



# WORLD

Technology News and Commentary for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People



## Don't die to send a reply.

**TDI teams with AT&T to fight texting while driving.**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Dulles, VA  
Permit No. 163

TDI  
8630 Fenton Street • Suite 121  
Silver Spring, Maryland  
20910-3803

### ALSO INSIDE:

**Uber Arrives in DC, Just in Time**

Page 10

**TDI in Action**

Page 20



## TDI'S MISSION

**“TDI provides leadership in achieving equal access to telecommunications, media, and information technologies for deaf and hard of hearing people.”**

## FEATURE ARTICLES

**Common Sense .....pg 12**

**TDI Joins Forces with AT&T on it Can Wait Safe Driving Campaign .....pg 13**

**Will the Deaf Finally be Called to Serve in the Military? .....pg. 16**

## REGULAR COLUMNS

**BOARD VIEWS by Sheila Conlon-Mentkowski, TDI President ..... pg 2**  
Taking Up the Challenge

**CAPITOL COMMENTARY by Claude Stout, TDI Executive Director ..... pg 4**  
The Benefits of “Don’t Drive, Don’t Text” Project

**ACCESSIBLE TECH by James House, TDI World Contributor ..... pg 6**  
Misinformation Technology of Speech Recognition

**TECH BYTES by Don Cullen, TDI World Managing Editor ..... pg 10**  
The Uber Revolution has Arrived, Just in Time

**TDI IN ACTION December 2012 - May 2013 .....pg 20**

**TDI Membership forms.....pgs 31 & 32**

## Thanks to These Advertisers:

**Hamilton pg 5 • Verizon pg 7 • Maryland Relay pg 8 • Purple pg 9  
Sorenson pg 19 • Sprint Relay pg 23 • ALDA pg 28 • Ultratec back page**

Contact TDI WORLD Editor for reprints of articles in PDF format.

TDI WORLD is published quarterly by TDI to provide information about telecommunications, media and information technology access for people who are deaf, late-deafened, hard of hearing and deaf-blind. You may freely copy and distribute all or portions of TDI WORLD for non-commercial use with credit given to TDI. TDI has no affiliation with any company advertised, and the mention of company names, products and services in the articles herein comes solely from the authors' own experiences and does not imply accuracy nor endorsement by TDI. Furthermore, TDI does not warrant any products or services mentioned in TDI WORLD to be in compliance with any applicable federal, state or local disability access laws and regulations or industry standards.



# WORLD

**Volume 44.1&2**

**Editor-in-Chief:** Claude Stout

**Managing Editor:** Don Cullen

**Guest Editor:** Jim House

**Advertising Manager:** Claude Stout

**Publication Production:** Electronic Ink

### TDI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### NORTHEAST REGION

Bernard Hurwitz (NY)

Bernard.Hurwitz@TDIforAccess.org

#### SOUTHEAST REGION

Fred Weiner (MD), Vice President

Fred.Weiner@TDIforAccess.org

#### MIDWEST REGION

Stephanie Buell (WI)

Stephanie.Buell@TDIforAccess.org

#### CENTRAL REGION

Rebecca Rosenthal (MN), Secretary

Rebecca.Rosenthal@TDIforAccess.org

#### WEST REGION

Sheila Conlon-Mentkowski (CA), President

Sheila.Conlon-Mentkowski@TDIforAccess.org

#### MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Joe Duarte, Treasurer

Joe.Duarte@TDIforAccess.org

Andy Lange

ALange@TDIforAccess.org

Alexa Schriempf

ASchriempf@TDIforAccess.org

#### TDI OFFICE STAFF

#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Claude Stout

Executive.Director@TDIforAccess.org

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS

Don Cullen

Public.Relations@TDIforAccess.org

#### BUSINESS MANAGERS

Terry Berrigan and John Skjeveland

Finance@TDIforAccess.org

#### VOLUNTEERS

Dawnell Douthit

Yvonne Mattiello

Helena Schmitt

#### TELECOMMUNICATIONS FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING, INC. (TDI)

8630 Fenton Street - Suite 121

Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3803

www.TDIforAccess.org

#### TELEPHONE:

Phone (Voice/Video): .....301-563-9112

To subscribe to **TDI eNotes**,

send an email to

Public.Relations@TDIforAccess.org

Follow **TDIforAccess** on



**Shaping An Accessible World**

## Board Views



**SHEILA CONLON  
MENTKOWSKI**

*TDI President and  
Western TDI Region-Elected  
Board Member*

**"It will be formidable to follow in former TDI President Roy Miller's big footsteps but with the support of the present board members, Executive Director Claude Stout, and your help, I am confident that I am up to this new challenge for the next two years."**

## Taking Up the Challenge

I am so excited and pleased to be the newly elected TDI President of the Board, as well as a board member! My regions include: Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. I've set up a TDI West Region Facebook page so if you are from any of these states I represent, go ahead and join us at the page!

It will be formidable to follow in former TDI President Roy Miller's big footsteps but with the support of the present board members, Executive Director Claude Stout, and your help, I am confident that I am up to this new challenge for the next two years.

Let me introduce myself. I was diagnosed as hard of hearing at the tender age of 4 and fitted with a body type hearing aid. I had speech therapy through elementary school. I attended mainstream schools all the way up to college. I did not have note takers but I did have friends I could borrow notes from in my classes. I then went to Gallaudet for my graduate degree in education of the deaf which is where I learned sign language. CART was not around then so it was either learn sign or sink as lip reading was so (and is still) difficult. Living on the Gallaudet campus and immersed in sign language also helped tremendously to acquire expressive and receptive skills.

After three years of teaching in various deaf educational programs, I went to law school at Georgetown University law Center. While there, I interned at the national Center for law and the Deaf (NCLD). Upon graduation, I continued to work at NCLD as a staff attorney for 8 years before moving to Sacramento, California. At NCLD, I worked on legal issues affecting deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind

individuals in telecommunications, education, employment, medical, police, and other issues. In California, I worked at NorCal Center for the Deaf (as it was then called) for five years as an advocate, program manager, editor of the agency newsletter, and acting director. An exciting job opportunity came up with the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) and I have been working at DOR now for nearly 20 years. I started at DOR as Project Coordinator of their California Assistive Technology Systems (CATS) Initiative program then administered the statewide Client Assistance Program until recently. I am now back in CATS as an administrator working with an Assistive Technology Advisory committee and California's Foundation for Independent Living Centers (CFILC) on Assistive Technology for people with disabilities and their families. I also assist with the DOR's Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) program which administers contracts with 7 TBI sites throughout the state to provide services to people with TBI to function in the community to the best of their ability.

As you can readily see from my background, I have an extensive knowledge and experience not only with deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind individuals' needs but also people with all types of disabilities. I have built up an extensive network of professional contacts in various fields ranging from federal, state, and local government entities as well as been part of a number of coalitions consisting of the consumer groups of deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, and people with disabilities.

I also am the Chair of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD)

*Continued on page 3*



**BOARD VIEWS** Continued from page 2

Technology committee, yahoo group of about 80 members who discuss technology topics ranging from visual alerting systems, 911, texting to 911, emergency alerting on TV, Videophone technology, IP relay, and other types of technology of interest to deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind consumers.

I am very proud to be part of TDI and have been since 1980 when I saw my first, "Blue Book" which some of you may remember was a small blue

notebook binder. It has been thrilling to see the development of the "Blue Book" over the years.

I am enjoying the experience of being a TDI Board member as well as the President. My primary goals for my Presidency is to continue to work with Claude Stout, the Executive Director, on advocacy in the telecommunications and related social media areas on behalf of our constituency in "Shaping an Accessible World". My other primary goals are to work on TDI's upcoming 2015

conference and to monitor the fiscal health of TDI ongoing.

In closing, as President of TDI, with Claude Stout and the Board members, we will work together to continue to further the rights of our constituency to accessible social media and other technology as necessary for us to be independent.

*All for Access,  
Sheila Conlon Mentkowski  
President, TDI  
Western Region Board Member*

# Keep in touch.



Visit TDI's new, interactive website at **[www.TDIforAccess.org](http://www.TDIforAccess.org)**  
And help us shape an accessible world.

## Capitol Commentary



BY CLAUDE STOUT  
*TDI Executive Director*

**“Can we live down the memory of causing one to lose a life, or to be permanently disabled one way or another as a result of our neglect or irresponsibility?”**

## With Much Gratitude to AT&T: the Benefits of “Don’t Drive, Don’t Text” Project

**H**ope you will enjoy reading about the “Don’t Drive, Don’t Text” project in this issue.

We want to share the results of the project with you. The project would not be possible without the support of AT&T. TDI extends its deepest appreciation to the officials at AT&T – Andrea Brands, Carol Wilner, Susan Diegelman, Susan Mazrui, Avalyn Jackson, and Sam Sappenstein.

For a few years, AT&T has been the corporate leader behind its “Texting & Driving: It Can Wait” project. The intent behind the project has become more crucial as time went on, as the volume of calls and minutes broke records on every succeeding year. Our lives and well-being are increasingly affected one way or another as we spend more time everyday to use the text devices.

AT&T understood very well, that in order for this project to be successful and meeting the key objectives of its national campaign with people with hearing disabilities, they have TDI send out the word via the videos in sign language and with captions about the dangers of texting while driving. We deeply appreciate the support of the students at Gallaudet University that took part in the production of the three videos. We worked closely on the videos with Sam Fabens and Joyprada Swaim of VoxGlobal, a consulting firm for AT&T, and Jane Jonas of Eyeth Studios, LLC, who did the filming/editing of the videos. Robert McConnell and Jim House played supportive roles in the production as well.

Be sure to check more about AT&T’s national campaign, <http://www.itcanwait.com>. You are welcome to take

part in its campaign, by taking a pledge not to use text while driving on the road. Over five million have made their pledges for the campaign.

Jim House, the departing Director of Public Relations, TDI wrote a great feature article for this issue. You will be impressed with the data from the national campaign, and understand how serious this issue has become for participating Americans. We give you details on how to locate for our three YouTube videos. Let us give a warm welcome to the new Director of Public Relations, Don Cullen to TDI, who debuts as Managing Editor for this issue.

It is essential not to text while we drive. Sometimes we are tempted to do it, but let us remind ourselves that it is absolutely not safe to do it. If we are texting while driving, it is like taking the chance to speed more while on a curve, or going fast up the hill and not knowing what is down the hill. Can we live down the memory of causing one to lose a life, or to be permanently disabled one way or another as a result of our neglect or irresponsibility?

