

The Deaf Bee: Spotlight on Staff

A Special Feature from Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center, Inc.

MICHELLE BRONSON

Executive Director- All Offices

Deaf

Years with DHHSC: 6

What kind of education did you have? I was mainstreamed, and I graduated from California State University, Fresno with a B.A. in psychology and M.S. in Marriage and Family Therapy with a Pupil Personnel Services credential.

What do you want our community to know about you? I am an optimist, and I believe in amazing transformations that occur when people work together as a team to bring about positive changes. I am a person of faith, and I appreciate each person's uniqueness.

Who is your role model? Dr. Paul Ogden

What do you want to see in the future? I look forward to seeing more committed individuals join DHHSC's staff and Board of Directors and benefiting from their knowledge, skills, and experience to develop more programs and services for the agency and the Deaf Community as a whole.



JESSE LEWIS

Operations Director- All Offices

Deaf

Years with DHHSC: 9

Where are you from? I grew up in the beautiful state of Maryland.

What kind of education did you have? I was mainstreamed, with interpreters for all classes. I used SEE and PSE until college.

Where did you go to college and what did you study? I received my B.A. degree in Human Communications from CSU, Monterey Bay. My emphasis was in journalism.

What are the most important issues to you? Literacy for all deaf, encouraging community involvement, and improving communication in families.

What do you want to see in the future? More appreciation in the community of our differences. We are all people!



KATHY YOSHIDA

Director of Interpreting- All Offices

Hearing

Years with DHHSC: 22

Where are you from? I grew up in Collingswood, New Jersey, a small town across the Ben Franklin Bridge from Philadelphia.

Where did you go to college and what did you study? I graduated from the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing in 1967 and completed a 25 week intensive Interpreter Training Program at CSUF in 1981.

What are the most important issues to you? I believe it is important for people to have complete access to information so they can make informed decisions, grow mentally and spiritually, and enhance their quality of life.

What do you want our community to know about you? I love my job, my co-workers, and the community we serve.



SUSAN COULTER

Educational Services Manager- Fresno Headquarters
Hard of Hearing **Years with DHHSC: 10**



What kind of education did you have, where did you go to college and what did you study? Mainstreamed without interpreters; Attended San Jose State University, BS degree in Occupational Therapy in 1983.

What past jobs have you worked? Job Placement Services, Employment Specialist, Counselor, and Program Manager.

What's the most interesting thing that happened to you? With an internship that involved all group activities, as a hard of hearing person I was not able to hear in group situations. I was a beginning signer. I did not know how to advocate for myself. I did attempt to but my request for a sign language interpreter was met with arguments of confidentiality. I didn't have the training to know what more to say or where to turn. I failed that internship. Through my work at DHHSC I look back and see how far we have come and how much I have learned about advocacy.

Why did you get into social services? I "fell" into social services. I learned sign language when I was 21 years old. Even when I was not yet fluent I applied for a job working with the Deaf. I didn't get the job but one person on the interview panel offered me the contracted employment with the Department of Rehabilitation. The experience from this job and improvement in my signing skills led from one job to the next until social work became my field of interest.

DAVID DENTON

Human Resources Manager -All Offices
Hearing **Years with DHHSC: 2**



Where are you from? Fresno, CA.

Where did you go to college and what did you study? CSU Fresno, Bachelor's of Science in Business Human Resources

Who is your role model? - Michelle Bronson and Jesse Lewis

What past jobs have you worked? - Riverside Golf Course

What's the most interesting thing that happened to you? I have been to 40 of the 50 states



PAUL BARNETT

Communication Assistant/Bookkeeper- Fresno Headquarters
Hearing **Years with DHHSC: 19**

Where are you from? Fresno.

Where did you go to college and what did you study? Fresno State University - B.S. in Social Welfare.

What past jobs have you worked? Interpreter in the schools.

What do you want our community to know about you? I enjoy writing fiction.

Who is your role model? Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King.

DIANA LEE

Client Services Specialist- Fresno Headquarters
Hearing Years with DHHSC: First year

Where are you from? Born and raised in Fresno, CA.

Where did you go to college and what did you study? CSU Fresno for Communicative Sciences and Disorders.

What's the most interesting thing that happened to you? Traveling to Taiwan to adopt my beautiful daughter. We are so blessed to be in America.

What are the most important issues to you? Equal access and a more clear definition as to what that means.

What do you want to see in the future? Less talk of equal access and more action.



