

DHHSC Annual Report for the year of 2019  
(prepared January 2020)

## Accomplishments

Our primary funder, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS)-Office of Deaf Access, funds our seven core services, which include Communication Assistance, Counseling, Advocacy, Independent Living Skills Instruction, Job Development and Placement, Information and Referral, and Community Education. As part of our contract with CDSS, we set goals for each of the seven service categories regarding the number of clients we will serve. At the end of each fiscal year, we then provide CDSS with an End-of-Year Report. We are pleased to report that we either met or exceeded the goals for four of the seven categories for the most recent year, with percentages ranging from 51% to 186%. With additional staff hired with the recent budget augmentation and with higher performance expectations, it is our mission to not only meet, but exceed, those goals.

CDSS also added a new service for DHHSC for the year 2019-2020, providing outreach and assistance with CalFresh applications.

Here are the highlights of our grant programs this year:

Our **Deaf Thrive** program, funded by Fansler Foundation, that included at-home American Sign Language instruction (ROCK program), employment preparation for Deaf and Hard of Hearing high school students (YES! program), IEP advocacy, and literacy development. During spring 2019, we hosted our 4th Annual Family Day event, with 66 people in attendance, and 23 Deaf and Hard of Hearing middle and high students from local schools participated in our 8th Annual YES! Job Awareness Fair.

We successfully met our goals with this program. We also received continued funding for another year, for which we are most appreciative.

We completed another contract year with Employment Development Department that allows us to offer **employment assistance services** to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at an EDD location in Fresno. This contract funds one full-time Employment Specialist and one full-time Staff ASL Interpreter. It was an exciting year for them as they successfully placed many Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals at various locations, including Amazon and Harris Ranch.

We successfully met our goals with this program.

**Deaf Access** was a program based in the Central Coast Outreach office in Salinas, funded for the third time by Harden Foundation, providing primarily systems advocacy for our community. Our focus was on improving accessibility for Deaf and Hard of Hearing community members at various organizations and businesses, such as hospitals, law centers, police departments, and more. In addition to systems advocacy, we provided a self-advocacy workshop.

We successfully met our goals with this program.

We completed our second year of the **ASL 4 Kids program** in Merced County, funded by First 5 of Merced County. This program, which is funded for several more years, provides ASL instruction to any children between the ages of 0 and 5, regardless of whether they are Deaf or hearing. Priority is given to families with Deaf and Hard of Hearing children, but the program is also open to hearing kids with the goal of teaching these kids about ASL and their Deaf peers to reduce communication and cultural barriers. Giving these children a positive perspective on their Deaf peers and exposure to another language is another way to benefit our community.

We successfully met our goals with this program.

Central California Women's Conference again awarded us funding for our **deSIGN Artists United** program, an art-oriented workshop series we host in Fresno for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community. Unlike other local classes, our deSIGN Artists United workshops are facilitated in American Sign Language, providing our community members with a very accessible environment for creating art. We also had a well-known Deaf artist from Riverside provide a painting workshop here at DHHSC, and it drew a large crowd and generated another request to host another such workshop. This version of the program focuses on women and children, to honor the terms of the grant funding.

We successfully met our goals with this program.

United Way of Merced County funded our **D-Well Video Series**. This program focused on monthly health-related videos instead of workshops and proved to be a successful and worthwhile program. We decided to test out the online format in order to reach more of our community members who were not able to come to the Merced Outreach Office due to transportation issues or other barriers. However, this format also allowed other Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals from other counties to view the videos as our website is accessible to everyone, not limited to those just in the Merced area. We were able to reach more Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals with this approach.

We successfully met our goals with this program.

Smart & Final was a funder this year for an **ASL Summer Reading Program**, to encourage Deaf and Hard of Hearing children to read. We incorporated this reading program into our annual ASL Summer Program, emphasizing to families the importance of developing their children's literacy skills. Funding allowed us to provide free books and literacy-based games to these families, and we included ASL Storytelling as part of our ASL Summer Program to demonstrate how to make reading and storytelling fun and inclusive for everyone.

We met our goals with this program.