If it is imperative that we text an important message immediately to someone, all we have to do is pull over our cars to the shoulder of the road or a parking lot, and then to use our texting devices. As my dear mother reminded me a number of times, Benjamin Franklin said, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” It will pay us in the long run to conform to our responsibilities of not texting and driving. Let us not play with the risks of producing an accident that we would be regretting for the rest of our lives. Each life is precious, and may you have a safe, sensible driving (or texting) experience everyday!

See what they say

# Talk about options

Introducing the Hamilton CapTel® 2400i  
The latest addition to the Hamilton CapTel Suite of Solutions.

888-514-7933

July 20 3:15 pm

Call Time: 00:01:47

**Important:** Individuals with hearing loss who use Hamilton CapTel® consistently may experience life-changing feelings of clarity, confidence and freedom, endless smiles, contagious laughter, and a renewed sense of happiness when the phone rings.



Pause Captions



Font Size



CapTel

Now available! Order the new  
Hamilton CapTel 2400i today.

Call: 888-514-7933

Visit: [HamiltonCapTel.com](http://HamiltonCapTel.com)

See what they say

**HAMILTON**  
capTel.

The Hamilton CapTel phone requires telephone service and high-speed Internet access. WiFi CapTel®.

Copyright © 2013 Hamilton Relay. All rights reserved. CapTel is a registered trademark of SBC, Inc.  
Seismic Wireless CapTel® 2400i. Seismic (PCT) is a registered and funded by the Federal Communications  
Commission (FCC) 2013 designed exclusively for individuals with hearing loss. To learn more, visit [www.sbc.gov](http://www.sbc.gov)

061113

## Accessible Tech



BY JAMES HOUSE  
*TDI World Guest Editor*

**“Technology has been a boon for many of us. It has brought the world together, allowing us to communicate with more people far and near. With today’s digital communications, it is now possible to communicate with a clerk at the store without “interpreters”.”**

## Misinformation Technology of Speech Recognition

**D**uring a focus group discussion on accessible technology at the US Access Board, an entire group of deaf participants, myself included, brainstormed on a perfect accessibility device. We came up with a “magic wand” that had a microphone we could point to any audio source, and a readout on the side of the wand would show the text transcribing the sound. According to the focus group moderator, a similar group of blind people wished for a wand they could use to point at signs or text in their environment, and it would speak out the text.

Technology has been a boon for many of us. It has brought the world together, allowing us to communicate with more people far and near. With today’s digital communications, it is now possible to communicate with a clerk at the store without “interpreters”. For example, we have text-to-speech where a scanner reads all the letters and numbers in a document and speaks to the reader like the wand for the blind group. That is the easy part.

The not so easy part is the reverse where machines like the wand for the deaf and hard of hearing group that can interpret free-flowing speech into text. Our pursuit of the perfect system consists of two overarching goals: speaker independency and unlimited vocabulary. The ideal system would capture everything that is said by anyone with zero errors.

However, today’s voice recognition systems are hampered by several realities. According to the US Census Bureau, the 2010 Census tabulated the

responses of nearly 300 million people in the United States and categorized about 381 different languages in addition to the various spoken and sign languages that are in wide use by readers of TDI World. While we can appreciate the diversity, the immense variety of voice inflections and accents creates a nightmare for program developers seeking to create effective algorithms for automatic speech recognition.

Out of two types of speech recognition systems, one is found in automatic telephone menus in certain businesses. For example when you call your bank, you will hear a voice menu for different functions. Instead of pushing a number on your phone keypad, you will need to say specific words such as WITHDRAW, BALANCE, TRANSFER, DEPOSIT and other phonetically distinct words. The system looks for specific vocal patterns in each response to direct the call to the proper “department” or function. In most situations, this type of voice recognition system with a limited vocabulary base will work for many speakers independently.

The other type of voice recognition system allows for large vocabularies, but only one speaker who has trained the system to understand his unique speech patterns. For many years, voice recognition has been used in office settings where doctors and lawyers dictate letters and other documents for their staff to produce.

More recently, this type of application has found its way into mobile technology. In response to the

*Continued on page 8*





# LIMITING THE TIME A PATIENT WAITS. *NO MATTER THE ROOM.*

{ POWERFUL ANSWERS }

At Verizon, we've gathered some of the greatest technological minds to fight the toughest diseases. Using supercomputers, fiber optics, and the cloud, our innovators are creating new ways to speed up more informed diagnoses. Uploading the sum total of knowledge on treatments to our secure networks, so doctors can reduce months of research into seconds of search time.

**Because the world's biggest challenges, deserve even bigger solutions.**

[verizon.com/powerfulanswers](http://verizon.com/powerfulanswers)

## ACCESSIBLE TECH Continued from page 6

demand for less distraction while driving, phone manufacturers have begun to include third party apps to help dial-by-voice and other features. You can even ask your phone to do an online search for the nearest pizzeria and receive audible driving directions. Believe me, it is not as easy as it looks. It looks great on paper, but in practice, often the end result is riddled with errors and frequent repetition.

What does this have to do with us? Researchers and engineers are seeking to use voice recognition to bypass the high cost of providing accommodations for people with hearing disabilities. I can appreciate the innovative spirit among many engineers whose ultimate goal is to increase access. The Americans with Disabilities Act only requires effective communication, which takes into account the communication needs of the users, and the resources of the party providing the services. That said, I do believe there are situations where a voice recognition solution would be appropriate, but once we take a hard look at quality issues, I sometimes wonder if this is a case of being penny wise and pound foolish where saving

a few dollars at the expense of quality service is happening more than we care to admit. I'm all for minimizing costs only if that is the right solution that provides full and equal access for the parties involved.

For several years we have had captioned telephone services where an operator re-speaks what he hears from the other person. The speech recognition program is trained for that particular operator. My experiences on those calls have not matched the functional equivalency that I enjoyed when making phone calls as a hard of hearing child when all I had was a hearing aid and an amplified phone. Now a new service, InnoCaption has broken the speech recognition ceiling and uses steno captioning to provide its service to deaf and hard of hearing mobile users everywhere.

Voice recognition is also entering the broadcast captioning arena. Attempts to increase captioning without doing it properly can result in gibberish on the screen insults us more than if there were no captions at all. Thankfully the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has new standards pending that will require TV captions to be accurate, synchronous, timely, and

**“Researchers and engineers are seeking to use voice recognition to bypass the high cost of providing accommodations for people with hearing disabilities.”**

not obstruct other important visual information for viewers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

To put this all in perspective, we can use the analogy of speech reading. Many of us have been to an audiologist where we undergo a battery of tests that determine our hearing level and speech comprehension. Many of us can and do lip-read quite well in real life, but the fact remains that an estimated 30% of the English language can be accurately read on the lips while the rest of our understanding is based on educated guesswork. Have machines surpassed the ability of humans to comprehend speech like the imaginary wand? I think not, but do keep trying!

## More ways to say “I love you.”

If you, or a loved one, is Deaf, hard of hearing, Deaf-Blind, or have difficulty speaking, Maryland Relay offers many calling options to keep you connected by phone.

Plus! You may qualify for a free TTY, VCO phone, Captioned Telephone\* or other assistive device through the Maryland Accessible Telecommunications program. Free training may be available upon request.

**Just dial 7-1-1 to make a Relay call.**

Visit [mdrelay.org](http://mdrelay.org) or like us on Facebook to learn more.

### Calling Options

- TTY (Text Telephone)
- Voice Carry-Over
- Hearing Carry-Over
- Speech-to-Speech
- Captioned Telephone\*
- Spanish Relay

301 W. Preston Street, Suite 1008A  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
800-552-7724 (Voice/TTY)  
443-453-5970 (VP)



\*Available to qualified applicants with traditional landline service only.



## Why is New P3 and P3 Mobile the BEST choice?

New P3 and P3 Mobile gives you the freedom to make a call wherever – and whenever – you want!

Easy and convenient, make your VRS calls with the BEST interpreters on your laptop, PC/Mac® computer, tablet or smartphone. And the video is so clear, it's as though you have an interpreter next to you!

### New P3

- Superior video quality
  - Video-only mode
  - 3-way calling
  - Block calls
  - One-line VCO
- [www.purple.us/p3](http://www.purple.us/p3)

### P3 Mobile

- Connect easily with the touch of a button
  - Built-in PurpleMail™
  - Search contacts by name with "Smart Search"
  - One-line VCO
- [www.purple.us/p3mobile](http://www.purple.us/p3mobile)



Download Purple's free software and app today!  
[www.purple.us/trynow!](http://www.purple.us/trynow!)



© 2014 Purple Communications, Inc. All rights reserved. Purple, P3, the hands logo, the Purple logo and SmartVP are registered trademarks of Purple Communications, Inc. Other names may be trademarks of their respective owners. Visit [www.purple.us/usernotice](http://www.purple.us/usernotice) for important information concerning 10-digit numbering and E911 services for VRS or IP-Relay. 798-201408



## Tech Bytes

**DON CULLEN***Managing Editor, TDI World*

“Just exactly what is Uber, this amazingly disruptive company that has taxi drivers running (driving) scared? What does this mean for deaf and hard of hearing customers?

Why, everything!”

## The Uber Revolution has Arrived, Just in Time

**W**elcome to our first ever Tech Bytes section! I’m quite passionate about technology, and make it a point to read at least a hundred articles per day to make sure I stay atop emerging technologies. This section is my opportunity to share bite-sized chunks of awesomely interesting tech, apps, and services that I think you’d love to know about!

Quick, tell me your top complaints about taxi cabs!

“Many don’t take credit cards... Writing back and forth is such a pain just to tell them where I want to go! They tend to run up the meter to try to make more money! Often they have poor attitudes! It takes forever just to



[www.uber.com](http://www.uber.com)

Type of technology: mobile phone app

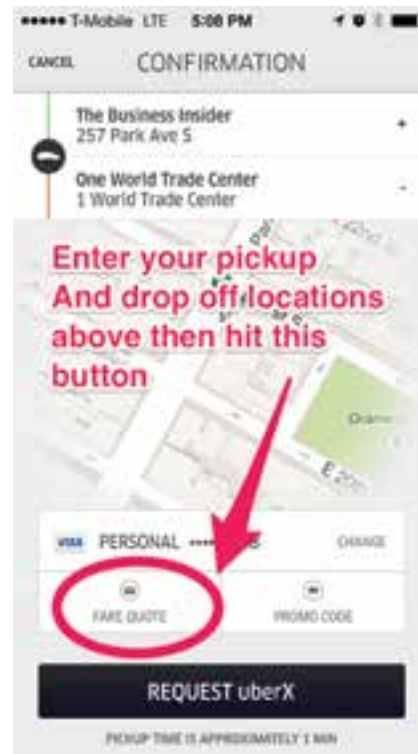
Supported by:



find a taxi cab!”

