



# WORLD

Technology News and Commentary for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People



## 2015 Biennial Conference in Baltimore

**TDI and ADA: Leveraging 25 Years of Achieving Access**

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**Microsoft Now Offers ASL Tech Support!**

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## TDI'S MISSION

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

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**Volume 46.2**

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**Shaping An Accessible World**

## Board Views



**SHEILA  
CONLON-MENTKOWSKI**

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

**"In the area of technology,  
many advances have been  
made but some services  
still need to be 'functionally  
equivalent.'"**

## TDI and ADA: Leveraging 25 Years of Achieving Access

**A**ll of us here at TDI are very enthused, inspired, and invigorated as the 2015 TDI Conference dates approach. The location is Baltimore, MD, in the Inner Harbor, within walking distance of a number of attractions, the National Harbor, Camden Yards home of the Baltimore Orioles, and other attractions to name a few.

The theme this year is "TDI and ADA: Leveraging 25 Years of Achieving Access." Looking over the Conference presentation tracks, plenary speakers, and other activities, there is something for all to attend and participate in. The tracks will provide attendees an update on what's happening in all the aspects of telecommunications, media, movie, TV, and Internet captioning. We are also providing the opportunity for professional development with a track on 'Professional Development for an Accessible World', where presenters can provide an overview of compliance with the ADA in the areas of Employment, Public Services, and Public Accommodations.

When the ADA was first enacted in 1990, it was difficult to foresee 25 years further down the road to 2015. Now here we are! What have we learned and experienced over these past years that will leverage access that we have attained and still have yet to attain?

In the area of technology, many advances have been made but some services still need to be 'functionally equivalent'.

In the area of employment, we still do not see a significant number of deaf, hard of hearing, late deafened, and deaf blind individuals in upper

management. Accommodations for these populations are still not widely understood or provided easily. Individuals need to advocate for themselves for their own accommodations on the job. There is still a lot of issues with providing videophones for deaf people who use those on the job as well as telephones for those who use text phones such as CapTel and Caption Call (check) with voice over.

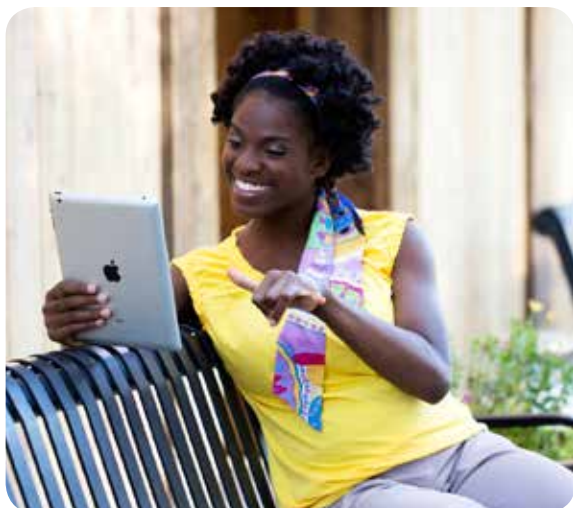
In the area of accommodations, it seems some locations are attempting to use VRI in lieu of in person interpreters. We need to educate the hearing world why VRI is not a good substitute for in person interpreters for a number of reasons.

Texting to 911 is a work in progress and will be for some time to come. Go to the presentation and find out why and how you can assist with this process.

We are seeing some progress in transportation in the USA, text alerts on Amtrak, captioned safety videos on some domestic airlines, captioning in the airports on TVs but not usually at the airport gates.

There will be several prominent speakers during the conference. The Federal Communication Commission Chairman, Tom Wheeler, will be a featured speaker. We are pleased and honored that he accepted our invitation to speak during our conference. Jarrod Musano, the Chief Executive Officer with Convo Relay is also a featured speaker. Angela Officer, Senior Program Manager with Sprint

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## Capitol Commentary



BY CLAUDE STOUT  
*TDI Executive Director*

**“Celebrate with us on the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, review the progress we have made with this Act, and plot the future in areas where we can make extra impetus with new approaches and strategies for the next twenty five years under the Act.”**

## Come Join Us at the TDI Conference in Baltimore!

**T**DI hosts its Biennial Conference every two years in alternate sites. This year we are excited to have our 21<sup>st</sup> Conference on August 19-22, 2015 at the Hyatt Regency Baltimore on Inner Harbor in Baltimore, MD.

This Conference is offering us a three-day's rich experience and personal/professional development such as learning about the latest in public policy for disability access, networking with business and government, strategic consensus planning with local, state, and national consumer advocates, and the visit to the exhibits that showcase the latest in accessible products and services from the marketplace. Here they are:

- a. meet the industry leaders that have worked with TDI and its sister consumer groups in the last two years on access topics such as relay services, emergency communications, wireless communications and information, and captioning of video programming;
- b. receive inspiring keynote and luncheon addresses on our civil rights in telecommunications, employment, and other areas in the community;
- c. hear about the research and other studies that have been conducted in Sweden and United States for accessibility in information, communication, hearing enhancement, and employment;
- d. get updates on federal government initiatives for employment and civil rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act for people who are deaf and hard of hearing;
- e. get pointers from a panel of well-known deaf and hard

of hearing leaders on their experience interacting with their fellow hearing colleagues in the workplace;

- f. get the latest on recent initiatives from the FCC for relay services, captioning of video programming (TV and Internet), emergency communications, advanced communication services;
- g. discover more about the Maryland state government and its offering of accessible services and resources in telecommunications, civil rights, rehabilitation, and employment;
- h. appreciate the changing times we have today with interpreter services, and the impact of technology on the interpreting profession;
- i. meet and interact in an evening reception with the TDI Board President and other TDI Board members on the top floor of the hotel overlooking Inner Harbor;
- j. visit a number of exhibits that showcase the current offering of accessible products and services at home or in the workplace from the market and government that benefit individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing;
- k. learn from the key players with industry, consumer groups, and government on the latest in implementing the FCC's TV caption quality rules;
- l. enjoy the new Technology and Youth Forum which will give spotlight on the latest in innovation and accessibility from today's generation of young Americans that are deaf, hard of

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## CAPITOL COMMENTARY Continued from page 4

- hearing, or hearing (aged less than 35);
- m. applaud the contributions from the deserving individuals/ companies that receive the biennial awards from TDI in humanitarian service, lifelong service to others, engineering, telecommunication access, marketing and public relations, and public policy; and
  - n. last, but not least, celebrate with us on the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, review the progress we have made with this Act, and plot the future in areas where we can make extra impetus with new approaches and strategies for the next twenty five years under the Act.

Would you like to take yourself and your family to the ball game? We are pleased that there will be a TDI section in Camden Yards on Wednesday evening, August 19 for the major league baseball game between the Baltimore Orioles, and the New York Mets. Camden Yards is just a few blocks from our host hotel. Check for information in the issue on how to purchase the tickets online for the game.

Instead of taking risky deep-sea diving out in the oceans, would you want the pleasure of seeing some unbelievable creatures within the tanks of the Aquarium? You are most welcome on your own to buy tickets online from the National Aquarium for a tour on Friday evening, August 21. The Aquarium is on Inner Harbor, just a short walk from the hotel.

We are very much honored to get acceptances for the keynote and luncheon addresses from three dignitaries from government and the

business community. Tom Wheeler, whom many have considered to be the best Chairman in the FCC's history in disability access, will give the keynote address in the early morning of Thursday, August 20. Under his leadership in about a year and half, the FCC has made key inroads for our access in relay services, captioning of video programs, and deaf-blind equipment distribution. Angela Officer, who is Senior Program Manager with Sprint Relay, will give inspiring remarks for the Professional/ Motivational Luncheon at noon on Friday, August 21. And last but not least, we will see Jarrod Musano, Chief Executive Officer with Convo Relay give his wisdom and thoughts on what it is like to run a business under a challenging regulatory climate in relay services, and to give an optimistic vision of the future for the deaf and hard of hearing in the marketplace.