BETH LILLEY

Client Services Specialist- Merced Outreach Office
Hearing Years with DHHSC: First year

Where are you from? South Carolina.

Where did you go to college and what did you study? I went to Fresno State for BA in Interpreting; look forward to going back to school for my M.A.

Why did you get into interpreting and social services? I got into interpreting with the support of the Fresno State Deaf Studies Program. I took ASL 1 and 2 to fulfill GE requirement and from there became more interested in Deaf culture and ASL. I changed my major from Biology to Audiology to Interpreting.

What are the most important issues to you? Community involvement, services for Deaf-Blind, and equal rights for minorities.

SHELLEY STOUT

Client Services Specialist- South Valley Outreach Office
Deaf Years with DHHSC: 2

Where are you from? Hanford

What kind of education did you have? I graduated from Fremont School for the Deaf, but mainstreamed until 8th grade first.

Where did you go to college and what did you study? Golden West College, Huntington Beach- AA in Sociology; College of the Sequoias, Visalia- AA in Early Childhood Education; and Fresno Pacific University, Visalia- BA in Early Childhood Education

Why did you get into social services? I like to work with people and I believe in empowering them to be successful in life.

What are the most important issues to you? Having access to communication, Deaf rights, jobs for the deaf, and being successful in life.





WAYNE JOHNSON

**Coordinator of Client Services- Central Coast Outreach Office
Hearing** **Years with DHHSC: 15**

Where are you from? I am a life-long resident of Salinas California.

What past jobs have you worked? Instructional aide for community college cabinet-making class, tubing fabricator at hang glider factory, commercial photographer.

Why did you get into social services? Because it was an opportunity to assist and benefit others.

What are the most important issues to you? Right to equal access through effective communication, busting myths held by hearing community, improving quality of life for Deaf and Hard of Hearing through information and education.

What do you want our community to know about you? That if you have a need, I am here to assist within the best of my ability, the policies of the agency and the law.

BECKY EDENS-PAUL

**Interpreter & Breast Cancer Educator - Fresno Headquarters
Hearing** **Years with DHHSC: 1**

Where did you go to college and what did you study? I went to College of the Sequoias as well as Fresno State and Gallaudet University. My main focus was theater and interpreting.

What's the most interesting thing that happened to you? I met my now husband while on a date with one of his friends.

What are the most important issues to you? Breast Cancer Awareness, Equality for all individuals, Deaf Culture Awareness.

What past jobs have you worked? My first job was a Blockbuster, which was a perfect fit because I love movies. I have also worked as a waitress and signing aide!

What do you want our community to know about you? I have a strong passion for my work. I love the process of interpreting, it challenges my mind everyday.



KATIE CARLSON

**Interpreter- Fresno Headquarters
Hearing** **Years with DHHSC: 3**

Where did you go to college and what did you study? I graduated from California State University in Dec of 2007 with two B.A. degrees.

What past jobs have you worked? Physical Therapist Assistant, Medical Assistant for an Ophthalmologist

What's the most interesting thing that happened to you? I recently learned a little bit of Irish Sign Language from Deaf Irish natives!

Why did you get into interpreting? In college, I simply fell in love with the beautiful language and the treasured culture and values.

What are the most important issues to you? In the field of interpreting, the most important issue for me is continuing to pursue the highest level of excellence in this profession in order to serve consumers with the best service possible.

ANGELICA MARTINEZ

**Coordinator of Client Services- Merced Outreach Office
Deaf** **Years with DHHSC: 2**

Where are you from? Oakland, California

What kind of education did you have? I went to an all hearing Catholic School without an interpreter. I basically read lips and worked extra hard.

What past jobs have you worked? Certified Nursing Assistant, Pre School Teacher, Private Security and SF Police Cadet, Volleyball Coaching.

What are the most important issues to you? I love the idea of helping family and the most important issue for me is making a difference!

What do you want to see in the future? A Learning Center for parents of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and those who want to become an interpreter, with me directing it!



RAZONDA MUNYARADZI

**Interpreter- Fresno Headquarters
Hearing** **Years with DHHSC: 4**

Where are you from? I'm from Ohio

Why did you get into interpreting? Although I do not have Deaf family members, interpreting appealed to me because I appreciate language, culture, and empowerment. I wanted to become immersed without having to travel very far! To my surprise, I found a whole new world right before my eyes.