Based on those complaints, why would anyone in their right mind take a cab? Of course, one might say they don’t

Continued on page 11



Uber's straightforward interface makes getting around town easier than ever.



## TECH BYTES Continued from page 10

have a choice. But that's just it! You DO have a choice! In many major cities across the United States, a company called Uber aims to make taxi cabs history. What Apple did for the smart phone industry is what Uber is doing to the taxi cab industry by completely upending them. It's gotten to the point where nearly every taxi cab company out there is in an uproar demanding that the government shut down Uber because they feel they cannot compete with Uber.

Just exactly what is Uber, this amazingly disruptive company that has taxi drivers running (driving) scared? What does this mean for deaf and hard of hearing customers? Why, everything

You begin by installing the app on your phone. Once done, you then set up your account. All par for the course. What happens after you finish setting up your account is where the app begins showing you its true potential. You'll see a map with a couple of cars driving around. Those cars are Uber cars! You'll also see a black box saying Set Pickup Location, along with an estimate for how long you'll be waiting for an Uber car. Just touch Set Pickup Location, make sure the address of your location is correct.

Now the Uber cars know where you are! You should see a button at the bottom that says Fare Quote. Tap that. Pop in the address of where you want to go. It'll then show you an estimate of the fare cost. The total fare shouldn't exceed that quote. If you're happy with the quote, hit REQUEST uberX.

That's it! Now you simply wait. If you watch the map, you'll see one of the Uber drivers confirm they're on the way, along with an estimate of how long before they arrive. You'll see them driving to you on the map.

They'll arrive, pick you up with a grin, and whisk you off to where you want to

**Uber will automatically charge your credit card as soon as the trip is finished. The only thing you need to do is thank the driver, get out of the car, and walk away.**

go without having to ask you where you want to go (since you already put it in Uber!). Once you arrive, you're done. No tipping – Uber designed the fares so that customers don't have to feel it necessary to tip. Don't worry about paying the driver either; Uber will automatically charge your credit card as soon as the trip is finished. The only thing you need to do is thank the driver, get out of the car, and walk away.

There's one more thing you can do, but

is completely optional: you also can rate the driver on Uber. If the driver gets a poor rating, Uber will follow up with the driver. This way, you know you'll be able to rely on a consistently good experience!

Uber offers more than simply UberX – they also offer black/SUV Uber cars if you want to drive in style or Uber XL/family cars if you're hauling a family or a group of friends. You even can split fare!

Try it for yourself if you're ever in a major city and want to have an unique cab experience!

For more information, see: [www.uber.com](http://www.uber.com)

*Do you have suggestions as to what technology should be featured on Tech Bytes? Do you have any feedback you'd love to share? Please do feel free to contact Don Cullen via email at [dcullen@tdiforaccess.org](mailto:dcullen@tdiforaccess.org), or call TDI at (301) 563-9112!*

## AN OVERVIEW OF UBER'S SAFETY STANDARDS IN DC

Uber's technology platform brings an unprecedented degree of transparency and accountability to transportation in DC.

Here's an overview of what we're doing to ensure you have the best possible experience:

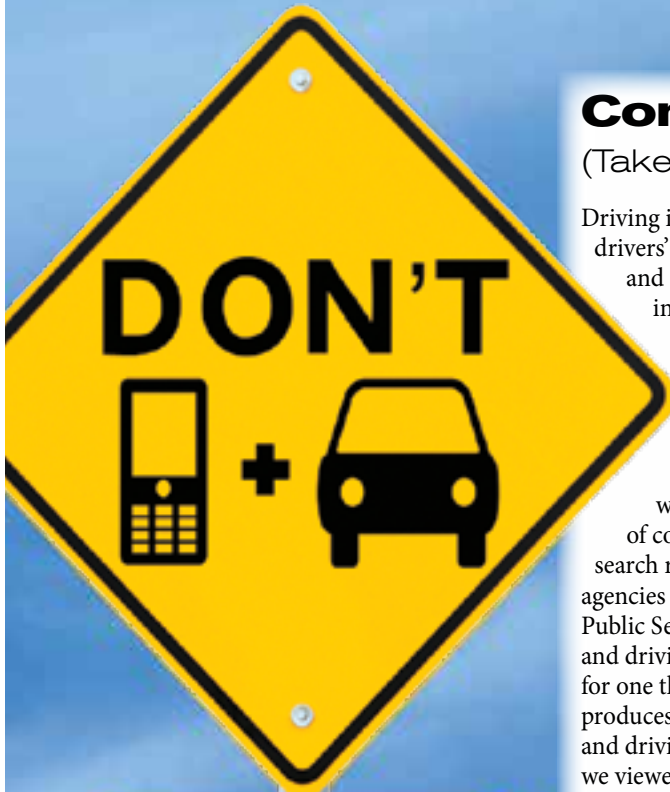
### What you can expect when you request a ride with the Uber app:

Every driver that uses Uber's technology platform must pass a background check and ongoing quality reviews stronger than anything that is required of taxi drivers in the District.

Every uberX ride requested through the app is insured with at least \$1M in liability insurance – 50x higher than what is required of DC taxis.

Even before pickup, you are given your driver's name, photo, car type, and license plate number, so that you can make sure you're getting in the right car with the right driver.

You are able to call your driver through the app using an anonymized phone number. That way, you can talk to your driver without ever sharing your personal contact information.



## Common Sense

(Taken from Thomas Paine)

Driving is difficult enough not to have to worry about other drivers' bad habits. Before mobile devices were developed and sold, it appeared we would have to be on the watch for inebriated drivers or people either shaving their beards, plucking their eyebrows, or applying lipstick while driving. Now, with the burgeoning popularity of mobile devices, we need to be on guard to be alert to texting drivers.

In writing this preface, I 'surfed the Internet' to see what would surface when I entered "texting and driving" and of course a number of websites on this topic surfaced. The search results showed a number of corporations, government agencies both federal and state, and other entities producing Public Service Announcements (PSAs) on the dangers of texting and driving. Most of the videos seemed to have captioning, except for one that had gone viral but lacked captioning. When one produces a PSA or any other media related material on texting and driving, accessibility should be taken into consideration so we viewers who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind can learn from the PSA as well.

I wanted to share a story that horrified me when I first saw it on Facebook. Apparently a woman in England was texting on not just one but two mobile devices while driving. She was driving her Jaguar at a speed of 70 MPH when she slammed into the back of another driver who was killed instantly. The woman driving the Jaguar initially denied using the mobile devices while driving when questioned by investigators. During the investigation, the mobile devices were found to have been in use -- the driver had sent a text message just before the crash while at around the same time, she received one on another device. Prosecutors in this case noted that the texting driver had been caught using her mobile phone behind the wheel in the past and her driver's license has been suspended twice, once in 2009 and 2012. As a result, the judge sentenced her to 6 years in prison and her driver's license has been again suspended for 8 years. I was just appalled reading this story as it shows one person's callous disregard for other peoples' lives.

This article is full of excellent information on why one should NOT text while driving. Please do take the time to look over the resources and share with your family, friends, and colleagues. Remember: texting is never worth a life.

— **Sheila Conlon Mentkowski**  
President, TDI, Western Region Board Member

## TDI Joins Forces with AT&T on *It Can Wait*® Safe Driving Campaign:

# "Please Don't Text While Driving!"

JIM HOUSE  
TDI Guest Editor

"Please don't text and drive." Sharing these five simple words with a distracted driver will often encourage him or her to put the phone down and remain focused on the road. Why is speaking up so important? Well because it could save a life. Texting while driving is involved in over 200,000 accidents every year, often causing injuries and deaths.<sup>1</sup> We are especially concerned about this at TDI since many drivers who are deaf or hard of hearing use at least one type of mobile device for communicating by text or video.

Texting has become one of the most popular ways to communicate. While most people continue to use their wireless devices for voice calls, many of them turn to text. Two groups emerged as the early adopters of texting; teenagers and people who are deaf or hard of hearing. From there, texting grew as people became aware of the advantages to using text over voice such as:

- **DISCREETNESS** - Texting attracts less attention than talking on a phone.
- **BREVITY** - Messages can be sent quickly without having to take the time for a full-fledged phone conversation.
- **CONVENIENCE** - Messages like PLS BRING HOME MILK or B HOME IN 1 HR could be acknowledged at any time with a short reply of OK.

- **UBIQUITOUS** - Nearly everyone who has a wireless device has the ability to text.
- **TIMELY ALERTS** - From airlines to pizza delivery and breaking news, you can receive alerts about new announcements.

Amid all these advantages, there can be some serious dangers, especially if you're distracted by a text message behind the wheel. Texting is a particularly alarming distraction because it involves all three types of distractions:

- **VISUAL** - taking your eyes off the road
- **MANUAL** - taking your hands off the wheel
- **COGNITIVE** - taking your mind off from the task of driving

While many can relate to a close call from texting while driving, the research on the subject further drives home the risks associated with texting while driving. According to the Virginia Tech Transportation Research Institute, texting drivers are much more likely to be in an accident.<sup>2</sup>

From the perspective of a deaf person, it is liberating to have options available to us now that we did not have while growing up. Deaf and hard of hearing people who are in their twenties or thirties would not have had much experience in dealing with the lack of access such as captioning or using the telephone. Some of the old-timers will remember the days where we had to ask our parents to arrange our

## A FEW FACTS:

While nearly everyone has experienced a close call from texting while driving, the research on the subject further drives home the risks associated with texting while driving.

### MORE LIKELY TO BE IN AN ACCIDENT

Texting drivers are much more likely to be in an accident.

*(Source: Virginia Tech Transportation Research Institute)*

### 97% KNOW ITS DANGEROUS

97 percent of teens know that texting while driving is dangerous, but 43 percent admit to still doing it.

*(Source: AT&T Wireless Survey)*

### 77% HAVE SEEN THEIR PARENTS DO IT

77 percent of teens have seen their parents texting while driving.

*(Source: AT&T Wireless Survey)*

# Spread the word through social media

Here are some examples:

@ATT @TDIforAccess and @GallaudetU have teamed up to spread awareness of dangers of texting and driving: [#ItCanWait](http://bit.ly/1nGt74Z)

No text is worth a life. Check out this new video from @TDIforAccess that highlights how you can kick the habit: [#ItCanWait](http://bit.ly/1q8jxxz)

TDI's videos are at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8TAKl0wS00>

No Text is Worth a Life - It Can Wait

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xt0L1WkEQpQ>

Texting While Driving: Break the Habit

Other information about texting and driving can be found at:

National Safety Council  
[www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)

Virginia Tech Transportation Institute Research: [www.vtti.vt.edu](http://www.vtti.vt.edu)

AT&T Wireless Survey [www.att.com/Common/about\\_us/txtng\\_driving/att\\_teen\\_survey\\_executive.pdf](http://www.att.com/Common/about_us/txtng_driving/att_teen_survey_executive.pdf)

TXTNG & DRIVING... IT CAN WAIT  
[www.itcanwait.org/](http://www.itcanwait.org/)

It Can Wait Simulator [www.itcanwaitimulator.org/](http://www.itcanwaitimulator.org/)

DON'T TEXT WHILE DRIVING Continued from page 13

dates for us over the phone or being constantly denied jobs just because we could not use the phone at all. These collective experiences gave rise to the birth of TDI and it is an important part of our heritage.

