign language interpreters, documents in Braille, and other ways of making information and communications accessible to people who have speech, hearing, or vision impairments.

Modifications to Policies and Procedures: The City of Fresno will make all reasonable modifications to policies and programs to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy all of its programs, services, and activities. For example, individuals with service animals are welcomed in the City's offices, even where pets are generally prohibited.

Anyone who requires an auxiliary aid or service for effective communication, or a modification of policies or procedures to participate in a program, service, or activity of the City of Fresno, should contact the office of **Elizabeth Kunz, ADA Coordinator** during normal business hours at **559-621-8716 (voice), 559-621-8721 (TTY), 559-457-1051 (FAX)** or **elizabeth.kunz@fresno.gov**, preferably five working days but no later than 48 hours before the scheduled event. The ADA does not require the City of Fresno to take any action that would fundamentally alter the nature of its programs or services, or impose an undue financial or administrative burden.

More information about the ADA can be found at the US Department of Justice website, www.ada.gov, or by calling their helpline at 800-514-0301 (voice), 800-514-0383 (TTY). Applicants or employees of the City of Fresno who would like to request a reasonable accommodation or have other disability-related concerns may contact **Dan Turner, Risk/Safety Manager**, at **559-621-6901** or dan.turner@fresno.gov. Concerns or complaints that a program, service, or activity of the City of Fresno is not accessible to persons with disabilities should be directed to **Elizabeth Kunz, ADA Coordinator** at **559-621-8716 (voice), 559-621-8721 (TTY), 559-457-1051 (FAX)** or elizabeth.kunz@fresno.gov

The City of Fresno will not place a surcharge on a particular individual with a disability or any group of individuals with disabilities to cover the cost of providing auxiliary aids/services or reasonable modifications of policy, such as retrieving items from locations that are open to the public but are not accessible to persons who use wheelchairs.



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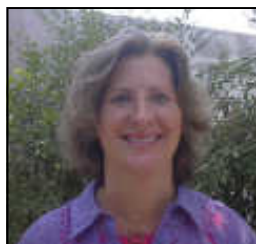
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United Together For Our Community's Growth



Since we assumed our new roles as Executive Director and Operations Director back in February, it has been a whirlwind of activities at DHHSC. From the first day we started we have been immersed in grant-writing, meetings, direct services, team-building, and community events, yet loving every minute of it. It is a true privilege to serve DHHSC and our Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community, and we feel honored to serve in this capacity.

DHHSC is comprised of a wonderful management team and staff, and we feel so blessed to be working alongside such a dedicated team of individuals. Each person brings with him/her different skills, talents, experiences, and perspectives, which fosters an environment of creativity and growth. It is challenging, yet rewarding, to establish specific goals that are beneficial to DHHSC and have everyone come together to realize those same goals. It is important to us that both the management team and staff feel heard and valued for their input because without them, DHHSC cannot move forward.

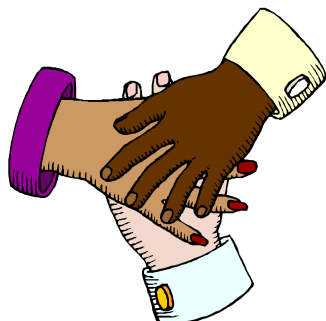
For example, our staff shared that they would like to see more ASL classes offered through DHHSC, along with workshops focusing on parenting skills, health and safety, employment, and diabetes. Because it is their passion to meet the needs and interests of our community, we are seeing more of these classes at each of our four offices. It is you, our community, that supports our agency and it is important to us that we are attuned to your interests as well. If there is a particular workshop that needs to be provided, please let us know right away! We appreciate feedback and suggestions provided by the community, and we keep a evaluation form near the front desk at each office for this purpose. If you prefer to write your ideas or feedback without using your name, feel free to fill out a form anytime. We want to know what you think of DHHSC and our services so that we can always meet the community's needs with the help of information from all of you.

We are grateful to our funders, in addition to California Department of Social Services. We recently received several grants, which include First Five of Merced County, United Way of Merced County, Susan G. Komen for the Cure, and a mini-grant from First Five of Tulare County. These grants make possible different events and workshops and it is thrilling to see staff and community come together for learning and growth. Please ask us for more details on these programs if you are interested! We never cease learning or trying new things, hence the importance of participating in continuing education. The world is a constantly changing place and DHHSC is committed to empowering clients with accurate and current information so they can make informed, life-enhancing decisions. Without knowledge, one cannot expect to make a wise decision.