Other grant updates:

Our **Communication Access Program (CAP)** has again been funded by Monterey Peninsula Foundation. This program funds both interpreting services for our Client Services Specialist in the Central Coast Outreach office and also Communication Assistance services to our local Deaf Community.

We applied for a fourth year contract with the Employment Development Department to continue providing employment services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Our first three years were successful, and we look forward to expanding the program even further. Our EDD staff are seeing new clients wanting jobs, and they are working hard to build connections and partnerships. We are seeing an increase in job placements and the need for interpreting services as Deaf and Hard of Hearing new hires orient themselves to their new positions, tasks, and work environments. We are thrilled to once again receive the Wagner-Peyser funding so our community can continue utilizing valuable services at EDD.

Fansler Foundation awarded us with funding again for our **Deaf Thrive** program, which they have previously funded three times before. This program, very similar to the Family Service Program, provides ASL communication-building sessions (ROCK program), employment preparation classes for Deaf and Hard of Hearing youth (YES! program), and literacy services. Our Fresno, South Valley Outreach, and Merced Outreach offices are facilitating these services. Our annual Family Day event, YES! Job Awareness Fair, and Deaf Prom will all be included in the program this year as well.



DHHSC Staff pose outside the Fresno Headquarters, with our new roof, paid for by fundraising. We appreciate all of our donors!

### **Other examples of our success in 2019**

We had many successful events in 2019. Three in particular were our Martha's Vineyard in the Valley, 8th Annual YES! Job Awareness Fair, and 30th Annual Valley Deaf Festival.

DHHSC had an incredibly large turnout, 1,323 paid attendees, for the 30th Annual Valley Deaf Festival! This number did not include the staff, board members, and many volunteers who participated. The

Flipside Show, starring Brett Schaffer, was our special entertainer for the event and was very popular with college/university students majoring in Deaf Education, Deaf Studies, and Interpreting. The theme was DHHSC and the Candy Factory, a play on the famous Roald Dahl story Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.



DHHSC Staff having fun after Valley Deaf Festival

We hosted a sold-out 35th Anniversary event in May 2019 with Deafies in Drag as our entertainment. In spite of technical and food challenges, we all had a great time and still enjoyed the beautiful environment at The Falls Event Center with delicious food from Tree of Life.

DHHSC partnered with National Technical Institute for the Deaf/Rochester Institute of Technology (NTID/RIT) in hosting summer camp in June 2019. NTID/RIT staff ran the camp the first year (in 2018), but last year was facilitated by DHHSC staff for the first time. It was a success, and we plan to continue this partnership. Department of Rehabilitation covered the costs for Deaf and Hard of Hearing youth ages 16 and up, and our camp was focused on vocational training. We had 23 campers and they stayed at the dorms at Fresno State University. The campers participated in many hands-on activities and went on two field trips to Basilwood Farms and Pepsi Co, the latter with a Deaf employee who personally shared her employment experiences with the students.

We had a very successful fundraiser for #GivingTuesday this year, raising approximately \$5,000 with the support of fantastic volunteers who worked with our staff in teams. Some donations are still coming in for this fundraiser.

### **Heartfelt Thanks**

As always, we are grateful to our primary funder, California Department of Social Services-Office of Deaf Access, for their continued support of our core services. Without CDSS, we would not be able to provide as many services as we do.

We would also like to express our heartfelt gratitude to funders of our grant programs for 2019: Employment Development Department, Fansler Foundation, United Way of Merced County, First Five of Merced County, Monterey Peninsula Foundation, Harden Foundation, Central California Women's

Conference, Visalia's Citizens Advisory Committee, and Smart & Final. Your support of our programs have positively impacted the lives of our Deaf and Hard of Hearing community members!

In honor of one of our board members, a transgendered woman, who passed away in June 2019, Lavina Espinosa Memorial Fund was established to provide the Deaf and Hard of Hearing LGBTQIA+ Community with events, activities, and services. We hope to set up a support group for this specific community soon, and some of the donated \$15,000 will be used to cover AIDS/HIV workshops that also include sex education.