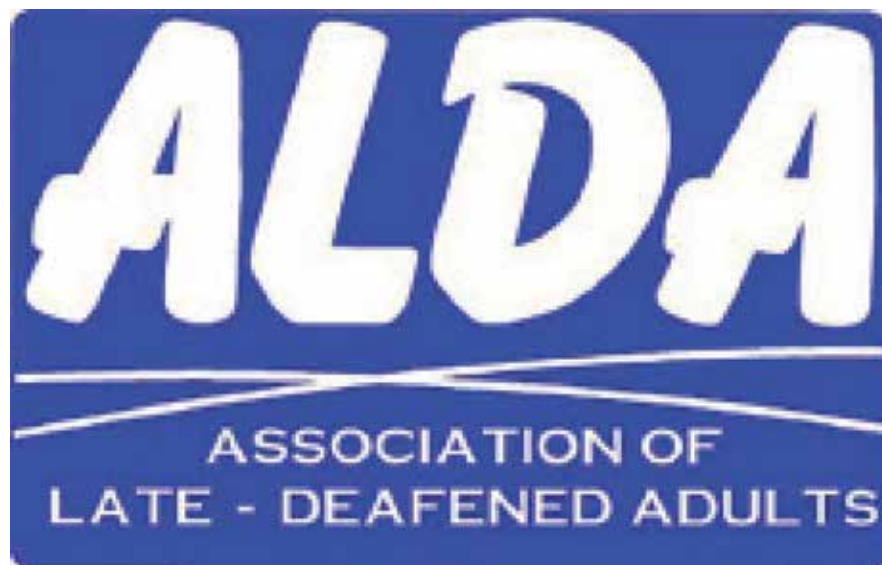
We are equally delighted to have a team of FCC executives and attorney advisors come to the Conference to present the latest in the Commission's efforts for our access needs in telecommunications, media, and information services. FCC continues to have our deepest appreciation and

respect for its initiatives in disability access, and no other federal office/ cabinet department can match its highest level of commitment. Karen Peltz-Strauss, Deputy Policy Chief, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, FCC, and Greg Hlibok, Chief, Disability Rights Office, CGB, FCC will be moderating the two separate town hall meetings during the Conference.

Near the end of the Conference, active TDI members and visitors will get to see TDI Board President Sheila Conlon-Mentkowski give a presentation during the association business meeting. Everyone is most welcomed to give input or make motions during the meeting.

At the conclusion of the Conference, we will enjoy a good dinner at the hotel, and then watch a great entertainment show featuring Jennifer Ann Cook, commonly referred to as "JAC", and CJ Jones, as "CJ", both from the state of California. Cook comes to the Conference for the first time, having had much success as an emcee for recent NAD Conferences, and as a performing artist in a few promotional

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## Tech Bytes



**DON CULLEN**

*Managing Editor, TDI World*

Welcome to our  
Tech Bytes section!  
This section is TDI's  
opportunity to share bite-  
sized chunks of awesomely  
interesting tech, apps,  
and services that  
we think you'd love  
to know about!

## Microsoft Now Offers ASL Tech Support!

In addition to Verizon, Small Business Administration (SBA), and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Microsoft has joined the ever-growing ranks of major organizations that provide ASL public relations channels by providing a way for ASL users to call technical support using a videophone.

The ASL support lets people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing get assistance for using Microsoft products in general, as well as assistive technologies such as screen magnifiers, speech recognition software and their devices' accessibility settings.

Experiencing computer problems? Can't install software, having problems with internet, experiencing viruses, or need help installing hardware? Microsoft is happy to help!

It's available from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. PT Monday through Friday, when people can reach an agent who speaks ASL as their primary language via a videophone. The support is currently offered in the US only, though the company is continuing to evaluate the need for potential expansion internationally.



While many companies offer support for people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing through a relay service that translates their words, the process can "get difficult, and sometimes technical messages get lost," says Laura Greer, Microsoft senior business program manager.

FCC has pointed out that that last year saw 125 million video-assisted minutes in time being spent by deaf and hard of hearing on videophone calls. FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler further emphasized the importance of providing ASL-based public relations by saying "It is now time to expand direct video calling beyond the FCC and make it available to all levels of government and companies who answer consumer inquiries."

Greer is in clear agreement; she says ASL support gives people who are most comfortable communicating through sign language "the

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Hello! Welcome to Microsoft's Disability Answer Desk, my name is Ariele.



**TECH BYTES** Continued from page 6

opportunity to fix their technical issue with someone who speaks their own language." Early feedback, she adds, has been positive.

I've personally used Microsoft's Disability Answer Desk to resolve a touch-screen issue on my PC at the office. The staff was very friendly, knowledgeable, and was very patient with me while they worked hard to diagnose the issue. It was actually a relief and pleasure to be able to chat with tech support in ASL.

Jenny Lay-Flurrie, Senior Director of Trusted EXperiences Team (TExT): Accessibility, Online Safety and

Privacy at Microsoft, shared "We could not have done this without the help and guidance we received from the ASL community! We look forward to learning from your experience so we can make this the best service for all of our customers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Microsoft's Disability Answer Desk is part of the company's commitment to help people of all abilities achieve more. Since it was launched in early 2013, it has grown into a 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week service that's now available in 11 countries.

Got an issue with a Microsoft product? Give them a call, you'll be sure glad you did!

## Disability Answer Desk

The Disability Answer Desk is where people with disabilities can get support with Microsoft products and accessibility features.

Connect with a Microsoft expert:



Call +1 (800) 936-5900



[Chat online](#)



American Sign Language  
+1 (503) 427-1234

**BOARD VIEWS** Continued from page 2

Relay, will be a luncheon inspirational speaker.

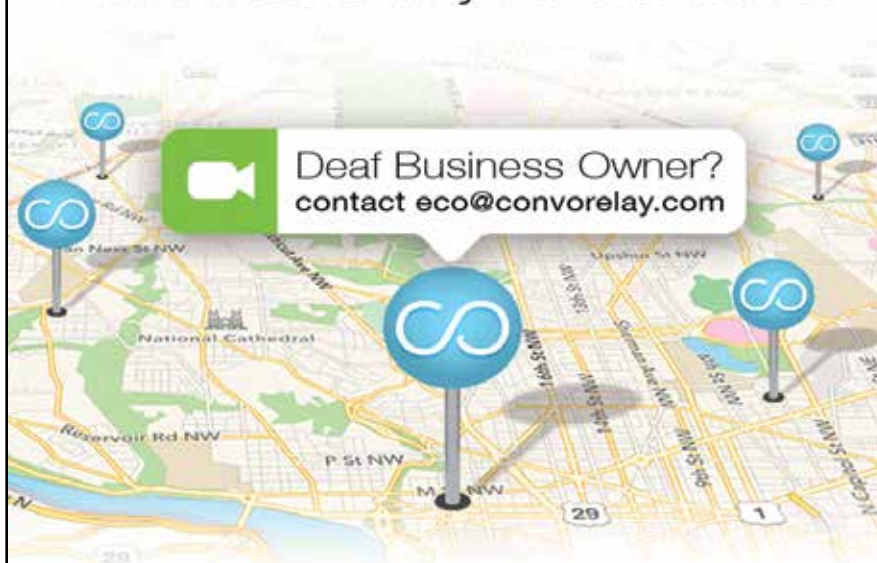
On the Saturday of the Conference, I will be presiding over a brief TDI business meeting and I hope you all will attend to give input for TDI.

Saturday night entertainment will be CJ Jones and JAC Cook, be prepared for fun!!

If you haven't already, please do register for the conference at, stay at the conference hotel, buy your baseball tickets for the TDI baseball night at or the tour of the National Aquarium at [www.tdiforaccess.org](http://www.tdiforaccess.org) Tickets are available for the President's Reception, the two luncheons, and the Dinner/Entertainment finale. If you need more assistance, please do feel free to send an email to Claude at [cstout@tdiforaccess.org](mailto:cstout@tdiforaccess.org)

See you all in August!!!