Some deaf and hard of hearing drivers do boast superior peripheral vision as a way to compensate for their hearing disability. They claim they are able to focus on the road and watch a conversation out of the corner of their eye from someone in the passenger seat or the back seat. A few deaf drivers, especially those that sign, use the phone in a windshield holder (similar to using a GPS) for video calls, as they feel it puts them on a functionally equivalent basis as with hearing drivers who are able to talk hands-free. After all, it is not much different than signing back and forth to a passenger with one eye on the road.

Some experienced drivers do ask that there be no talking or signing conversations from passengers if the traffic requires more attention. Because text or video calls behind the wheel requires far more skill in shifting attention back and forth from the task of driving, TDI does not condone any use of technology that makes anybody an unsafe driver.

"While we seek to promote access to telecommunications for deaf and hard of hearing people, we are aware that the liberation of mobile phones also carries a responsibility to use these devices safely," said Claude L. Stout, Executive Director, when TDI announced their partnership with AT&T's *It Can Wait*® campaign. TDI recognized that access to technology must be carried out responsibly, and by advocating access to mobile technology, safety on the highways must be a priority. Stout and Jim House, former Public Relations Director saw an opportunity to send this message to our members through AT&T's long-running *It Can Wait*

campaign.

Public opinion everywhere is frowning on distracted driving caused by texting, just like driving under the influence of drinking or drugs. Beginning with AT&T, other major industry stakeholders began to acknowledge publicly that the misuse of their products, especially on the road can have fatal implications.

"We are committed to the fight against the texting while driving epidemic - whether it's reminding customers that texting can wait or urging drivers to pledge to never text and drive again," said Andrea Brands, Director of Consumer Safety and Education at AT&T. Brands adds, "We are thrilled that Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. plays such a crucial role in the effort to remind all drivers - including those who are deaf and hard of hearing - that no text is worth a life."

Working with Robert McConnell and Jane Jonas of Eyeth Studios, TDI hosted a safe driving awareness event at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. We set up a texting while driving simulator on a laptop with a steering wheel and foot pedals that linked to each participant's cell phone so students could experience the dangers first-hand. Approximately 20 deaf and hard of hearing students participated, and we were able to document useful video footage in sign language about the perils of texting while driving.

TDI's videos about texting while driving are available at:

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8TAKl0wS00>

**No Text is Worth a Life - *It Can Wait***

2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xt0L1WkEQpQ>

**Texting While Driving: Break the Habit**

We want our members and friends to

DON'T TEXT WHILE DRIVING  
Continues on page 15



**DON'T TEXT WHILE DRIVING** Continued from page 14

remember no text is worth a life and share the message. Here are some things you can do to make sure you "arrive alive".

- Use #X in text messages, social media or email – to pause the conversation before you drive to let friends know you will respond once you safely reach your destination.
- Download a free app like AT&T DriveMode® that automatically replies to incoming texts while you're on the road to let people know you'll get back to them later.
- Turn off your cell phone or put it in the glove compartment or some other inaccessible place while driving.
- If you can, let your passenger become your designated texter who can read your messages for you and reply accordingly.
- Pull over in a safe place if you need to have an urgent conversation.
- Take the pledge at ItCanWait.com and ask your friends to join you. There are more details to these hints as well as many other resources and tools you can use.
- Spread the word through social media - here are some samples:
- @ATT @TDIforAccess and @GallaudetU teamed up to spread awareness of dangers of texting and driving: [#ItCanWait](http://bit.ly/1nGt74Z)
- No text is worth a life. Check out this new video from @TDIforAccess that highlights how you can kick the habit: [#ItCanWait](http://bit.ly/1q8jxxz)

Please visit [ItCanWait.com](http://ItCanWait.com) for more information about texting and driving.

1 National Safety Council

2 Virginia Tech Transportation Institute  
Research: [www.vtti.vt.edu](http://www.vtti.vt.edu)

# Speak up.

## you might just save a life.



Steps to stop texting and driving:

### 1. Awareness. *Know the risks.*

Texting while driving is involved in 200,000+ vehicle crashes each year, often involving injuries and death.

### 2. Commitment. *Make a promise.*

Make a *lifelong commitment* never to text and drive.

Go to [ItCanWait.com](http://ItCanWait.com) and make a promise with a loved one.

### 3. Ritual. *Change your behavior.*

Create a routine that reminds you before you drive.

### 4. Influence. *Speak up.*

90% say they'd stop if a friend in the car asked them to.<sup>1</sup>



of teen drivers say they're likely not to text and drive if friends tell them it's wrong or stupid.<sup>1</sup>

93% would stop if a parent in the car asked them to.<sup>1</sup>



say that they would be thankful if a passenger complained about their texting while driving.<sup>1</sup>

Source: National Safety Council, 2013



## Will the Deaf Finally be Called to Serve in the Military?

VIA AIRFORCETIMES.COM

(BRYANT JORDAN)

AND MILITARY.COM (KRISTIN DAVIS)

WRITTEN & PARAPHRASED BY

DON CULLEN

**S**gt. Daniel Bauer has been a policeman at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., for eight years. Trained and certified by the Metropolitan Police Department, the fact that he is deaf has never gotten in the way of doing his job, he said. Now he's hoping that

legislation recently filed in Congress will enable him to switch uniforms — to Air Force blue.”

– *Airforcetimes.com*

Shockwaves hit the deaf community when realization that a bill had been proposed by Representative Mark Takano (D) of California 41st district, which would be intended to require a demonstration program on the accession as Air Force officers of candidates with auditory impairments.

“H.R. 5296, filed by Rep. Mark Takano, D-California, on July 30,

would have the Air Force launch a demonstration program that would allow 15 to 20 deaf and hearing impaired people to serve. Except for a hearing impairment, the successful applicants would have to meet all other requirements needed to serve as an Air Force officer, according to the bill.”

– *Airforcetimes.com*

A critic of the bill stated: “Once you put on the uniform you shouldn't have

**MILITARY SERVICE FOR THE DEAF?**

*Continues on page 17*

**MILITARY SERVICE FOR THE DEAF?***Continued from page 16*

to be in a special job. Your job is as an Air Force guy,” said Donald Pickard of Florida, a retired Air Force fighter pilot. “There is a place for [disabled] people, absolutely. But give them a civilian job, give them a military job but in a civilian slot.”

The Defense Department excludes from service those who are deaf, use a hearing aid or have a cochlear implant. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Nate Christensen, a Department of Defense spokesman, said that is for good reason.

“In all areas of military life, but especially in combat, an individual’s life and the lives of his or her comrades may depend on what individuals can hear. Situations could occur where hearing impairment would not only result in injury or loss of life, but could jeopardize a unit’s mission,” he said in an email. “Individuals who are physically disqualified for military duty can and do become civilian members of the team. The work they perform for the Department and our country is valuable and rewarding but without the rigors of military duty

The proposed legislation is a companion to a bill introduced in the Senate in December by Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, who has noted the military allows service members who acquire a disability while serving their country to remain on active duty.

Takano, who represents the California School for the Deaf in Riverside and co-chairs the Bipartisan Congressional Deaf Caucus, and Harkin were inspired by the story of Keith Nolan, an Army ROTC cadet in California who could not advance because he could not pass the hearing test, said Brett Morrow, a spokesman for Takano. .”

– via *Military.com*



News of this bill proved to be quite controversial. Nick Khamhou Dethoudo Chaleunphone commented on *Military.com* saying:

“As someone who’s already serving with the US Military in the US Coast Guard as an Auxiliary Member, I’m also a deaf person and an Intersex person. I’m one of the first known deaf US Coast Guard Auxiliarist and I am all for it. I’m a prime example of how the US Coast Guard utilizes those with a disability and are able to contribute to the US Coast Guard Mission without hindering the mission and operations. I would think that they can let deaf & hard of hearing people in and restrict them from front line combat jobs and let them do combat support jobs such as Medical, communications, IT technology, Cyberwarfare or even logistics. It would free up more able-bodied person for Frontline work. Even other countries like Israel for example, allows those with a disability to serve in the Military in areas such as Air defense, Intelligence,

Communications, Cyberwarfare, Public Affairs and logistics.”

Keith Doane, who is aspiring to enlist as soon as the military begins recruitment, stated “80% of US military functions are not in combat zones. 24% of Iraqi/Afghanistan veterans have a degree of hearing loss, and they were booted from active duty. Let them remain in active duty. See the last part of this article: “If it doesn’t work, it doesn’t work. If it does, maybe we’ve found something better.” Let’s do some innovation and show the result.”

Joe Bacarella saw the statement, and posted an argument: “All I am saying is that the U.S. military should concentrate on effective warfare not social engineering. As stated in the above article by the DoD Spokesman, Navy Lt. Cmdr Nate Christensen, “hearing impairment may result not only in injury or loss of life but could jeopardize a unit’s mission”. Mr.

**MILITARY SERVICE FOR THE DEAF?**

*Continues on page 18*



## MILITARY SERVICE FOR THE DEAF?

Continued from page 17

Doane, please allow me to explain further... The military exists to carry out their mission. No mission success equals F A I L U R E. The military doesn't do failure well... It's not in their charter; That Sir, is understanding a real context."

Joe then responded to another commentator adding: "It's nice to see you support deaf community rights, however, their rights [conflict] against my will to live. Have you ever served in the military? I have served in the U.S. Navy and my life and the others on my aircrew depended, yes depended, upon our ability to communicate verbally. Our mission involved communications in a high stress, life threatening environment... How would you adapt one of a kind equipment to the needs of the deaf community? How would the deaf community use sound powered headsets so common in the U.S. Navy fleet?"

Don Cullen stepped in to respond to Joe Bararella's comment saying: "Good points brought up here. Except for one crucial factor: 80% of US military functions are not in combat zones. Let me say that again. 80% of US military functions are not in combat zones. My family has served in the military for a long time, and only half of them have actually seen combat. There's plenty of positions the deaf would do quite well that involve science, technology, engineering, and math.