DHHSC strives to be Professional, Positive, and Productive (our new "3 Ps" motto) and we work closely with our committed Board of Directors to ensure a smooth delivery of appropriate services. They are committed to seeing DHHSC grow in ways that benefit our Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community. In addition, this creative team is generating new ideas for DHHSC including fundraising activities and family-building ASL storytelling sessions. They are working hard on our current Friends of DHHSC Booster Club and recruiting interested members of the community to become vested Board Members.

DHHSC is here for our community. You are the inspiration that keeps us rooted, working closely with each client who requests services so that each of us has access to what is needed most. We appreciate all the volunteering and donations you give back to us, knowing that you make a difference to your own community by supporting services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Thank you for being a part of what makes DHHSC a place we all value.

Working alongside such an inspiring group of individuals, we anticipate years of dedicated service to DHHSC and our Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community. We look forward to what the future brings and especially working with such a diverse community. Together we can brainstorm new ideas and try new methods. Together we can develop new programs that will benefit the agency and community. Together we can empower ourselves to grow as contributing members of society. Together we can discover our individual strengths and talents. Together we can become united as leaders of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community. **Together We Can!**



Michelle Bronson, Executive Director

Jesse Lewis, Operations Director

Deaf Leaders Make an Impact in Community

Stephanie Flerchinger
Leadership Coordinator

DHHSC is sad to see the Leadership team come to an end after working together for one year. The "Leaders in our Midst" program was made possible by the Department of Rehabilitation Independent Living and Assistive Technology Section. This program has allowed us to provide a service to our Deaf and Hard of Hearing community that has never been provided in the past: promoting, empowering, and encouraging Deaf participants to become future Deaf Leaders in our community.

Through training, Deaf and Hard of Hearing participants had the opportunity to learn a variety of

leadership techniques, such as how to run a meeting using Parliamentary Procedure, discovering their career goals according to his/her personalities, knowing the different communication styles,

developing and planning a curriculum, tips for successful networking skills, multiple ways to solve conflicts, advocacy, voting rights, and empowerment. Through workshops and one-on-one instruction participants were able to gain a deeper understanding of how to apply these leadership techniques to their personal lives. During the one-year commitment the leadership team was responsible for setting up and organizing three major deaf events.

The first event was the annual Christmas celebration, Silent Sleigh. Leadership team members put on an original performance at the Fresno

Air-Force base for all Deaf and Hard of Hearing children throughout Fresno County. Not only did they work together to write and develop the performance but they also created handmade props to make the performance a success. The kids enjoyed the performance and it was heart-warming to see their bright, smiling faces.

The second event was the Saint Patrick's Day Potluck. Deaf Community members were encouraged to bring various greenish foods to share at the festivities. The potluck contained a selection of green food such as, salads, spinach dip, pea soup, zucchini soup, veggie trays, cookies and cupcakes with green frosting/icings and vegetable casseroles. Surprisingly, they all turned out to be quite good and healthy!

The third event was the April 25th Picnic, which was hosted at Letterman Park in Clovis. This event turned out to be a big hit! There were an estimated 93 people varying in age from Senior Citizens to newborn babies. During the picnic the leadership team had a barbecue for everyone and attendees brought a side dish or dessert of their own preference. The picnic contained a variety of games and it was endearing to see Deaf and hearing children of Deaf parents coming up to give a mini-speech of how important Deaf Culture is to our heritage. Hopefully next year we can beat the numbers from this event and reach our goal of having over a hundred people in attendance.

In addition to these three major events the leadership team also took the initiative to host a congratulatory party in honor of seven Hoover High School students who passed the California Assessment High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). This marked the first time that Fresno Unified School District (FUSD) has had this many Deaf students passing the

exam, a major accomplishment by both students and faculty! During the festivities the leadership team barbecued for the teachers, families, close friends and the graduating students. After the party the Leadership Coordinator, along with the Executive Director, Michelle Bronson, congratulated and recognized the Leaders for their hard work, awarding them certificates of appreciation. Sadly, DHHSC must say farewell to the Leadership team however we are looking forward to their continued commitment to leading within the Deaf community.

DOR Employment Services Available

Roy Abueg
Employment Specialist

Many of you do not yet know me as I moved to Fresno last year from the San Francisco Bay Area in order to become an Employment Specialist for DHHSC. I have worked in the Social Services field for over six years at four different non-profit organizations as a Medical Advocate and Prevention Educator for Deaf Victims, Deaf Services Coordinator, and Client Advocate. I am so proud to be part of the DHHSC to provide Deaf and Hard of Hearing consumers with Employment Services!