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now available on  convo mobile

convo



# Registration is Now Open for the TDI 2015 Conference!

*TDI and ADA: Leveraging 25 Years of Achieving Access*

Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. (TDI) has some good news to share with you. TDI will be having our 21st Biennial Conference on August 19-22, 2015 at the Hyatt Regency Baltimore in Baltimore, Maryland. For your convenience, online registration for the TDI 2015 Conference in Baltimore, Maryland is now open! You can register online at [www.tdiforaccess.org/conference!](http://www.tdiforaccess.org/conference!)

If you're unable to register online, please feel free to call us at (301) 563-9112 (VP/Voice) or (301) 589-3006 (TTY), and we can work with you to get you registered!

You are invited to join us in the "Charm City" at this exciting conference. The conference will take place on August 19-22, 2015, at the Hyatt Regency Baltimore Hotel in historic Baltimore, Maryland.

The Hyatt Regency Baltimore Hotel is an AAA Four Diamond hotel on Baltimore's picturesque Inner Harbor. The urban contemporary hotel offers a

**Wed., Aug. 19, 2015**

(12 PM EDT)

-to-

**Sat., Aug. 22, 2015**

(11PM EDT)

**Hyatt Regency  
Baltimore Hotel**

300 Light Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202



luxury gateway to "Charm City," along with the remarkable Pisces lounge, a luxury venue that overlooks the Inner Harbor.

This Conference is offering you a wonderful three-day's experience and opportunities for personal/professional development as well as some time for fun with friends and family. The conference will include award presentations, exciting workshops, exhibits featuring state-of-the-art technology for everyone's telecommunication needs, and unique networking opportunities. You get

**CONFERENCE Continued on page 9**



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to learn about the latest in public policy for disability access, to network with others from with business and government, and to visit the exhibits that give you the latest information on accessible products and services. You meet the industry leaders that have worked with TDI and its sister

you benefit from getting pointers from a panel of well-known deaf and hard of hearing leaders on their experience interacting with their fellow hearing colleagues in the workplace. Some key Federal Communications Commission officials speak about recent initiatives from the Commission for relay services, captioning of video programming (TV and Internet), emergency communications, and

Disabilities Act of 1990.

Tom Wheeler, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, gives the keynote address in the early morning of Thursday, August 20. Angela Officer, who is Senior Program Manager with Sprint Relay, gives inspiring remarks for the Professional and Motivational Luncheon at noon on Friday, August

## Notable Speakers:



**FCC Chairman  
Tom Wheeler**



**Sprint Relay Senior Program Manager  
Angela Officer**



**Convo Relay CEO  
Jarrod Musano**

consumer groups in the last two years on access topics such as relay services, emergency communications, wireless communications and information, and captioning of video programming.

You get to see others speak about the research and other studies that have been conducted for accessibility in information, communication, hearing enhancement, and employment. There will be updates given on federal government initiatives for employment and civil rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act for people who are deaf and hard of hearing. For some of you still working every day,

advanced communication services, etc.

For the first time ever, there will be the new Technology and Youth Forum which give spotlight on the latest in innovation and accessibility from today's generation of young Americans that are deaf, hard of hearing, or hearing (aged less than 35). We will recognize a number of individuals and companies in an Awards Luncheon for their contributions in the community, engineering, telecommunication access, marketing and public relations, and public policy. Last but not least, you celebrate with us on the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with

21. And we see Jarrod Musano, Chief Executive Officer with Convo Relay give his thoughts on what it is like to run a business under a challenging regulatory climate in relay services.

At the conclusion of the Conference on Saturday evening, August 22, we enjoy a good dinner at the hotel, and then watch a great entertainment show featuring Jennifer Ann Cook and CJ Jones, both from the state of California.

Of course, you'll want a place to stay while at the conference. Don't forget

**CONFERENCE Continued on page 11**





## Would you like to attend the ball game?

We are pleased that there will be a TDI section in Camden Yards on Wednesday evening, August 19 for the major league baseball game between the Baltimore Orioles, and the New York Mets. Camden Yards is just a few blocks from our host hotel. Attendance is optional.

## Instead of taking risky deep-sea diving out in the oceans, would you want the pleasure of seeing some unbelievable creatures within the tanks of the Aquarium on Friday, August 21?

TDI will be hosting an optional tour at the National Aquarium. The Aquarium is on Inner Harbor, just a short walk from the hotel. Getting a glimpse of the enormous lagoon style tank is always a thrill—which includes seeing the sharks and rays gliding through the water. Of course, who can forget the seahorse, the corals and of course, the electric eel! In addition, this year, they have opened an exhibit called “Living Seashore.” In this exhibit, you are actually encouraged to touch creatures such as moon snails, stingrays, and jellyfish!



CJ Jones

## Entertainment Dinner Finale

Join us for dinner and enjoy excellent entertainment as provided by renowned entertainers CJ and JAC! Definitely not to be missed!

**Admission: \$50.**

*No Registration Required*



Jennifer ("JAC") Ann Cook

Continued from page 9

to book rooms at the Hyatt hotel. Guests can breathe easy thanks to all of the guestrooms being nonsmoking rooms. The Hyatt Regency Baltimore Hotel even offers Respire guestrooms for a Hypo-Allergenic stay. Additional accommodations that the hotel offers are fee-based high-speed Wi-Fi internet, flat screen television with cable movie channels, and wireless keyboard. The hotel also has an outdoor pool with sundeck, and a 24-hour gym.

### Hotel Registration:

<http://bit.ly/2015tdiconfhotel>

Baltimore is the largest city in Maryland with over 600,000 in population. It is located in the central area of the state along the Chesapeake Bay. It is home to the John Hopkins University, and also to the Baltimore Orioles. Areas of interest include the National Aquarium, Fort McHenry, and Oriole Park at Camden Yards,

B&O Railroad Museum, American Visionary Art Museum, and more. Taking a cruise on the Chesapeake Bay during sunset is certainly not an experience to be missed! Be sure to check out the "Baltimore Attractions" article in this issue to see what Baltimore has to offer!

We'd like to emphasize that we'd absolutely love for you to join us at the Conference. Check our website [www.tdiforaccess.org](http://www.tdiforaccess.org) or the links below to register for the Conference, to stay at the host hotel - the Hyatt Regency Baltimore, and to buy tickets for either the baseball game or the tour of the National Aquarium. You can register for full combo tickets, or single events like the President's Reception, the two Luncheons, and the Dinner/Entertainment Finale. You need not be registered in order to attend any one of the aforementioned four food functions.

### Conference Registration:

<http://bit.ly/2015tdiconfreg>

### Hotel Registration:

<http://bit.ly/2015tdiconfhotel>

### Orioles-Mets Baseball Game, Wednesday, August 19:

<http://bit.ly/2015tdiconfbaseball>

If you still need information or support to make Conference plans, feel free to contact us anytime at [pubrel@tdiforaccess.org](mailto:pubrel@tdiforaccess.org). We hope you can join us at the Conference. We will be happy to assist you until you are completely satisfied. We thank you very much for considering our invitation to participate in the Conference. This will be the 21st Biennial TDI Conference held during the 47 years since TDI's establishment in 1968. The Conference Planning Committee, chaired by Claude Stout, TDI Executive Director, is working hard to make this Conference a huge success. You will enjoy the conference and be glad you came!