You cite the danger of sending the deaf into combat as communications are crucial. You have a valid point. That only happens to 20% of US military functions; what about the other 80%? If you were arguing to prohibit the deaf from being deployed to those combat zones, then I could see — even to a degree, support — your reasoning. But to prohibit the deaf from the



Nolan, 29 and deaf, has been trying for decades to join the U.S. military. While some of his persistence has paid off -- he's passed the first two levels of ROTC, joining the Bravo Company at California State University -- he's currently prohibited from moving on to level three, he said in a recent TEDx talk.

non-combat zones? I have yet to see you offer up strong logic that'd justify barring the deaf from serving in non-combat positions.

Israel has recognized this, and have a deaf unit serving in their military in non-combative positions. The military education and training has benefited those in the deaf unit. Their military hasn't imploded as of yet. They're actually doing just fine."

GovTrack.us, a website that tracks bills' progress as they move through Congress up to the point of the President signing the bill into law, had a rather grim prognosis for the H.R. 5296 bill currently referred to the House Armed Services committee (chaired by Rep. Howard "Buck" McKeon [R-CA25]): "0% chance of being enacted", with only "2% chance of getting past committee". The committee consists of 34 republicans and 27 democrats. The bill has four co-sponsors (all democrats): Garamendi, John [D-CA3], Tsongas, Niki [D-MA3], Van Hollen, Chris [D-MD8], and Waxman, Henry [D-CA33].

Quoted text and comments from above are from both airforcetimes.

com (Bryant Jordan) and military.com (Kristin Davis). Keith Dolan's website can be found at: <http://cadetnolannow.wordpress.com/>

*Editor's Note: On February 14, 2014, TDI Executive Director Claude Stout sent a letter to U.S. Senator Carl Levin, D-MI, who was then the Chair of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee. The letter encouraged the Committee to support a multi-year demonstration program that'd see the recruitment of deaf and hard of hearing military personnel. Stout pointed out important benefits such as heightened visual integration ability, high tolerance of high noise environments and ability to communicate easily via sign language in spite of noise, increase in number of recruits to help counter trend of declining recruitment rates, and opportunities to enhance existing technologies that would benefit wounded warriors & veterans. It would also especially help decrease cost of force attrition, retention, and replacement.*

*Do you have any feedback you'd love to share about this article? Please do feel free to contact Don Cullen via email at [dcullen@tdiforaccess.org](mailto:dcullen@tdiforaccess.org)!*



# Sorenson myPhone



**Sorenson myPhone** gives you convenience.

- One Phone Number
- Shared Call History
- Shared Contacts List
- Shared SignMail and Video Center

To learn more and to apply for the Sorenson myPhone feature go to **[www.svrs.com/myphone](http://www.svrs.com/myphone)**



© Sorenson Communications, Inc. All rights reserved. If you choose Sorenson as your default provider, you can port your existing 10-digit number to Sorenson from another provider or Sorenson can provide you with one for the geographic area where you live or work. If you later change your default provider, you can port your number to that provider. When selecting Sorenson, you must provide to Sorenson the physical address (i.e., the Registered Location) from which you are placing the call, so that Sorenson can properly route any 911 calls you may make. If you move or change your location, you must notify Sorenson immediately. You can update your Registered Location from your Sorenson videophone by calling 800-659-4810 or by visiting [www.svrs.com/moving](http://www.svrs.com/moving). Sorenson will confirm receipt of your Registered Location information. Emergency calls made via internet-based TRS may not function the same as traditional E911 service. For example, you may not be able to dial 911 if there is an internet-service failure or if you lose electrical power, and your 911 call may not be routed correctly if you have not updated your Registered Location. For more information on the process of obtaining 10-digit numbers and the limitations and risks associated with using Sorenson's VRS to place a 911 call, please visit Sorenson's website: [www.sorenson.com/disclaimer](http://www.sorenson.com/disclaimer). For information on toll-free numbering, please visit [www.svrs.com/tollfree](http://www.svrs.com/tollfree).



# TDI In Action

## December 2012 – May 2013

**Editor's Note:** Frequent references to other consumer groups denotes involvement and support from other leading national organizations serving deaf and hard of hearing people. This may include some or all of the following: Alexander Graham Bell Association (AGBell), American Association of the Deaf Blind (AADB), American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC), American Speech, Language, and Hearing Association (ASHA), Association of Late-Deafened Adults (ALDA), California Coalition of Agencies Serving the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCASDHH), Cerebral Palsy and Deaf Organization (CPADO), Communication Services for the Deaf (CSD), Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Action Network (DHHCAN), Deaf Seniors of America (DSA), Hands & Voices (HV), Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), National Association of the Deaf (NAD), National Black Deaf Advocates (NBDA), and Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). On certain CVAA matters, sometimes we work in collaboration with other cross-disability groups and those groups that serve people who are blind or have low-vision such as the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB). Our academic partners include the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center (RERC) on Telecommunications Access, which comprises the Technology Access Program at Gallaudet University (TAP), and the TRACE Research Center at University of Wisconsin in Madison (TRACE).

## Communications & Video

### Accessibility Act of 2010:

The FCC released a Second Report and Order implementing the part of the CVAA that requires Internet browsers and websites to support accessibility to ACS on mobile devices for users that are blind or have low vision. Not much of a deaf/hard of hearing issue except that it touches on requiring access for deaf-blind where it is technically feasible. There was not much information available to put in the record to support more accessibility requirements for deaf-blind users, but this ruling puts another access issue for deaf-blind on FCC's radar and the Commission will be looking into it in the future. Here below are excerpts from FCC's announcement today:

On April 29, 2013, the FCC released a Report and Order to implement section 718 and part of section 716 of the Communications Act. The Report and Order does the following:

#### Section 718:

Requires Internet browsers installed on mobile phones to be accessible to and usable by individuals who are blind or have a visual impairment, unless doing so is not achievable. This requirement applies when Internet browsers are used for any purpose.

#### Section 716:

Requires Internet browsers installed on equipment used for advanced communications services, such as computers, laptops, and tablets

used for e-mail, to be accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, unless doing so is not achievable. This requirement applies when Internet browsers are used for advanced communications services. These requirements apply to Internet browsers installed on mobile phones and equipment used for advanced communications services that are manufactured on or after October 8, 2013.

[http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/FCC-13-57A1.pdf](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/FCC-13-57A1.pdf) (PDF)

### IP-Captioning:

New rules were issued by the FCC for owners, producers, and distributors to provide closed captioning of their video programs that are delivered online after they were aired on television (commonly referred to as IP-captioning). The rules established an implementation schedule

that started September 30, 2012, for full-length prerecorded television programming that a distributor shows for the first time on the Internet and continued through March 31, 2013, when the requirements were extended to live and near-live programming. On September 30, 2013, programming that is edited for Internet distribution must be captioned. Then for archival video programming that is already in a distributor's Internet inventory, the distributor must add captions within 45 days after the video programming is shown on TV with captions on or after March 30, 2014. The grace period for captioning archival programming is reduced to 30 days in 2015, and then to 15 days beginning in 2016 and onward.

### Text-to-911:

Shortly after the last Board meeting in November, the four major

Continued on page 21



The grace period for captioning archival programming is reduced to 30 days in 2015, and then to 15 days in 2016.



# TDI In Action

December 2012 - May 2013

Continued from page 20

telecommunications carriers (AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, and Verizon) announced a joint agreement with the two leading public safety industry groups (NENA and APCO) to roll out text-to-911 by May 15, 2014. Since the nationwide implementation has already started with trials in certain jurisdictions and the adoption by 6,300 PSAPs will be long and varied, the carriers suggested a standardized error fall-back message that basically tells the caller by text "Your call cannot be completed, please call 911 by voice or TTY", and that will be in place by June 30, 2013. The consumer groups applauded the measures, even though we were not consulted for our feedback prior to the announcement.

In December, the FCC came out in support of these initiatives in the form of a notice of proposed rulemaking. TDI and the consumer groups formally responded with comments to one part of the NPRM addressing the error message implementation and proposed ideas for a public education/outreach campaign. The consumer groups pushed for a standardized easy-to-understand error bounce-back message and urged the FCC to allocate funds for a public education program because texting at this time would not transmit location identifying information and the dispatcher will need to confirm the location before sending assistance. We did not file reply comments.

The other part of the NPRM addressed the scope of the initiative, whether it should be extended beyond the four major carriers and other issues. The consumer groups urged the Commission in the reply comments to extend support for text-to-911 to all carriers, regardless of size because even with all four carriers participating, there will be gaps in certain areas of the country – not only in rural areas, but

also pockets in inner cities where the major carriers do not provide services. We also asked the FCC to require all advanced communication services to be part of the text-to-911, including the error messages if necessary and reiterated our request for full funding of educational outreach programs to be conducted by nongovernmental nationwide and local community groups.



## Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911):

Shortly after the industry announcement on text-to-911, the FCC issued a notice of inquiry. The Consumer Groups urged the Commission to take the lead in establishing and mandating consistent standards and accessibility requirements

## Did you know ...



for Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG911). This will require the Commission to work to remove all necessary jurisdictional barriers and create a governing framework. Every American regardless of his or her disability has a right to easy and convenient access to emergency services no matter where in the country he or she lives or is visiting. The Consumer Groups also urge the Commission to make sure that the legal and statutory framework allows the Commission to ensure efficient and accurate transmissions of all NG911 service. We believe that the Commission is in the best position to lead the transformation to NG911 and this leadership is necessary to avoid inconsistency, confusion, waste, and barriers to accessing NG911.

Continued on page 22

Today's 9-1-1		Next Generation 9-1-1
Virtually all calls are voice callers via telephones over analog lines	➡	Voice, text, or video information, from many types of communication devices, sent over IP networks
Most information transferred via voice	➡	Advanced data sharing is automatically performed
Callers routed through legacy selective routers, limited forwarding / backup ability	➡	Physical location of Public Service Answering Point (PSAP) becomes immaterial, callers routed automatically based on geographic location, enhanced backup abilities
Limited ability to handle overflow situations, callers could receive a busy signal	➡	PSAPs able to control call congestion treatment, including dynamically rerouting callers

Comparison between today's 9-1-1 service and the NG911 standards.





# TDI In Action

December 2012 - May 2013

Continued from page 21

## VRS Reform:

Throughout the last six months, there were a number of meetings between officials at the FCC on the eighth floor, the staff of the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, and representatives of consumer groups, including TDI, NAD, ALDA, and DHHCAN. The latest we get from the FCC is that they are taking in our recommendations in the following areas:

- A. Interoperability and portability of VRS services and equipment. The FCC is leaning toward contracting with an independent third party to certify that each specific VRS service is interoperable.
- B. The FCC appears to go along with our call for a VRS reference platform that will serve as a basis for multiple VRS applications.
- C. The FCC intends to contract with a third party to do neutral outreach efforts to publicize all forms of TRS, more so with hearing parties that either are not aware of this benefit, or have been reluctant to use any

TRS service to call their contacts that are deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened, deaf-blind, or speech-disabled. We have asked the FCC to reimburse VRS providers for their marketing efforts to promote their brand name services.