We were also blessed to receive continued support from United Way Combined Federal Campaign, which paid for materials, supplies, and curriculum for staff to use for DHHSC's many events and programs. We are fortunate to receive such support from all of you!

Furthermore, we would like to thank Sorenson Communications and Educational Employees Credit Union for their continued support of our annual events, such as our 30th Annual Valley Deaf Festival.

A big thank you to Sign & Sew Guild (SSG) for their annual quilt fundraiser for DHHSC. The 2019 quilt raised \$1,025.00! SSG will soon decide how they would like DHHSC to use the funds.

We are grateful to Martha Coletti for her continued support and loyalty to DHHSC. She donated \$500 towards the cost for new flooring in the Fresno Headquarters.

A big thank you to Fresno Deaf Seniors for supporting our 11th Annual Holiday Luncheon, and we appreciate their ongoing support of our community events.

Mary J. Pigott generously donated \$11,000 for new flooring in our lobby and community room at the Fresno Headquarters. We are grateful for her ongoing support of our work and desire to improve the appearance of our building. The new flooring is beautiful and has greatly improved the professional appearance of our lobby and community room.

Other donors that we want to publicly acknowledge and appreciate for their contributions are:

Fresno Rotary 4,000.00 \$  
Educational Employees Credit Union-Barsto 3,000.00 \$  
Harry Pinajian Memorial Fund 2,908.80 \$  
United Way California Capital Region 1,822.15 \$  
United Way Fresno/Madera Combined Fed Cam 1,719.10 \$  
Martha Coletti 1,500.00 \$  
Paul Ogden 1,000.00 \$  
United Way Federal Campaign 830.70 \$  
Shane Fanzel 600.00 \$  
North Fresno Lions 500.00 \$  
The Exchange Club of Fresno 500.00 \$

Wonderful Giving 500.00 \$  
Kathleen M Yoshida Doerksen 420.00 \$  
Kaj Kraus 300.00 \$  
Razonda Munyaradzi. 255.00 \$  
Sheila Wolff 225.00 \$  
Joan F. Creighton 200.00 \$  
Rosa Stroble 193.00 \$  
United Way State Campaign 139.46 \$  
Betty Daubs Estate 125.00 \$  
David and Linda Hammer-Brown 125.00 \$  
Cynthia G Hudson 100.00 \$  
Helen Siporin 100.00 \$  
Louise Lovan 100.00 \$  
Patty Parker 100.00

Finally, we want to acknowledge each of you who volunteered or donated to DHHSC in 2019. We are so appreciative of every hour of volunteer work you do for us and for every donated dollar that supports DHHSC's services and programs, such as for our two #GivingTuesday campaigns: Family Services and DeafBlind/Support Services Providers (SSPs) Programs. Your efforts and financial support make possible for us to achieve as many goals as we can for the community we so passionately serve. In addition, we had a wonderful marketing group of students from Fresno State University who chose DHHSC as their nonprofit organization as their focus, and they assisted us with raising funds for our #GivingTuesday campaigns and advertising for our 30th Annual Valley Deaf Festival. While campaigning for us, they also spread awareness about DHHSC and the many services and programs we provide, and it was a valuable experience for all of us involved.

As always, we express our deep gratitude for our Board of Directors for their time serving on the board. We are thankful to have every hour of support they offer through DHHSC's fundraising efforts and events. Their financial contributions as board members also cover some of DHHSC's expenses that are not billable to CDSS.

### **Your continued support is needed**

Every day, each DHHSC service provider shows commitment to providing quality services to our community. We believe in providing the best services possible, and we know that our efforts do make a difference. We deeply care about the community we serve, including each Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind, and Late-Deafened individual, and caring supporters, like you, who well understand the vast needs of our community.

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*Your support is welcome, whether it is a donation of your time or money. If you would like to donate your time in volunteering, please visit your local DHHSC office today and ask how you can contribute.*

*If you would like to donate money online for DHHSC's services, you can easily do so at this link:*

*<http://www.dhhsc.org/donations-page>*

*We also welcome donations in person at any of our four offices, and of course, your donations are tax-deductible!*