*We'd absolutely love to see you there!*

## 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)







# 21st TDI Biennial Conference Schedule of Events

*Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. (TDI)  
The Hyatt Regency Baltimore  
Baltimore, Maryland  
August 19-22, 2015*

## WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19 (TDI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING)

*All Events Open to Public*

---

1:00 PM to 6:00 PM

### **TDI BOARD MEETING**

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12:00 PM to 5:00 PM

### **CONFERENCE REGISTRATION**

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7:00 PM to 10:00 PM

### **TDI BASEBALL NIGHT, MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL GAME, METS VS. ORIOLES**

*Location: Camden Yards, Baltimore, MD*

*Tickets: [http://purchase.tickets.com/buy/MLBEventInfo?pid=7955178&agency=ORLV\\_B2B149](http://purchase.tickets.com/buy/MLBEventInfo?pid=7955178&agency=ORLV_B2B149)*





## THURSDAY, AUGUST 20 (TDI CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES – DAY ONE)

*All workshops at Hyatt Regency Baltimore require registration!*

9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

### CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

### EXHIBITS OPEN TO PUBLIC

9:00 AM to 10:00 AM

### OPENING CEREMONY

**Andy Lange – Emcee**  
Member At Large, TDI Board of Directors, and Chair, TDI  
Conference Program Committee



### Introduction of TDI Board of Directors & Executive Director

### Keynote Address

**Tom Wheeler**  
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission



10:15 AM to 11:30 AM

### PLENARY SESSION

#### FCC Town Hall on Communications:

#### Title I of the CVAA, Relay Services, and the Disability Advisory Committee



**Karen Peltz-Strauss**  
Deputy Chief, Policy  
Consumer &  
Governmental  
Affairs Bureau  
FCC



**Elaine Gardner**  
Designated Federal  
Officer  
Disability Rights Office  
Consumer & Govern-  
mental Affairs Bureau  
FCC



**Eliot Greenwald**  
Deputy Chief  
Disability Rights Office  
Consumer & Governmental  
Affairs Bureau  
FCC



**Greg Hlibok**  
Chief, Disability Rights  
Office  
Consumer &  
Governmental Affairs  
Bureau  
FCC



**Bob Aldrich**  
Legal Advisor to the  
Bureau Chief  
Consumer &  
Governmental Affairs  
Bureau  
FCC



**Rosaline Crawford**  
Attorney Advisor  
Disability Rights Office  
Consumer & Governmental  
Affairs Bureau  
FCC



## Premium Activity: The National Aquarium

501 E Pratt St  
Baltimore, MD

Cost: \$24.95-\$39.95 per ticket  
<http://www.aqua.org>

“Considered one of the world’s best aquariums, the National Aquarium’s mission is to inspire conservation of the world’s aquatic treasures. It champions environmental initiatives by engaging with visitors, volunteers, education groups and schools to actively participate in the preservation of the world’s natural resources and living systems. The National Aquarium delivers meaningful experiences through its living collection of more than 17,000 animals from more than 750 species of fish, birds, amphibians, reptiles, marine mammals and sharks, as well as through exclusive behind-the-scenes experiences like sleepovers and tours, science-based education programs and hands-on experiences in the field.”  
(Trip Advisor)

## Premium Activities:



### American Visionary Art Museum

800 Key Hwy, Baltimore, MD 21230

Cost: \$15.95/per adult ticket, \$13.95/  
per senior ticket

<http://www.avam.org/>

"Be prepared for the unusual and imaginative at this museum housing works by non-mainstream artists, including the "whirligig", a 55-foot wind-powered sculpture, a 10-foot model of the Lusitania made entirely out of match sticks and a mobile that spans three floors." (Trip Advisor)



### Ripley's Believe It or Not - Baltimore

301 Light Street, Baltimore, MD 21202

Cost: \$25.99/per adult, \$17.99/child,  
includes access to odditorium, 4D  
theater, and mirror maze

<https://tickets.ripleys.com/baltimore/>

"From statues ranging from a two-headed calf to a man who had the world's largest nose, there is no shortage of bizarre attractions at Ripley's Believe it or Not! Odditorium in Baltimore. The museum is set to open June 1 in the Light Street Pavilion along the Inner Harbor." (Baltimore Business Journal)

11:30 AM to 1:00 PM

**LUNCH BREAK (ON YOUR OWN, IF TIME LEFT, GO VISIT THE EXHIBITS!)**

## BREAKOUT WORKSHOPS

1:00 PM to 2:15 PM

### WORKSHOP I: CLOUD4ALL

Using Cloud Technology to Increase Accessibility

**Christoffer Friberg**  
Software Developer  
Omnicor  
Stockholm, Sweden



### WORKSHOP II: 9-1-1 CO-PRESENTATIONS

**"Roll-Out Text to 9-1-1 in USA: What is Really Happening Now?"**



**Donna Platt**  
Emergency Preparedness  
Coordinator  
NC Division of Services for  
Deaf and Hard of Hearing



**Richard Ray**  
ADA Compliance Coordinator  
Department on Disability  
City of Los Angeles, CA



**Suzy Rosen Singleton**  
Attorney Advisor  
Federal Communications  
Commission

**"Two Steps Forward, Two Steps Forward"  
(Wireless Location Accuracy)**

**Toni Dunne**  
Manager, External Affairs  
Intrado



2:30 PM to 3:30 PM

### PLENARY SESSION

**"Everybody is Important"**

**Colet Mitchell**  
Supervisory Policy Advisor  
Office of Disability Employment Policy  
U.S. Department of Labor



3:30 PM to 5:00 PM

**WORKSHOP III: SEAMLESS ACCESS TO COMMUNICATION SERVICES****"Seamless Access to Communication Services - from Legacy Technology to Total Conversation Without Disruption"**

**Dr. Christian Vogler**  
Director  
Technology Access Program  
Gallaudet University



**Lisa Astrom**  
Manager, Research & Development  
Omnitor  
Stockholm, Sweden

**WORKSHOP IV: INTERACTING WITH HEARING COLLEAGUES IN THE WORKPLACE**

**Vikki Porter**  
U.S. Government  
Accountability Office



**John Fechter**  
Hamilton Relay



**Matt Myrick**  
AT&T



**Pam Holmes**  
Ultratec



**Jenny Lay-Flurrie**  
Microsoft

5:00 PM to 6:15 PM

**WORKSHOP V: THE WIRELESS INDUSTRY****"The Wireless Industry: Finding the Cell Phones or Mobile Devices To Meet Your Needs"**

**Jeff Kramer**  
Executive Director  
Strategic Alliances  
Verizon Communications



**Matt Gerst**  
Director, External & State Affairs  
CTIA

**Premium Activities:****Camden Yards Oriole Park Tour**

333 W Camden St,  
Baltimore, MD 21201

Adults - \$9; Children (14 and under) - \$6;  
Seniors (55 and over) - \$6;  
Children 3 and under - free

<http://baltimore.orioles.mlb.com/bal/ballpark/tours/index.jsp>

"Come see Oriole Park at Camden Yards from a whole new perspective. Enjoy the charm of the ballpark from club level suites, the press level, and even the Orioles dugout. Oriole Park revolutionized baseball when it debuted on Opening Day 1992. Now, here's your chance to go behind the scenes of this historic ballpark and learn more about how it has continued to change the baseball fan's experience ever since." (Baltimore Orioles)

**Top of the World Observation Level**

401 E Pratt Street, World Trade Center  
Institute, #27, Baltimore, MD 21202

Cost: \$6 for adults, \$5 for seniors (60+) or  
military with ID, \$4 for children 3-12 years  
old, Free under 3

<http://www.viewbaltimore.org/index.cfm>

"Observation tower at the top of the World Trade Center offering audio-visual presentations about the history of Baltimore." (Trip Advisor)



## Premium Activities:



### The Maryland Science Center

601 Light St, Baltimore, MD 21230

Cost: \$20.95/per adult, \$16.95/per child 3-12, \$19.95/per senior

<http://www.mdsci.org/>

"The Maryland Science Center in Baltimore is a jewel of the city's Inner Harbor. Aside from its science exhibits, the museum is home to an IMAX movie theater and planetarium. With a number of hands-on exhibits, the science center is a phenomenal attraction for kids, and is a must-see stop for tourists and locals alike." (Baltimore About)

### Fort McHenry

2400 East Fort Ave.,  
Baltimore, MD 21230

Cost: \$7.00/per adult (16 or older),  
children 15 or younger free

<http://baltimore.org/see-do/fort-mchenry>

"Fort McHenry is primarily known for the Battle of Baltimore during the War of 1812, when American troops stopped a British invasion. The battle inspired Francis Scott Key to pen what would become the national anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner" – originally entitled "Defense of Fort McHenry". During the Civil War, the fort served as a military prison. Another interesting fact: When a new flag is designed for use by the United States, it is first flown over Fort McHenry. This spectacular embodiment of the spirit of America is open most days for a visit and is a must-see for history fans." (Visit Baltimore)

## WORKSHOP VI

**"Better Together: RID, the Deaf Community, and the Path Toward Equal Access"**



**Julie Ann Schafer**

Director of Public Policy & Advocacy  
Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

## PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION

Admission: \$50

Location: Top floor of hotel

*Has a breathtaking view of Inner Harbor; definitely not to be missed!*



**Sheila Conlon-Mentkowski**

President, TDI Board of Directors

## FRIDAY, AUGUST 21

### (TDI CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES – DAY TWO)

*All workshops at Hyatt Regency Baltimore require registration!*

9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

## CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

## EXHIBITS OPEN TO PUBLIC

9:00 AM to 10:00 AM

## PLENARY SESSION



**Eve Hill**

Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Justice

## BREAKOUT WORKSHOPS

10:15 AM to 11:30 AM

### WORKSHOP VII

**"Being Deaf or Hard of Hearing is A Challenge (But Not Impossible) when We Try to Move Up on the Career Ladder"**

**Dr. W. Scot Atkins**

Faculty Member, Business Studies Support Services  
National Technical Institute for the Deaf



### WORKSHOP VIII

**"The Role of National Council on Disability and the U.S. Access Board in Washington, D.C."**



**Benro Ogunyipe**  
Council Member  
National Council on Disability



**David Capozzi**  
Executive Director  
U.S. Access Board

11:30 AM to 1:15 PM

### PROFESSIONAL/MOTIVATIONAL LUNCHEON

**"Dreams Can Come True:  
Working for Sprint Relay 23 Years"**

Admission: \$50

*No Registration Required*



**Angela Officer**  
Senior Program Manager  
Sprint Relay

## Free Activities:



### Baltimore Museum of Art

10 Art Museum Dr, Baltimore, MD 21218

<https://artbma.org/>

"This museum is free to everyone making it a great destination. There is a wide array of different exhibits through the year, including special exhibits from partners." (FreeStuff)



### The Walters Art Museum

600 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD

<https://www.thewalters.org/>

"The Walters Art Museum owns more than 25,000 pieces of art and offers free general admission (excluding special exhibits). Bring the whole family to enjoy special family tours and activities for all ages. Children will enjoy the displays of knights' armor; the statues; the colorful paintings; the furniture; and the many small and lovely objects – including Fabergé eggs. The museum hosts a variety of free family programs as well, from drop-in art classes on Saturdays and Sundays to museum tours with family-friendly guides." (Visit Baltimore)

## Free Activities:



### Fell's Point Art Loop

*Fell Street, Baltimore, MD 21231*

[http://historyatrisk.com/fellspoint.html#=\\_](http://historyatrisk.com/fellspoint.html#=_)

"This charming national historic district, dating back to the 18 century, has cobblestone streets, historic buildings, craft and antique stores, coffee houses and street fairs. Stop by the Art Gallery of Fells Point to see some fine work by local artists." (Trip Advisor)



### Howard Peters- Rawlings Conservatory & Botanic Gardens

*3100 Swann Dr, Baltimore, MD 21217*

<http://www.rawlingsconservatory.org/>

"Opened in 1888, the historical Rawlings Conservatory is one of Baltimore's most beautiful structures. It features five distinct greenhouse rooms, one 1/2-acre garden with many flower beds and a kaleidoscope of colors all year round." (HP Rawlings Conservatory)

1:15 PM to 2:45 PM

### PLENARY SESSION

#### FCC Town Hall on Video Programming:

#### Title II of the CVAA, Captioning Quality and Other Video Programming Matters



**Rosaline Crawford**

Attorney Advisor  
Disability Rights Office, CGB,  
FCC



**Karen Peltz-Strauss**

Deputy Chief, Policy  
Customer & Governmental Affairs Bureau  
FCC



**Eliot Greenwald**

Deputy Chief  
Disability Rights Office, CGB  
FCC



**Suzy Rosen Singleton**

Attorney Advisor  
Disability Rights Office,  
Consumer & Governmental  
Affairs Bureau  
FCC

2:45 PM to 3:00 p.m.

### VISIT TO EXHIBIT HALL

3:00 PM to 4:00 PM

### PLENARY SESSION

#### "The State of Maryland Is Your Friend in Accessibility"



**Brenda Kelly-Frey**

Director  
Telecommunications Access  
of Maryland



**Kelby Brick**

Director  
Maryland Governor's  
Office of the Deaf and  
Hard of Hearing



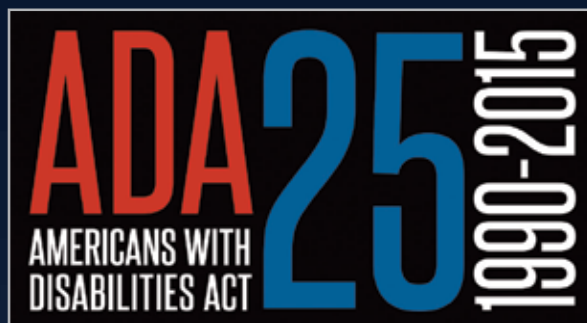
**Craig "Hank" Passi**

Maryland State Coordinator  
Vocational Rehabilitation Services  
for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing





## Celebrating the Americans with Disabilities Act



### 25 years of removing barriers and empowering individuals

Since 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act has ensured that nearly 54 million Americans with disabilities would not be discriminated against. In doing so, the ADA has paved the way for Hamilton Relay® and Hamilton CapTel® to provide life-changing, functionally equivalent telecommunications services for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or have difficulty speaking.



Find out more about the ADA 25th Anniversary and what it means to us.

**HamiltonRelay.com**

That's what I'm talking about

**HAMILTON**  
relay

## Free Activity:



### Visit Edgar Allan Poe's Grave Site and Memorial

*Westminster Cemetery on the southeast corner of Fayette and Greene sts., Baltimore, MD*

"Edgar Allan Poe and his wife, Virginia Clemm, are buried in the Westminster Hall cemetery. While you're paying your respects to this great American writer, keep a look out for gravestones belonging to other prominent Maryland citizens." (Baltimore.org)

#### CAPITOL COMMENTARY Continued from page 5

videos with Purple Communications. Jones returns to do another one, the last appearance he made was for the 2009 TDI Conference in Austin, TX.

We look forward to having you at the Conference. Check our website to register for the Conference, to stay at the host hotel, the Hyatt Regency Baltimore, and to buy tickets for either the baseball game or the tour of the National Aquarium. Be sure to buy tickets also for the President's Reception, the two Luncheons, and the Dinner/Entertainment Finale. If you still need information or guidance to make Conference plans, feel free to contact me anytime at [cstout@tdiforaccess.org](mailto:cstout@tdiforaccess.org).

## BREAKOUT WORKSHOPS

4:00 PM to 5:30 PM

### WORKSHOP IX

#### "Current Progress for TV Caption Quality"



**Blake Reid**  
Assistant Professor  
Samuelson-Gluckho Technology and Policy Law Clinic  
University of Colorado  
Boulder, CO



**Ann Bobeck**  
Senior Vice President  
and Deputy General Counsel  
National Association of Broadcasters



**Heather York**  
Vice President of Marketing and Government Affairs  
VITAC, Inc.



**Eliot Greenwald**  
Deputy Chief, Disability Rights Office, CGB, Federal Communications Commission



**Adam Finkel**  
Director, Government Relations  
National Court Reporters Association



**Lise Hamlin**  
Director of Public Policy  
Hearing Loss Association of America



**Zainab Alkebsi**  
Policy Counsel  
National Association of the Deaf

### WORKSHOP X

#### "A Panel of Four Providers Giving Their Updates on Their IP-Captioned Relay Offerings"



**Jason Dunn**  
CaptionCall, Sorenson



**Rita Beier Branman**  
ClearCaptions, Purple Communications



**Dixie Ziegler**  
Hamilton Relay



**Jim Skjeveland**  
Sprint Relay

6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

## TOUR IN THE NATIONAL AQUARIUM



**Location: Inner Harbor**

*This activity is optional. It is only a brief walk from the hotel.*

*Tickets: <http://www.aqua.org/tickets?date=08/21/2015>*

## SATURDAY, AUGUST 22 – CONSUMERS' DAY (TDI CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES – DAY THREE)

*All Workshops and Exhibits are now open to everyone; no registration is required.*