- D. The FCC is leaning toward designating some amounts of funds to National Science Foundation for some research projects that would produce progress in interoperability, as well as advanced technology for VRS and other forms of TRS. We have asked the FCC to reimburse VRS providers for their individual research and development projects.

We anticipate that the FCC will issue a Report and Order to announce such initiatives within a week or two. Some delays may occur with the Commission undergoing a transition after the departure of Chairman Genachowski and Commissioner McDowell.

## IP-CTS:

The FCC circulated some draft emergency rules that would require any



new consumer that wants to use Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Service (IP-CTS) service to register confirming that they have at least a certain dB hearing loss, originally intended as 90 dB, then lowered to 71 dB, and then 40 dB. This was in response to what they called as an exponential increase in the last two years in IP-CTS. One provider may have not taken sufficient measures to ensure that every client it took in really needed the IP-CTS service. We fought to have this dB requirement dropped, citing that our hearing loss is largely diverse, depending on onset and progression of loss. Also, there are environmental factors that play into how well we hear with some level of interference. Even some individuals report that their hearing loss can vary from day to day, sometimes as a result of tinnitus. The FCC subsequently dropped the dB requirement, and went forward with other emergency rules for IP-CTS. With the new emergency rules, it prohibited referral fees for obtaining new clients, and it required providers to distribute/upgrade firmware to render the IP-CTS devices as operating with the captions in a default-off setting. It also made clear that any provider can distribute free devices to those whose income exceeds four times the federal poverty guideline, and that those who



TDI Executive Director Claude Stout explains TDI's recommendations on VRS reform to the FCC.

Continued on page 24



# Sprint Relay Store

- **Experienced**  
Wireless Sales  
Account Managers
- **Affordable**  
Unlimited Data  
Only Plan While on  
the Sprint Network
- **Available**  
Video Customer  
Service Online  
Text Chat

The image shows a screenshot of the Sprint Relay Store website. The website has a yellow header with the 'Sprint Relay Store' logo and navigation links like 'Home', 'What's New', 'Relay Services', 'Relay Store', 'WebCapTel', '10-11-12', 'Columbus', and 'Media'. There are also links for 'Sign up for Special Offers', 'Chat with VCS', 'Español', '911 Calls', 'Company', and 'Contact Us'. The main content area features a large yellow banner with the text 'Shop or chat online at sprintrelaystore.com!'. Below the banner, there are buttons for 'View products' and 'Learn More'. Two men, Ken Goulston and Art Moore, are standing in front of the website, giving thumbs up. Ken is on the left and Art is on the right. They are both wearing black polo shirts with the Sprint Relay logo.

Shop or chat online at  
**sprintrelaystore.com!**

Ken Goulston

Art Moore



# TDI In Action

December 2012 - May 2013

Continued from page 22

do not meet this benchmark would need to pay at least \$75 for each IP-CTS device. It has been about two months since the emergency rules were issued. TDI and HLAA have received at least 2000 complaints from IP-CTS customers that were upset with the default-off captions setting. We asked the FCC that they reconsider their decision on the default-off captions setting. We cited that this interfered with the IP-CTS users' functional equivalency standards for accessibility and usability. Gallaudet Technology Access Program (TAP) also released the results of its IP-CTS survey, which elicited more than 3,000 responses. The results of this survey basically refuted the FCC's claims that there was widespread fraud/abuse with the IP-CTS service. The FCC has indicated that they remain alarmed and worried about what they called a "runaway" growth of IP-CTS. We will work with them to make sure IP-CTS is provided in the future to new users that really need the service. We will also tell them that we cannot stop the growth of those that really need the service, and that it is the ADA that gives them the right to use relay services to contact their families, friends, and others in the community.

## Legislation to Expand Captioning and Improve Access to Movies:

On March 13, 2013 U.S. Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) introduced two new bills that will expand access to captioning and image narration in movie theaters and airplanes.

The Captioning and Image Narration to Enhance Movie Accessibility (CINEMA) Act would amend Title III of the ADA to require movie theater complexes of two or more theaters to make captioning



The Air Carrier Access Amendments Act would amend the Air Carriers Access Act to require that air carriers make captioning and video description available to passengers.

and video description available for all films at all showings. Video description is a process that allows an individual who is blind or visually impaired to have access to the key visual elements of the programming by contemporaneous audio narrated descriptions of the actions, settings, facial expressions, costumes, and scene changes during the natural pauses in the audio portion of the programming, usually through headphones.

The Air Carrier Access Amendments Act would amend the Air Carriers Access Act to require that air carriers make captioning and video description available for visually-displayed entertainment programming—live televised events, recorded programming, and motion pictures—that is available in-flight for passengers. In instances where the programming is only available through the use of an individual touch screen or other contact-sensitive controls, the bill would authorize the U.S. Access Board to promulgate accessibility standards so that individuals with disabilities, including individuals who are blind or visually impaired, can operate the displays independently.

TDI and other consumer groups have offered to provide feedback for specifics of these two bills.

## International Telecommunication Union Meeting at Gallaudet on June 3-4:

TDI and Gallaudet Technology Access Program (Gallaudet TAP) have volunteered to handle logistics work for a meeting of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) which will take place at Gallaudet on June 3-4. ITU is putting together a document on relay services, and it felt a meeting here in the U.S. especially in the nation's capital, Washington, D.C. would help it gather some information and material to produce a comprehensive report on all forms of relay services that are offered here in America and abroad. Invitations have been sent to key contacts in government, industry, and consumer groups to take part in this international standards body process. This paper, when published, will be vital for other

Continued on page 25



# TDI In Action

## December 2012 - May 2013

Continued from page 24

countries that haven't established their own national relay service programs. The rapporteur for this ITU meeting will be John Lee, who is with BlackBerry in Canada. Andrea Saks and others from ITU will participate as observers.

### Proposed Transition in Regulatory Environment from TDM to Internet Protocol:

TDI and other consumer groups are participating in meetings with industry and a few proceedings with the FCC to address one of the "big picture" issues facing telecom regulation: the evolution of the Public Switched Telephone Network ("PSTN") from "legacy" time-division multiplexing ("TDM") systems toward an Internet protocol ("IP") based network. The transition from the traditional PSTN to IP has been a hot topic at the Commission and within the industry, as consumers increasingly "cut the cord" on landline copper networks and rely on mobile wireless or IP-enabled communications technologies running on broadband networks. However, TDI, other consumer groups, and small carriers have warned that we get into the transition toward IP, the FCC maintains its regulatory authority in areas of accessibility and consumer protection over communications networks. AT&T is proposing that the FCC allows them to conduct a number of trials in some areas, and produce some results and findings before the FCC and U.S. Congress decide on the proper arrangements for a smooth transition from TDM to IP.

Consumer groups representing people with disabilities attended a briefing by Verizon. Verizon is asking us to consider supporting their plans to propose legislation with U.S. Congress

to have the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) oversee the IP ecosystem in areas of anti-trust issues, product safety, and acceptable business practices, etc. Verizon contends that the FCC may have jurisdiction over a number of broadband providers, but not so with third party software developers, and others that make up the ecosystem. Verizon assured us that it would not take away the FCC's role in promoting and enforcing accessibility in the communications market.

### Chronology of Major Meetings/Events/Activities in which TDI participated from November 2012 -April 2013:

#### TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACCESS:

(November 14) TDI, ALDA, NAD, DHHCAN, CCASDHH, NBDA, CPADO, AGBell, and ASDC filed comments in response to the FCC's public notice seeking additional comments on structure and practices of the Video Relay Service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022053555>

(November 26) HLAA, TDI, and ALDA met with Lyle Elder, Legal Advisor, Office of FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski, on the need for and value of captioned telephone services.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022069801>

(November 29) TDI, ALDA, NAD, DHHCAN, CCASDHH, NBDA, CPADO, AGBell, and ASDC filed reply comments in response to the FCC's public notice seeking additional comments on structure and practices of the Video Relay Service (VRS) program and on proposed VRS compensation rates. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022069247>

(December 5) TDI issued an eNote to warn our members and the general public on safeguarding themselves and their wireless devices against theft.

(December 19) TDI, DHHCAN, ALDA, HLAA, and NAD sent a letter to the FCC asking that it follows its standard notice and comment process for its plans to issue an order with emergency rules regarding Internet Protocol Captioned Telephony Service (IP-CTS). <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022087133>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022087134>

(December 20) TDI, NAD, ALDA, and HLAA met on the eighth floor at the FCC with legal advisors of the offices of Commissioners McDowell, Pai, Rosenworcel, and Clyburn to discuss the proposed emergency rules and a NPRM for Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Relay Service (IP-CTS).

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022089035>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022089036>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022092790>

(January 4) TDI, ALDA, HLAA, NAD, RERC-TA met with the Chairman's office and FCC staff to discuss anticipated emergency rules for IP CTS.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022100105>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022100110>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022104171>

(January 8) TDI's lawyer Tamar Finn spoke by telephone with the offices of Commissioners Clyburn and Rosenworcel about the Consumer

Continued on page 26





# TDI In Action

## December 2012 - May 2013

Continued from page 25

Groups' position on possible IP CTS emergency rules. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022100603>

(January 10) TDI's lawyer Tamar Finn spoke by telephone with Kris Monteith, Acting Chief of CGB about the Consumer Groups' position on possible IP CTS emergency rules. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022102521>

(January 14) The Consumer Groups responded to Hamilton Relay, Inc.'s proposal for new IP CTS rules.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022104171>

(January 22) HLAA, ALDA, Hands & Voices, NAD, TDI, DHHCAN, and RERC-TA submitted comments to the FCC's request for updated information for its review of its Hearing Aid Compatibility regulations.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022109823>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022109824>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022109825>

(January 25) TDI signed on to the request from TelePacific, ACN Communications Services, Inc., Level 3 Communications, and TDS Metrocom, LLC to the FCC asking that the Commission refresh the record and take expedited action to update its copper retirement rules to preserve and promote affordable broadband over copper.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022112098>

(January 28) TDI, NAD, HLAA, ALDA, CCASDHH, DHHCAN, TAP, RERC-TA filed a comment in response to AT&T's and NTCA's petition to launch a proceeding concerning the TDM-to-IP

transition.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022113635>

(February 21) TDI issued its first in a series of three eNotes to invite and remind our members and others to participate in Gallaudet Technology Access Program's Captioned Telephone Service Survey. Reminder eNotes were sent out on March 3 and March 7.