What are the most important issues to you? To me, the most important issues regarding interpreting include to the code of conduct and following the shift in the profession from conduit/process models to that of a practice perspective, in keeping with recent developments in this field as supported by RID across the U.S.

Where did you go to college and what did you study? I attended Columbus State for an interpreting degree, Ohio State for a degree in speech & hearing science, Gallaudet for speech pathology graduate courses and practicum, and Fresno Pacific for a degree in teaching ESL

What do you want to see in the future? I want to see DHHSC continue to offer the wonderful services it does!



BRITTANY KING

**Interpreter- South Valley Outreach
Hearing** **Years with DHHSC: First Year**

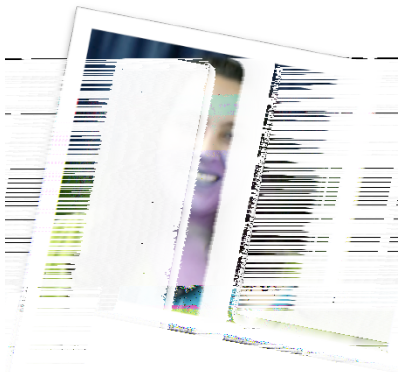
Where are you from? Bakersfield, Ca

Where did you go to college and what did you study? Fresno State- Interpreting and some social work

What do you want our community to know about you? I am enthusiastic about interpreting!

Who is your role model? Jesus Christ

What do you want to see in the future? More Deaf/Interpreting awareness in the Central Valley.





CATHY MURPHY

Billing Clerk- Fresno Headquarters

Deaf

Years with DHHSC: 9

Where are you from? I am from Chula Vista, CA.

What kind of education did you have? I was mainstreamed from kindergarten to 12th grade but had no interpreters. Glad I made it out alive!

What are the most important issues to you? I would like to see the hearing community educated on Deaf Culture to reduce ignorance.

Who is your role model? My mom was my role model.

What do you want to see in the future? I would like to see interpreting revenues reach over a million dollars so the interpreting department can receive a raise for working so hard.

CHERYL PARREIRA

Client Services Specialist- Fresno Headquarters

Deaf

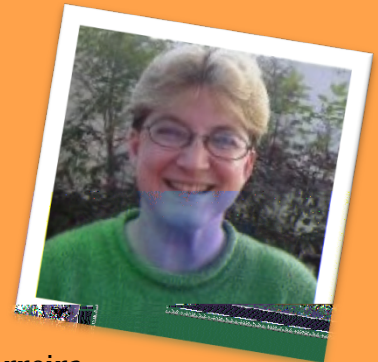
Years with DHHSC: 4

Where did you go to college and what did you study? Ohlone College, Fremont, CA. My major was Education, but now I am attending Fresno City College and my major is social work.

What past jobs have you worked? Jack in the Box, Wells Fargo Bank, California School for the Deaf, Fremont (Best job ever!!), assistant for System Medical Consultation, Inc., and Alcohol & Drug Prevention Program Specialist.

What's the most interesting thing that happened to you? Best thing happened to me that I married my wonderful husband, Anthony Parreira and I traveled all over world.

What do you want our community to know about you? I am a friendly person and enjoy working with our deaf community, empowering them to be independent because we can do it!
What do you want to see in the future? I want to see a domestic violence program added to DHHSC (my vision and passion), and I want to become a Certified Deaf Interpreter.



ERIN URIBE

Interpreter- Fresno Headquarters

Hearing

Years with DHHSC: 1

Where are you from? Born and raised in Fresno, Ca.

Where did you go to college and what did you study? Sign Language Interpreting at Fresno State.

What past jobs have you worked? Library Assistant at Fresno State, Educational Interpreting...

What do you want our community to know about you? I love what I do!

Who is your role model? Kathy Yoshida



SHANNON SIMONELLI

Interpreter Coordinator- Fresno Headquarters
Hearing **Years with DHHSC: 4**

Where did you go to college and what did you study? I graduated with a BA in Interpreting from CSU Fresno in 2004.

What past jobs have you worked? Educational interpreter in Jr. High & High schools, DHHSC receptionist, and Borders Books and Music staff.

What are the most important issues to you? Fostering the skills of fledgling interpreters, working with interpreters and interns/students who have a willingness to put in the time and effort to become a quality interpreter, nurturing the growth of other interpreters.

What do you want our community to know about you? I didn't grow up in the deaf community, yet I love serving and being involved with this amazing group of people.