DHHSC has a contract with the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) to provide our Deaf and Hard of Hearing community members with job preparation and job placement services in all DHHSC offices.

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DOR cont. from Page 4

Services include but are not limited to the following: exploring vocational choices, developing resumes, refining application skills, learning interviewing skills, gaining self-advocacy skills, meeting employer expectations, providing proper clothes for work, assisting with transportation needs, developing a network system, explaining to employers about benefits of hiring deaf employees, and following up after placement to provide retention skills within 90 days of hire. I must say I am very proud to share that I have placed several clients in different places of employment and they enjoy their new jobs very much.

If you have been looking for employment but are unable find a job, I can help you. If you need an interpreter for an interview or job training, I can assist with that as well. Please visit our website www.dhhsc.org for information on Employment Services. If you have any questions about our Employment Services/ Department of Rehabilitation, please feel free to email me at RoyA@dhhsc.org or contact me via phone at the Fresno headquarters to schedule an appointment with me or with DOR Counselor, Sheila Dibaji.

DASH Program Begins in Merced

*Matthew Mackenzie
Former Case Manager*

The DHHSC Merced Outreach office has recently been awarded with a \$6,000 grant from United Way of Merced County for the 2009-2010 year, effective July 1, 2009.

Our new grant program, Deaf and hard of hearing Access to Safety and Health education (DASH) targets the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community members of Merced County by providing community education in the areas of emergency response, home safety, health education and more. Our ultimate goal through this program is to empower community members

to take charge of their own health and safety.

The DHHSC staff person will not only work with the community, but also educate and collaborate with other agencies within Merced County on the importance of accommodating the Deaf and Hard of Hearing with sign language interpreters and other forms of effective communications based upon their rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Rehabilitation Act.

For more information about the program, please contact us via email at minfo@dhhsc.org. Thank you United Way of Merced County for your generous support!



GoodSearch
YOU SEARCH WE GIVE

What if Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center earned a penny every time you searched the internet? Well, now we can!
Goodsearch.com is a new search engine that donates half its revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. You use it just as you would any search engine, and it is powered by Yahoo!, so you get great results.

Just go to www.goodsearch.com and be sure to enter Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center as the charity you want to support. Just 500 of us searching four times a day will raise about \$7300 in a year without spending a dime! Be sure to spread the word!

Hearing Aid, Phone, & Smoke Detector Assistance Available

Wayne Johnson
Coordinator of Client Services



Faced with rising costs for everything these days, we sometimes think that we cannot afford things that are necessary. If you have a hearing loss and need hearing aids, but cannot afford them, there are several resources available to you.

The following web site provides a list of programs and organizations providing assistance with obtaining hearing aids for those who qualify:

<http://www.atnet.org/index.php?page=hearing-aid-funding-resources>

Medi-cal also provides assistance and for more information on qualifying for assistance from Medi-Cal in obtaining hearing aids please go to the following website: <http://www.atnet.org/index.php?page=medi-cal-funding-for-hearing-aids>

Are you having difficulty understanding

conversations on the telephone or hearing the telephone ring? At no cost to you The California Telephone Access Program (CTAP) provides specialized telephones to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing who live in California and have local phone service. We are fortunate here at CCO to have one of the few permanent displays in California of all of the CTAP phones for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Stop by and try as many phones as you like to ensure that you get the right phone for your individual need.

Have you checked to make sure you can hear your smoke detector with and without your hearing aids? Please do so as this is an important safety device. If you cannot hear your smoke detector and live in the Monterey and San Benito Counties area, please contact the CCO office to get information on programs that may be of benefit to you.

Thank you Matthew Mackenzie for the URLs, you will be missed at the Merced DHHSC office

Understanding and Living With Diabetes

Wayne Johnson
Coordinator of Client Services

Many of us know or have heard of the word “diabetes” but we do not realize how many of us are actually affected by this disease. Almost all of us either have diabetes or know someone who has diabetes. Diabetes is widely known in United States but most of us do not have much understanding of it.

What is diabetes? It is a disease where your body does not make or use insulin properly. Insulin is a hormone in your body that changes sugar and starches into energy that we need for everyday living. ALL (not just fatty foods) foods have some type of sugar or starch.

There are 23.6 million children and adults with diabetes in United States. About 17.9 million people know that they are diagnosed with diabetes; the rest of the affected 5.7 million people *do not know* that they

have diabetes. Are you one of those people who do not yet know they have diabetes?