(February 25) TDI, NAD, HLAA, ALDA, CCASDHH, DHHCAN, TAP, RERC-TA filed a reply to comments related to AT&T and NTCA's petition to launch a proceeding concerning the TDM-to-IP transition.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022124930>

(February 25) TDI, NAD, TAP, AADB met with the FCC CGB and Office of Strategic Planning to discuss the VRS reform NPRM. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022125674>

(February 26) TDI, ALDA, NAD, DHHCAN, CPADO, CCASDHH, ASDB filed a comment in the FCC proceeding on misuse of IP CTS.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022125430>

(February 26) HLAA filed a comment in the FCC proceeding on misuse of IP CTS.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022125354>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022125355>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022125356>

(March 12) TDI, ALDA, NAD, DHHCAN, CPADO, CCASDHH, AADB filed a reply to comment in the IP CTS misuse rulemaking.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/>

[view?id=7022130258](http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022130258)

(March 12) HLAA filed a reply to comments in the FCC proceeding on misuse of IP CTS. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022130198>

(March 25) NAD filed a comment in the FCC proceeding on rates for interstate calling services in prisons.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022134535>

(March 29) TDI filed a letter to the FCC clarifying its position on its sign-on to the petition by TelePacific et al, requesting to refresh the record and take action to update copper requirement rules to promote affordable broadband over copper. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022136097>

(April 4) TDI, DHHCAN, NAD, and ALDA met at the FCC with officials of the Office of the FCC Chairman, and Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau to discuss the FCC's most recent plans for its upcoming Order and a NPRM for VRS reform. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022157356>

(April 10) TDI, DHHCAN, NAD, and ALDA met with the legal advisors of the Offices of Commissioners Clyburn, Pai and Rosenworcel on the FCC's VRS reform plans in areas of interoperability, outreach and marketing, research and development, and the membership and role of iTRS Advisory Council. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022269750>

(April 24) TDI, DHHCAN, HLAA, ALDA, and Gallaudet TAP met with officials of Consumer and Governmental Affairs, and Wireline Competition Bureaus on IP-CTS issues. Gallaudet TAP gave a presentation on its findings and conclusions from its IP-CTS survey, which received participation from 3,000 individuals. TDI, HLAA, and ALDA

Continued on page 27





# TDI In Action

December 2012 - May 2013

Continued from page 26

then addressed the default-off captions setting issue, which has attracted over 2,000 complaints from consumers across the nation. We asked the FCC to consider rescinding its original decision on the default-off captions setting issue.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022301436>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022301437>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022301438>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022301439>

## MEDIA ACCESS:

(November 26) TDI, NAD, DHHCAN, ALDA, CPADO filed comments on twenty one petitions from program producers to exempt their programming from the FCC's closed captioning rules.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068770>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068781>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068807>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068809>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068814>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068820>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068821>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068822>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068824>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/>

[view?id=7022068883](http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068883)

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068914>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068919>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068924>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068930>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068932>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068939>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068949>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068953>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068956>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068962>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022068964>

(December 12) Jim House attended a meeting of consumer advocates, and officials of the National Religious Broadcasters in Manassas, VA. They explored ways to improve the future in religious broadcasts with captions across America.

(December 13) TDI, NAD, ALDA, HLAA, DHHCAN, and CPADO submitted a supplement (specifically on uncaptioned video clips) to the previous petition for reconsideration of the FCC's Report and Order on Closed Captioning of Internet Protocol-Delivered Video Programming, as a part of implementing the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022081775>

(December 14) TDI, NAD, DHHCAN, ALDA, CCASDHH, and CPADO submitted a supplemental response to the reply of Riverbend Church to their opposition to Riverbend's original petition to the FCC to exempt its program from its closed captioning rules.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022085864>

(December 20) TDI, NAD, DHHCAN, ALDA, HLAA, CCASDHH, CPADO, and Gallaudet TAP submitted a report regarding initial compliance with the FCC's IP closed captioning rules. The report specifically analyzed compliance by a number of video programming owners and distributors with the FCC's CVAA rules that prerecorded, unedited video programming delivered using IP be provided with closed captions. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022087866>

(December 20) TDI, NAD, DHHCAN, ALDA, HLAA, CCASDHH, and CPADO filed a formal complaint with the FCC alleging repeated violations of the Commission's IP closed captioning rules by Amazon.com, Inc. We contended that Amazon had failed to enable the rendering or pass through of captions for its programs on the Internet. We recommended that the FCC issue the maximum possible forfeiture against Amazon, grant injunctive relief requiring Amazon to immediately comply with the IP closed captioning rules, and establish daily base forfeitures for subsequent violations of the rules by Amazon.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022087869>

(January 14) TDI, NAD, DHHCAN, ALDA, CPADO filed comments on several petitions from program producers to exempt their programming from the FCC's closed captioning rules.

Continued on page 28



# TDI In Action

December 2012 - May 2013

Continued from page 27

Leon Charney Media Foundation, Inc.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022107210>

The other responses were filed as a single filing where we opposed 11 exemption requests.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022109426>

(April 1) TDI, NAD, DHHCAN, ALDA, CPADO filed five oppositions to petitions for exemption from the TV closed captioning rules.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022154948>

(April 1) TDI, NAD, DHHCAN, ALDA, CPADO filed an opposition to R.C. Boyd Enterprises' petition for exemption from the TV closed captioning rules. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022154746>

(April 17) TDI, NAD, DHHCAN, ALDA, HLAA, CCASDHH, and CPADO filed a response with the FCC to Amazon's February 14, 2013 letter to the FCC that addressed our December 20, 2012 informal complaint alleging violations of the Commission's Internet Protocol ("IP") closed captioning rules. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022285129>

## EMERGENCY ACCESS:

(November 29 & December 3) TDI, HLAA, and NAD met with the legal advisors from Offices of Commissioner Pai, and then joined by Gallaudet TAP, with those of Offices of Chairman Genachowski and Commissioner Clyburn on the FCC's tentative plans for the Report and Order, and Further Notice on Proposed Rulemaking for 9-1-1 emergency services via text messaging.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022074023>

(December 4) TDI, HLAA, and Gallaudet TAP met with the legal advisors from Offices of Commissioners Rosenworcel and McDowell on the FCC's tentative plans for the Report and Order, and Further Notice on Proposed Rulemaking for 9-1-1 emergency services via text messaging.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022074084>

(December 6) TDI issued an eNote inviting our members and the general public to participate in an emergency communications survey by the Georgia Tech Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center.

(December 13) TDI, NAD, ALDA, CCASDHH, HLAA, DHHCAN, CPADO and Gallaudet TAP filed comments to the FCC on legal and regulatory framework for development of NG9-1-1 services and the transition from legacy 9-1-1 networks to NG9-1-1. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022083259>

(January 7) TDI, AADB, NAD, DHHCAN, HLAA, ALDA, CPADO, RERC-TA filed reply comments in a rulemaking related to accessible emergency information delivered via IP. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022100040>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022109870>

(January 17) TDI, TAP/RERC-TA, AADB, and DHHCAN met with the FCC Media Bureau and CGB to discuss accessible emergency information for deaf-blind people. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022109870>

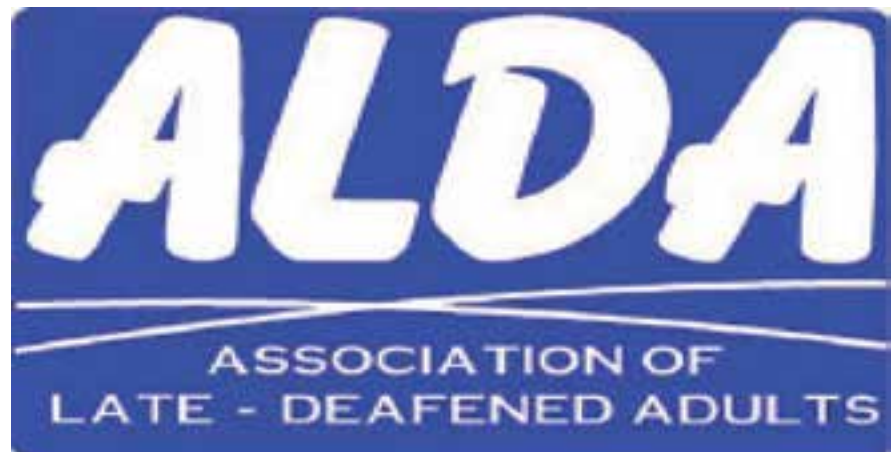
(January 29) TDI, NAD, ALDA, HLAA, DHHCAN, CPADO, CCADHH, TAP filed a comment in response to questions developing protocols for automated error messages for failed text-to-911 attempts.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022114272>

(February 5) Jim House gave a testimony on emergency preparedness at the Joint U.S. House and Senate Joint Seminar on Emergency Planning for Individuals with Access and Functional Needs. The title of Jim's presentation was "Information is Power Survival".

(February 13) TDI, TAP, ALDA, HLAA, NAD met with the FCC Media Bureau and CGB to discuss several captioning and emergency access issues. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022122102>

(February 25) TDI, TAP met with Commissioner McDowell's office to discuss several captioning and emergency access issues.





# TDI In Action

December 2012 - May 2013

Continued from page 28

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022125823>

(February 28) TDI and NAD met with Commissioner Clyburn's office to discuss several captioning and emergency access issues.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022127458>

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022137706>

(March 5) TDI and NAD met with Commissioner Pai's office to discuss several captioning and emergency access issues.

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022128792>

(March 7) TDI, NAD, TAP met with the Chairman's as well as Commissioner Rosenworcel's offices to discuss several captioning and emergency access issues. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022129782>

(March 14) TDI, NAD, DHHCAN, ALDA, CPADO filed an ex parte presentation related to several captioning and emergency access issues. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022130991>

(April 8) TDI, NAD, ALDA, DHHCAN, CPADO, CCASDHH, and RERC-TA submitted comments to the FCC on the petition by Telecommunication Systems, Inc. We urged the FCC to investigate a solution that promotes or requires the license of compliance-essential patents on fair, reasonable, and nondiscriminatory ("FRAND") terms to entities subject to the 911 rules. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022158114>

(April 9) TDI, NAD, ALDA, HLAA, DHHCAN, CPADO, and CCASDHH filed comments with the FCC urging the Commission to take the lead in

implementing the interim text-to-9-1-1 solution recommended by consumers and endorsed by industry. This proceeding addressed the Commission's requirement for bounce-back error messages for text users attempting to summon for help regardless of where in America they are, and in such situations where the most appropriate 9-1-1 centers are not in position to respond back via text messaging to the calling parties. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=7022250988>

(April 12) TDI, DHHCAN, NAD, ALDA, CPADO, AADB, CCASDHH, and Gallaudet TAP sent a joint letter of support to the FCC encouraging the Commission to take action on the request of Progeny LMS, LLC for authority to offer position location services to improve the effectiveness of 9-1-1 location accuracy.