Who is your role model? Kathy Yoshida. She has an amazing capacity to love others and serves the community with an open and willing heart, with no strings attached.



STACY CONSTANTINO

Resource Specialist/ Volunteer Coordinator- Fresno Headquarters
Hearing **Years with DHHSC: First Year**

Where are you from? Fresno, CA

Who is your role model? My Deaf mother.

What are your past jobs? Interpreting at Fresno City College in 1998 and again in 2000.

Why did you get into interpreting? Lack of communication is lack of education.

What do you want to see in the future? Better and more opportunities for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.



KYRA SCHLEEF

Accounts Receivable- Fresno Headquarters
Hard of Hearing **Years with DHHSC: First Year**

Where are you from? I grew up in the Midwest but spent several years in Las Vegas and the Bay Area before moving to Fresno.

What kind of education did you have? I was mainstreamed. Used CART (computer-assisted real-time) captioning in college since I wasn't proficient in ASL.

Where did you go to college and what did you study? I majored in English for my B.A. and later took a certification course in bookkeeping.

What are the most important issues to you? Keeping as much information and communication in a visual medium as possible.

What do you want to see in the future? Better and higher-quality captioning for everything shown on TV, DVD, and online. Better PSAs and education about how to interact with deaf and Hard of Hearing people.



STEPHANIE FLERCHINGER

Breast Cancer Educator- Fresno Headquarters

Deaf

Years with DHHSC: 2

Where are you from? Denair, California, small town.

What kind of education did you have, where did you go to college and what did you study? I was mainstreamed. I graduated from Fresno State (CSUF) and got my MA degree in Deaf Education

What past jobs have you worked? Staff Counselor at a Deaf camp, Inspector at Ahwahnee hotel at Yosemite National Park, DHHSC for several grant-funded programs, and ASL instructor.

Why did you get into social services? I am deaf and I love working with other individuals like myself. The fun part about my job is that there are no communication barriers.

What do you want to see in the future? A Deaf or Hard of Hearing individual win an election for the United States Senate or President.

MAX REIS



JOSE GARCIA

Facilities Coordinator- Fresno Headquarters
Deaf **Years with DHHSC: 3**

Where are you from? I am from San Benito, Texas.

What kind of education did you have? I was mainstreamed at Bullard High School. I studied the arts and photography.

What past jobs have you worked? My previous jobs include Rudy's and Veterans' Administration Hospital.

What do you want our community to know about you? The community knows me as being a silly person.

Who is your role model? My role model is Jim Carrey.

LISA HUFFMAN

ASL Instructor- Fresno Headquarters
Deaf **Years with DHHSC: First Year**

Where are you from? I'm from Fresno.

What kind of education did you have, where did you go to college and what did you study? I went to regular school at Roosevelt and took both mainstreamed classes and deaf classes.

What past jobs have you worked? I worked Child Development/ Campus Club for a long time.

What are the most important issues to you? I value our Deaf Community and I care for families who I can serve.

Who is your role model? Michelle Bronson and Rosa Ocampo are my role models.



JERRED HORSMAN

Computer Support Technician- Fresno Headquarters
Hearing **Years with DHHSC: First Year**

Where are you from? Fresno, California, born and raised.

Where did you go to college and what did you study? I am currently enrolled in Fresno State with a major in Business Administration and an Emphasis in Information Systems.

What past jobs have you worked? I have worked in Information Technology departments for multiple school districts.

What are the most important issues to you? Ensuring that people's needs are met, that information systems maintain security and that all data is recoverable in case of disaster.

What do you want to see in the future? I hope to see many business opportunities that lead me to large management and enterprise systems type environments with a focus on information systems design and engineering.



JAYME ROBERSON

Maintenance Assistant- Fresno Headquarters

Deaf

Years with DHHSC: First Year

What kind of education did you have, where did you go to college and what did you study? I graduated from Hoover High School in 2003. I studied construction for two years at Fresno City College from 2004-2006.

What past jobs have you worked? My previous jobs include TJ Maxx, Universal DataTech, and Athletic Designs.

What's the most interesting thing that happened to you? I was surprised when I was on the news for being a Hoover High School team basketball player and when I was in the newspapers with my best friend, Marlon, when we played against each other in football.

What do you want our community to know about you? I am a real man who is Deaf. I believe Deaf people CAN! Deaf people are just as capable as hearing people.

Who is your role model? My role model is Michael Jordan.