10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

### EXHIBITS OPEN TO PUBLIC

9:00 AM to 10:00 AM

### PLENARY SESSION

**"Being Comfortable"**

**Jarrod Musano**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Convo Relay



**Neil McDevitt**  
Executive Director  
Deaf-Hearing Communication Centre  
Philadelphia, PA  
evoHaX



**Thibault Duchemin**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Transcense



**Ryan Hait-Campbell**  
Chief Executive Officer  
MotionSavvy

10:15 AM to 11:45 AM

### TECHNOLOGY AND YOUTH FORUM

**Moderator:**  
**Alexa Schriempf**  
Accessibility Technologist  
Office for Disability Services  
Teaching and Learning with Technology  
Penn State University



**Chaim Haas**  
Head of Communications  
Glide

11:45 AM to 1:30 PM

### TDI AWARDS LUNCHEON

**Presentation of Six TDI Biennial Awards:**

*H. Latham Breunig Humanitarian Award*

*Robert H. Weitbrecht Telecommunications  
Access Award*

*James C. Marsters Promotion Award*

*Andrew Saks Engineering Award*



**Emcee:**  
**Joe Duarte**  
Member At Large  
TDI Board of Directors and Chair,  
TDI Awards Committee



*Karen Peltz Strauss Public Policy Award*

*I. Lee Brody Lifetime Achievement Award*

**Admission: \$50**

*No Registration Required*

1:30 PM to 2:45 PM

## PLENARY SESSION

**A panel of companies offering videos on demand that comes with captions.**



**Larry Goldberg**  
Director, Accessible Media  
Yahoo!



**Ken Harrenstien**  
Engineer  
Google



**Angela Roth**  
Global VRS  
Chief Executive Officer



**Robert Rae**  
Purple Communications  
Chief Executive Officer



**Paul Kershisnik**  
Sorenson Communications  
Chief Marketing Officer

3:00 PM to 4:00 PM

## PLENARY SESSION

**TDI Association Business Meeting**

**Sheila Conlon-Mentkowski**  
President  
TDI Board of Directors



**Jeremy Jack**  
Star VRS  
Vice President

## BREAKOUT WORKSHOPS

4:00 PM to 5:30 PM

## PLENARY SESSION

**"A panel of six providers giving their updates on their VRS offerings and proposals, including skills-based routing, Deaf-Blind VRS, and certified deaf interpreters (CDIs)."**



**Jarrod Musano**  
Convo Relay, Chief Executive Officer



**Phil Bravin**  
ZVRS  
Vice President

7:00 PM to 10:00 PM

## ENTERTAINMENT DINNER FINALE

Join us for dinner and enjoy excellent entertainment as provided by renowned entertainers CJ and JAC!

*Definitely not to be missed!*

**Admission: \$50**

*No Registration Required*

CJ Jones



Jennifer ("JAC") Ann Cook



**END OF CONFERENCE  
THANK YOU FOR COMING!**

**GLOBAL VRS**

**DEDICATED TO COMMUNITY**

**GLOBALVRS.COM**

A Division of ASL SERVICES HOLDINGS LLC, an FCC eligible provider

# Noteworthy News



John Stone, left, and Jon Mowl of Defense Logistics Agency Finance use the virtual remote interpreting service via tablet. The service is being tested at DLA Headquarters at Fort Belvoir, Va., as a tool to improve communication for deaf employees. DoD photo by Debra Simpson

## REMOTE INTERPRETIVE SERVICE BENEFITS DEAF EMPLOYEES

Source: Department of Defense  
<http://bit.ly/1QdE1gn>

BY SARA MOORE  
 DEFENSE LOGISTICS AGENCY

**FORT BELVOIR, Va., May 28, 2015** – When she wanted to level the playing field for her deaf employees, Debra Simpson was surprised to find “there’s an app for that.”

Simpson, the program analysis master planning branch chief for Defense Logistics Agency Energy, is leading the effort to implement a tablet- and desktop-based remote interpretive service for deaf employees.

The service, now in testing at DLA Headquarters, launches at the touch of a button, bringing up a sign-language interpreter for a live video chat.

“There aren’t many things you can do in your career that make an incredible difference, but just the absolute joy, if you will, when my employees got to test this application — they were so ecstatic,” Simpson said. “I was able to give them opportunities to go places

with me that they were never able to before.”

The idea to use this service, called virtual remote interpreting, came when Simpson was fuels branch chief in DLA Finance and had three deaf employees. These employees were fantastic, she said, but communication was becoming a barrier to their success and advancement.

“My communication skills were lacking to help them,” she said. “I found that in what I would consider a pretty fast-paced, difficult job, I wasn’t giving them the guidance that they needed, because I would have to spend hours writing emails.”

### Flexible Workplace Communication

To avoid having to use email as a primary form of communication and to allow for impromptu meetings when physical interpreters might not be available, Simpson looked for a solution. She found it in VRI, an on-demand sign language interpreting service that gives employees the flexibility to communicate throughout the workplace.

“The minute I saw this thing, I said, ‘We have to get this tool,’” Simpson

said. It saves her an enormous amount of time as a supervisor, she added, and it also helps the employees in their own careers.

Simpson brought the idea to her supervisors, who suggested she take it to DLA Finance Director Tony Poleo for his endorsement and financial backing. She demonstrated VRI to Poleo, who was impressed and immediately got on board to help bring it to DLA.

“My initial reaction was, ‘What a great idea, and why have we not already done this?’” said Poleo, who also serves as the Defense Department’s representative to the AbilityOne Commission.

Poleo said his work with the commission, which creates employment opportunities for people with disabilities through federal contracts, has made him more aware of the barriers they face in the workplace.

“There’s a saying within that community that people with disabilities don’t want a handout. They just want a hand up,” he said. “There’s a huge perception challenge that these folks face on top of their disability. So when I see opportunities to change that perception, I take advantage of them and do just that.”

### Implementing the Service

With Poleo’s backing, Simpson began working to get the service implemented at DLA. She worked with Richie Busigo in DLA Information Operations, the Equal Employment Opportunity office and DLA Acquisition to identify the right service provider and the way forward. Deputy Director of DLA Information Operations Robert Foster also endorsed the project, and he and Poleo helped to solve any issues that arose and provided support to keep the

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued on page 25



# Noteworthy News

**NOTEWORTHY NEWS** Continued from page 24  
process moving quickly.

After an initial estimate that was quite expensive, the team regrouped and discovered that a Defense Department-funded federal video relay contract would provide the service at no cost to DLA, Simpson said. That trial has been ongoing for more than a month with three employees in DLA Finance sharing a tablet, she added, and the results have been overwhelmingly positive.

An impromptu staff meeting enabled the employees testing the service to learn and get training, while sharing their knowledge with the rest of the office, Simpson said. "It's been fantastic," she said. "The system has worked so very well for them. I'm glad I had a part in it [and] to hear them tell me 'Thank you.' It didn't matter that it took me 18 months to get it here. We're getting it here."

## Mobility and Responsiveness

Jon Mowl, a business analyst in DLA Finance, is one of the employees testing the service. The biggest benefits he sees from having a sign language interpreter at his fingertips are the mobility and responsiveness he now has in the workplace, he said. A quick team meeting or a discussion with his supervisor about a project are no big deal now, he said, noting that in the past, those things would require a request in advance for an interpreter, handwritten notes, email or some other time-consuming alternative.

"It's just been unbelievable the number of meetings that happen in just one month's testing and how much information is being shared at such a fast pace," Mowl said through a VRI interpreter. "Even a simple meeting — 10 minutes or something at the end of the day to do a quick chat about a report or something — it just makes a huge difference in my ability to do my job."

Mowl noted that the VRI interpreters are very good with precise DLA-specific terminology and language, and having them available throughout the day makes it easier for him to meet deadlines and get information to his fellow employees.