## OTHER ADVOCACY

(December 5) Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Advocacy Network had its regular meeting at Gallaudet. Karen Peltz-Strauss and Greg Hlibok provided an overview of the FCC's activities and progress with the CVAA.

(December 13) We had our annual TDI Holiday Party in downtown Washington, D.C. 150 people attended the party, and FCC Commissioner Mignon Clyburn honored us with her presence.

(December 19) Stout attended the second FCC Chairman's Awards for Advancement in Accessibility event in Washington, D.C.

(December 20) AT&T disseminated a press release announcing establishment of its Corporate Accessibility Technology Office, and Stout was quoted in the release commending AT&T for this new initiative, and encouraging other Fortune 500 companies to follow

AT&T's example.

(December 21) TDI issued an eNote to inform that the FCC has revised its 2000C complaint form to include IP captioning.

(December 24) Another eNote was sent out to thank sponsors from industry, government, and academia for the 2012 TDI Holiday Party, which was held on December 13 in downtown Washington, D.C.

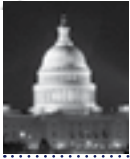
(January 3) Stout took part in a meeting with Google's Erica Swanson and Adrienne Biddings in downtown Washington, D.C. We discussed progress with Google on some accessible products and services, like its Hangouts+ video communication software, and auto captioning tool for the with the YouTube videos.

(February 27) Stout sent an email to Dr. Gerrie Hawkins, Senior Policy Analyst, National Council on Disability (NCD). Dr. Hawkins asked Stout to answer a number of questions for its annual progress report on national disability policy. Stout asked NCD to focus extensively on employment and education issues of people with disabilities, particularly those of individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing.

(April 4) TDI signed on to the letter from Common Cause to the White House asking that it nominates a new Chairman and a new Commissioner, FCC, who would be deeply committed to protecting the public interest by increasing competition, improving political transparency, promoting media diversity and accessibility, and ensuring an open Internet.

<http://www.commoncause.org/atf/cf/%7Bfb3c17e2-cdd1-4df6-92be-bd4429893665%7D/FCCPROMISES.PDF>

(April 15) Jim House submitted a



# TDI In Action

December 2012 - May 2013

Continued from page 27

piece titled, "Promoting Functional Equivalency" on formation of TDI and its role today for telecommunications access for a new publication, The Deaf Studies Encyclopedia. Dr. Genie Gertz and Dr. Patrick Boudreault serve as General Editors. The project is produced by Golson Media, and Sage Reference will then publish the work.

(April 15) An article, "The Rise of

Internet Captioning" written by Jim House, Director of Public Relations, TDI, was published in the March – April, 2013 issue of the Volta Voices magazine with Alexander Graham Bell Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

(April 22) TDI signed on to a letter from NAD to Shaun Donovan, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requesting that HUD discontinue its current policies

and regulations that create arbitrary maximum quotas, and cease denying preferences to individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing that need accessibility features of a unit and wish to live in that unit. This came about as Apache ASL Trails in Tempe, AZ, a housing complex for deaf and hard of hearing senior citizens in Tempe, AZ, is facing possible violations of HUD regulations. <http://www.nad.org/nad-writes-letter-housing-and-urban-development>

## Contribution Form



Please support TDI in its work in making technology more usable for everyone. While we do appreciate your membership, your contribution can help cover our additional advocacy costs. Please fill out and mail this contribution form (photocopies OK) with payment (check, money order or credit/debit card information) to TDI. You may fax or email a scanned copy of this form if you are paying by credit or debit card. To donate online, go to [www.tinyurl.com/donateTDI](http://www.tinyurl.com/donateTDI)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Please keep my/our donation anonymous. \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address, City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$200 ☐ \$500 ☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check Credit/Debit card issuer: \_\_\_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ American Express\*

16-Digit Card Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Card Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ 3-Digit CCV Code (Back of Card): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Sign me up for the free TDI eNotes at this email address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ This donation is in honor or memory of someone. The name and other details are enclosed.

\_\_\_\_\_ My employer has a contribution matching plan for nonprofits. Details of the plan are enclosed.

\*Note: AMEX has a 15-digit card account number and a 4-digit CCV security code on front of the card.

**Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. (TDI)**

8630 Fenton Street, Suite 121, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3803

Video: 301-563-9112 • TTY: 888-202-1120 • FAX: 301-589-3797 • Phone: 301-589-3786

[info@TDIforAccess.org](mailto:info@TDIforAccess.org) • [www.TDIforAccess.org](http://www.TDIforAccess.org)



# TDI AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Check here if this is a renewal ☐ Alternate Formats Available

**TDI Affiliate Membership is open to any business (large or small), nonprofit organization, educational institution (private or public), library, or government agency (federal, state or local).**

Name and Title of Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

**(Contact Person's name is for TDI's records only. It will not appear in Blue Book or eBlue Book.)**

Business / Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Business / Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Street / Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

(If your address is outside USA) Postal Code, Country: \_\_\_\_\_

**(For each of the following phones, please indicate the primary use of that phone.)**

Main Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Video ☐ Voice / Captioned ☐ TTY ☐ FAX

Alternate Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Video ☐ Voice / Captioned ☐ TTY ☐ FAX

Mobile Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Video ☐ Voice / Captioned ☐ TEXT

E-Mail Address **(Necessary to receive free TDI eNotes)**: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate E-Mail Address (If any): \_\_\_\_\_

Instant Messaging (IM) Service: \_\_\_\_\_ IM Username (ID): \_\_\_\_\_

Website Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Check all items that you want published for others to see:** ☐ Mailing Address ☐ E-mail Address and Website Address  
☐ Instant Messaging ☐ Phones (Includes Main, Alternate and Mobile)  
**(If no items are checked, you will not be listed in the Blue Book or eBlue Book.)**

May TDI send you **TDI eNotes**, the free TDI e-mail newsletter? ☐ Yes ☐ No

**All new listings/updates must be received in writing before October 1 to be included in the next edition of the Blue Book. Allow up to 30 days for processing eBlue Book changes mailed to TDI.**



## Select One TDI Membership Rate:

Affiliate (Business/Nonprofit/School/Library/Government): ☐ 1 Year \$100.00 ☐ 2 Years \$180.00

## Indicate here the TDI Membership Rate that you have selected above:

(Outside USA) Add additional \$15.00 for International Shipping: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Tax-Deductible Contribution to TDI (Fed Tax # 35-1146784): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU!**

**GRAND TOTAL:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(If Paying by Purchase Order) Attach Purchase Order

(If Paying by Check or Money Order) Make payable to "TDI."

**(There is a \$35 fee for checks returned due to insufficient funds.)**

(If Paying by Credit or Debit Card) Card issued by: ☐ American Express ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA



Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ CCV Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of cardholder: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail or fax completed application with payment information to:**

**TDI - 8630 Fenton Street, Suite 121, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3803**

**Phone (Video/Voice): 301-563-9112 • FAX: 301-589-3797 • E-Mail: [listings@TDIforAccess.org](mailto:listings@TDIforAccess.org)**

**Save Time and Postage – Join TDI or Renew Your Membership Online at [www.TDIforAccess.org](http://www.TDIforAccess.org)**

Revised 03/18/2014

## TDI INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

(If you are a business or organization, contact TDI for an Affiliate Membership Application Form.)

**Check here if this is a renewal** ☐ **Alternate Formats Available**

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Additional person's name desired in listing : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street or Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, and Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (If your address is outside USA) Postal Code, Country: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail address (Necessary for free TDI eNotes): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Video ☐ TTY ☐ Voice ☐ CapTel®  
 FAX: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile (Cell Phone): (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pager Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 IM Service: \_\_\_\_\_ IM User ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Web Site Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Check all items that you want published** ☐ Address ☐ E-mail ☐ Website ☐ IM ☐ Phones\*  
**in the Blue Book or eBlue Book:** (\*Phones include Video/TTY/Voice/FAX/Mobile/CapTel®)

(If no items are checked, your contact information will be unlisted and not published.)

May TDI occasionally send you TDI eNotes, TDI's free email newsletter? ☐ YES ☐ NO

*All new listings/updates must be received in writing before January 1 to be included in next Blue Book.  
 Allow up to 30 days processing in eBlue Book for changes mailed to TDI.*



### Select one TDI Membership rate:

	<b>1 Year</b>	<b>2 Years</b>	<b>LIFETIME</b>
Individual – Regular (age below 60):	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000.00
Individual – Senior Citizen (age 60+):	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$55.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000.00

### Indicate the TDI Membership Rate that you have selected above:

(Outside USA) Add additional \$15.00 for International Shipping: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution to TDI (Fed Tax # 35-1146784): *Thank you!* \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**GRAND TOTAL:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*TDI Members Receive: Listing in the Blue Book, four issues of TDI World and one Blue Book annually, occasional eNotes, and access to the eBlue Book until date of expiration.*

**Sorry, no refunds. Exchanges allowed for defective merchandise.**

(If Paying by Check or Money Order) Make payable to "TDI".

(There is a \$35 fee for checks returned due to insufficient funds.)

(If Paying by Credit or Debit Card) Issued by: ☐ American Express ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA



Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_ 3-Digit Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of cardholder: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail or fax completed application with payment information to:

**TDI - 8630 Fenton Street – Suite 121 • Silver Spring, MD 20910-3803**

Phone: 301-563-9112 • Fax: 301-589-3797

info@TDIforAccess.org • www.TDIforAccess.org

**SAVE TIME & POSTAGE – JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE AT [www.TDIforAccess.org](http://www.TDIforAccess.org)**

(Revised (01/06/2011))



# CONNECTING MADE EASY

Whether it's voice or text,  
from across the street or  
across the country, you can  
rely on Ultratec technology  
to keep you connected.



*Also featuring TTY's and Stomachers*

**Ultratec**

[www.ultratec.com](http://www.ultratec.com)

1-800-482-2424 (V/TTY)

[service@ultratec.com](mailto:service@ultratec.com)



CapTel®  
840i

## CAPTIONED TELEPHONES THAT FIT YOUR LIFESTYLE.



Large Visual Display



Traditional Phones



Touch Screen Phones



Mobile Apps



THE WORLD LEADER IN TEXT TELECOMMUNICATIONS