If you experience one or more of these symptoms: frequent urination, extreme thirst, extreme hunger, unusual weight loss, become more tired or fatigue, easily irritated, or blurry vision, it is good idea to check with your doctor.

There are four types of diabetes but many of only know of Type 1 and Type 2. There is also gestational diabetes and pre-diabetes. With pre-diabetes, a person’s blood glucose level is higher than normal but is not high enough to become a Type 2 diabetes. 57 million of us have pre-diabetes and that number is not included in 23.6 million people who are already diagnosed with diabetes in United States! Most of people who have Type 2 diabetes almost always have pre-diabetes before they got diagnosed with Type 2. Fortunately, research shows that if a person with pre-diabetes gets the

disease under control, then it can be prevented altogether or delayed from becoming Type 2.

If you are interested in obtaining more in depth information about diabetes

including: the disease itself, symptoms, causes of diabetes, importance of controlling diabetes, techniques for controlling diabetes, dangers of diabetes, diet, how to be prepared if diagnosed with diabetes, and how to help our family and friends with diabetes, please contact us at DHHSC.

Please keep an eye out for a vlog about diabetes that we will be posted on our web site www.dhhsc.org.

Information for this article is from American Diabetes Association, For more information check out: <http://www.diabetes.org/>



SVO's Shared Reading Project Collection (and How You Can Borrow!)

Jesse Lewis
Operations Director

Recently, thanks to the support of First 5 Tulare County, we were able to purchase a collection of materials from the Shared Reading Project, a program developed by Gallaudet University's Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center.

Through this amazing project we have compiled a wide variety of books and DVDs, as well as supplemental materials, for the purpose of teaching families how to read to their Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and increase levels of literacy. These stories are signed in American Sign Language, so the children in our community can follow the story in both ASL and the written word. They will enjoy the many stories we have available to borrow from our office library, each in a handy book bag to keep organized.

We will have storytelling events planned for the future, demonstrating how parents or other family members can use the books and dvds to sign and share these stories with children. Together, all of us can show Deaf and Hard of Hearing children how enjoyable it is to read stories and to inspire them to continue reading throughout their lives.

We encourage you to stop by the office today, or make an appointment to see us. We would be happy to sign you up so that you can borrow a book bag right away, and we will be available to share tips on how to be a part of your child's literacy education team.

We have also begun including Spanish translations of some book bags and expect to receive the rest of the translations soon, so that all our Shared Reading Project materials will be accessible to Spanish-speaking families as well!



What are DHHSC Advisory Councils and Why Should You Get Involved?

Jesse Lewis
Operations Director



If you often visit any of the outreach offices, whether it is in Visalia, Salinas, or Merced, you have probably seen some of us signing "AC" from time to time. No, this has nothing to do with air conditioning, though in these hot summer months, you can bet the staff is trying to keep cool.

When we are sharing information about the "AC" we are referring to our local advisory councils. Each office has an advisory council. You might have already known this, but did you know how important the advisory council is for you as a treasured member of our community?

More than anything else, what you need to know about the AC is that anyone who joins will be representing the local community. When a member has something to share or advice to give about what the community wants or needs, whether they say it in signs, speech, or in writing, that member is telling DHHSC something that the community feels we need to know. This is important to us.

We want to know what our community feels is needed. Perhaps it is more workshops on topics like "How to Get an Interpreter" or "SSI/SSDI and You." Or maybe you, as a community member yourself, have noticed a desire for more employment-related services or more opportunities to learn about new available technology. Whatever it is that the community would like to learn more about, we want to know so we can figure out

whether we are able to provide that workshop.

You might wonder, "Can I share my concerns about lack of interpreters or some places refusing to provide the Deaf with interpreters they ask for?" The answer is yes. The AC is a great opportunity for members to keep DHHSC staff updated on issues that come up, like a business commonly saying "NO" to interpreters. You can bring your ideas, comments, or concerns to any of the local advisory council members so they can share your feedback during the next meeting, without using anyone's name. Or, you can say something during the public comments part of the meeting.

What if you want to join as a member? Attend one of the AC meetings first and see how they work. There are a few simple rules that need to be followed and each member does have responsibilities. We would be happy to share this information—Just ask!

Ask your local office for the date of the next meeting. Whether you want to join as a member or attend just to watch, we welcome you!

Contact:
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waynej@dhhsc.org for Central Coast Outreach
angelicam@dhhsc.org for Merced Outreach