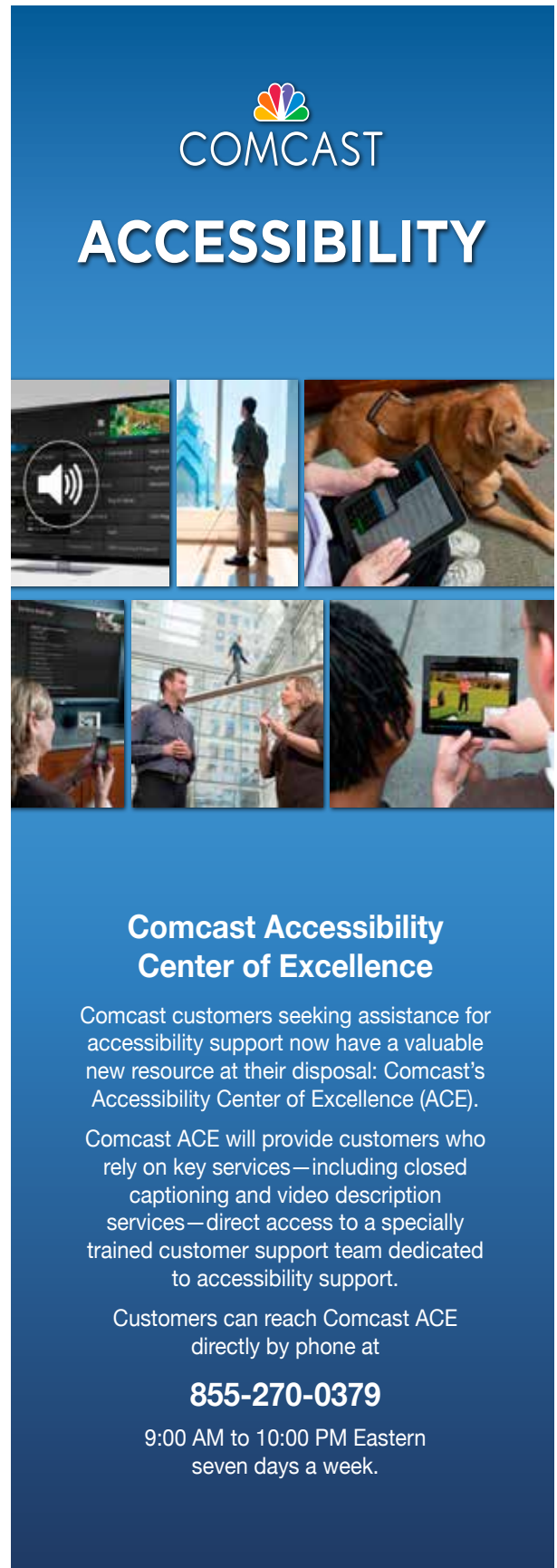
"This is a great tool for the deaf community to use," he said. "It's opening up doors for us, for the deaf people."

## Benefits for Employees and the Agency

Opening doors and providing opportunities for deaf employees is a key benefit of this service, both for the employees and the agency, Poleo said. Leaders, hiring managers and fellow employees who have never experienced life with a disability can easily confuse the disability with intellect, he said, or can be nervous about the communication barriers that may arise when working with a deaf person.

"I think from a human resources standpoint, we're shortchanging the agency

**NOTEWORTHY NEWS** Continued on page 26



The graphic features a blue background with the Comcast logo at the top. Below the logo, the word "COMCAST" is written in white, followed by "ACCESSIBILITY" in large, bold, white letters. A collage of six images is displayed in the center: a person using a sign language interpreter, a person using a tablet, a dog, a person using a sign language interpreter, a person using a sign language interpreter, and a person using a sign language interpreter.

## Comcast Accessibility Center of Excellence

Comcast customers seeking assistance for accessibility support now have a valuable new resource at their disposal: Comcast's Accessibility Center of Excellence (ACE).

Comcast ACE will provide customers who rely on key services—including closed captioning and video description services—direct access to a specially trained customer support team dedicated to accessibility support.

Customers can reach Comcast ACE directly by phone at

**855-270-0379**

9:00 AM to 10:00 PM Eastern seven days a week.

# Noteworthy News

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued from page 25

on a lot of talent we could be hiring or retaining if we just provide what amounts to what I think is a pretty simple accommodation in the big scheme: We give somebody a tablet and pay for a service," he said. "As accommodations go, that's pretty straightforward."

## Goal: Tablets for All Deaf Employees

The long-term goal is to provide tablets to all 120 to 140 deaf employees in DLA, Simpson said, and to install a desktop-based application for those employees, their supervisors, teammates and all those they communicate with regularly. The service ultimately will provide savings to the agency, she added, because it is paid for per minute rather than in established time blocks like interpreters who work in DLA facilities.

But even with all its advantages, she stressed, this service is not going to replace those live interpreters, who serve an important function. Rather, she explained, it will provide another tool for these employees, their supervisors and peers.

"This gives us the opportunity to make sure that we're all on the same sheet of music," she said. "That's so important to me, especially as a supervisor. You want all your employees on the same train that you're on and going the same direction. This made sure that we were able to do that quickly."

## Boosting Confidence, Expanding Opportunities

Poleo said he is eager to get VRI implemented throughout DLA, because he already has seen how it has benefitted the testing group, boosting their confidence and expanding their opportunities. He also noted that widespread use of the service might encourage deaf employees who are apprehensive about their disabilities to be more willing to seek out assistance.

"I just want everyone to have an opportunity to be successful," Poleo said.

The effort to get VRI for employees across the agency is one example of how the agency is accomplishing Goal Area 2 of the DLA Strategic Plan, which aims to "hire, develop and retain a high-performing, valued, resilient and accountable workforce that delivers sustained mission excellence."



## UBER UNVEILS APP UPDATES TO HELP ITS DEAF DRIVERS

Source: *Wired*

<http://www.wired.com/2015/05/uber-drivers-deaf-hard-of-hearing/>

BY DAVEY ALBA – BUSINESS

**MAY 28, 2015** — Uber has just updated its partner app with features designed for its deaf and hard-of-hearing drivers.

Once a driver chooses to turn on the special features by flipping a switch inside the app, a light will flash when a new trip is requested in addition to the existing audio cue. The option for passengers to call the driver will be blocked; riders who want to provide special pickup instructions are given only the ability to text. The app also adds an extra screen for passengers to enter their destination alongside a note that lets them know their driver is deaf or hard-of-hearing.

"We hope [these features] help extend the earning opportunity

that Uber presents to the deaf and hard-of-hearing community," Ben Metcalfe, head of product innovation at Uber, wrote in a blog post this morning.

Uber says it is testing these special features in four cities for now—Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C.—but if the trial run goes well, the updates could roll out nationwide in as little as two weeks. The tweaks were made, the company says, after receiving suggestions from drivers and the National Association of the Deaf, and they aim to streamline the ride-hailing process for everybody.

"Talking to these associations and our deaf partners, we realized there is such a need for increased economic opportunity for members of this community," says Rachel Holt, Uber's east coast general manager. "We're always trying to develop solutions that serve the unique needs of both our partners and riders."

There's real reason for concern. In 2012, according to the American Community Survey, only half of working-age adults with a hearing disability were employed.

## Accommodating Everybody

Larry Cotton Jr., a San Francisco-based driver who has been working for on-demand ride services, including Uber, Lyft and most recently DoorDash, for about eight months, says he's experienced some difficulty using Uber's regular app on several occasions. More than once, Cotton says, passengers requesting rides would try to call him up to give further instructions. After realizing he couldn't take the call, Cotton says, they would simply cancel on him and order another ride.

Other problems involved delays. On platforms like Uber, one way to maximize earnings is to make as many

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued on page 27

# Noteworthy News

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued from page 26 trips as

possible in as little time as possible. But, Cotton says, he and other deaf drivers needed to have lengthy conversations over text messaging or on notepads to coordinate, and might even need to pull over to the side of the road if a passenger had a question. The setbacks caused some trips to take much longer than they normally would.

It's true that these obstacles could cause some drivers to become discouraged, Cotton admits. But he continues to persist. "I'm a fighter, I want to be successful," Cotton says. "I want to demonstrate that we can do the work." Cotton says he also thinks it's important for other deaf drivers to identify themselves on platforms like Uber, so they can give feedback on the initiatives and continue to improve things for everyone. "What impresses me about the new Uber app is the speed of service," Cotton tells WIRED over video chat, with an interpreter present.

## A Positive Development

For Uber, which faces a number of lawsuits for not accommodating people with disabilities, the update also comes across as an effort to improve its reputation. The suits themselves, however, don't specifically deal with parties who are deaf or hard-of-hearing; one has been filed, for instance, by the National Federation of the Blind of California; another, by a 30-year-old woman who says she was refused service because of her wheelchair.

Uber has shown resistance in at least one of the cases. In response to the wheelchair suit, the company filed a response saying that as a technology company, it is not subject to laws that regulate public transportation services like busses or trains, nor should it be "required to provide accessible vehicles or accommodations." Pushback to that stance has come not only from disability advocates. The company faces competition from its archrival Lyft, which has made a name for

itself as a community-conscious alternative to Uber and, according to a recent report from The San Francisco Chronicle, has nurtured its community of deaf drivers.

Regardless of its other conflicts, however, these updates are a positive development for Uber and its drivers. There's a real need to give the deaf community more options for work. If updating an app can make things easier for them on Uber's platform, that's putting tech to good use.

## FEDERAL ELECTION 2015: DEAF CANADIANS FEAR LOSS OF CAPTIONED TV DEBATES

Source: *Wired*

[http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/05/27/deaf-canadians-fear-loss-\\_n\\_7455010.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2015/05/27/deaf-canadians-fear-loss-_n_7455010.html)

BY JENNIFER DITCHBURN, THE CANADIAN PRESS

May 27, 2015 — OTTAWA — Deaf and hard-of-hearing Canadians fear

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# TDI In Action

March 2015 - May 2015

AADB = American Association of the Deaf Blind  
 ALDA = Association of Late Deafened Adults, Inc.  
 ASDC = American Society of Deaf Children  
 CC – closed captioning  
 CCASDHH = California Coalition of Agencies Serving Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc.  
 CGB = Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau  
 CPADO = Cerebral Palsy and Deaf Organization  
 CTS = Captioned Telephone Service  
 DHHCAN = Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Consumer Advocacy Network  
 DRO = Disability Rights Office  
 E-911 – Enhanced 911  
 FCC = Federal Communications Commission  
 FNPRM – Final Notice of Proposed Rulemaking  
 HLAA = Hearing Loss Association of America  
 IP – Internet Protocol  
 NAD = National Association of the Deaf  
 NBDA = National Black Deaf Advocates  
 NG-911 – Next Generation 911  
 RERC-TA = Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Telecommunication Access

SCAT/SCABT = Speech Communications Assistance By Telephone, Inc.  
 SoA = Speed of Answer  
 TAP = Technology Access Program at Gallaudet University  
 TDM = Time Division Multiplexing, a method of handling electronic communications  
 TIA = Telecommunications Industry Association  
 TLPC = Samuelson-Glushko Technology Law & Policy Clinic  
 TRS – Telecommunications Relay Service  
 VRS – Video Relay Service

## TRS

- (Mar 25, 2015) TDI, NAD, DHHCAN, HLAA, ALDA, CPADO, and CCASDHH filed comments supporting Sorenson and Purple's requests to waive the pre-travel VRS registration requirement and the 28 day VRS limit while traveling. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001027462>
- (Apr 7, 2015) TDI, NAD, DHHCAN, HLAA, ALDA, AADB, CPADO, DSA, and CCASDHH filed an ex parte supporting the Joint Proposal from VRS companies. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001028393>
- (May 1, 2015) TDI, NAD, DHHCAN, AADB, CPADO, and ALDA met with several FCC bureaus to discuss the Joint Proposal of All Six VRS Providers. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001030923>
- (May 8, 2015) TDI, NAD, and RID met with the office of FCC Chairman to discuss the Joint Proposal of All Six VRS Providers

<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001031478>

- (May 14, 2015) TDI, NAD, and RID met with offices of Commissioners Rosenworcel, Clyburn, and Pai to discuss the Joint Proposal of All Six VRS Providers. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001047959>
- (May 15, 2015) TDI, NAD, and RID met with FCC Commissioner O'Rielly and his Legal Advisor, Amy Bender to discuss the Joint Proposal of All Six VRS Providers. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001047983>
- (May 20, 2015) TDI, NAD, and RID filed a supplemental ex parte letter for the May 8 meeting with the FCC Chairman's Office to address two items raised after the meeting: (1) a clarification about interpreter shortage and (2) the GAO Report. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001048263>
- (May 21, 2015) NAD, TDI, DHHCAN, HLAA, ALDA, CPADO, AADB, CCASDHH, and DSA filed a letter with FCC Chairman Tom

Wheeler to express our profound concern with the FCC's decision to require VRS providers to start collecting deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind users' last four digits of their Social Security numbers. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/firm?confirmation=2015522945503>

## Captioning, Subtitles, and User Interfaces

- (Mar 3, 2015) TDI was notified of FCC decision denying the closed captioning waiver petition of Joy Ministries.
- (Mar 3, 2015) TDI, NAD, CPADO, DSA, CCASDHH, and HLAA filed comments in the FCC rulemaking on modernizing the definition of a Multichannel Video Programming Distributor (MVPD). <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001025565>
- (Mar 12, 2015) TDI, Gallaudet TAP, HLAA, and NAD met with the FCC to discuss the accessibility of

Continued on page 29



# TDI In Action

March 2015 - May 2015

Continued from page 28

- closed captioning user interfaces.  
<http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001026738>
- (Mar 16, 2015) TDI, CPADO, NAD, ALDA, DSA, CCASDHH, and AADB filed several oppositions to petitions for exemption from the Commission's closed captioning rules.  
\* <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001026788>  
\* <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001026789>  
\* <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001026791>
  - (Mar 16, 2015) TDI, CPADO, NAD, ALDA, DSA, CCASDHH, and AADB commented on a petition for exemption from the Commission's closed captioning rules. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001026792>
  - (Mar 17, 2015) TDI, NAD, HLAA, ALDA, DHHCAN, and Gallaudet TAP filed an opposition to a petition for rulemaking and request for waiver of the Commission's closed captioning quality rules by the National Court Reporters Association and several captioning vendors. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001026930>
  - (Mar 25) TDI, NAD, HLAA, and Gallaudet TAP met with the FCC to discuss closed captioning quality. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001027619>
  - (Apr 1, 2015) TDI, NAD, CPADO, DSA, CCASDHH, HLAA, AADB, and ALDA filed reply comments in the FCC rulemaking on modernizing the definition of a Multichannel Video Programming Distributor (MVPD). <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001028033>
  - (Apr 9, 2015) TDI was notified of FCC dismissal of a closed captioning waiver filed by Peace is Possible.
  - (Apr, 10 2015) TDI was notified of public notice for five closed captioning waivers and began researching and drafting oppositions and comments that were filed on May 11, 2015.
  - (Apr 13, 2015) TDI, AADB, CPADO, NAD, DSA, DHHCAN, ALDA, and CCASDHH commented on petitions for exemption from the Commission's closed captioning rules.  
\* <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001028872>  
\* <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001028877>  
\* <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001028879>  
\* <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001028874>  
\* <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001028876>
  - (April 20, 2015) Stout and a few other consumer advocates took part in the meeting on caption quality (caption accuracy formula and flowchart issues) with a few captioning providers (VITAC, NCI, and WGBH) at the National Court Reporters Association headquarters in Vienna, VA.
  - (Apr 28, 2015) TDI, AADB, CPADO, NAD, DSA, ALDA, and CCASDHH sent a letter to Chairman Wheeler calling for attention to an exemption request from one of the largest Spanish-language programming distributors. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001030240>
  - (May 4, 2015) Stout took part in the meeting at the National Association of Broadcasters in Washington, D.C.

NAD, HLAA, and Gallaudet TAP took part in the meeting. NAB was advised to submit a joint request with the consumer groups to the FCC to postpone the deadline for the report on ENT readiness and compliance by around 700 TV stations in the nation.

- (May 11, 2015) TDI, DSA, ALDA, AADB, NAD, CPADO, and DHHCAN commented on petitions for exemption from the Commission's closed captioning rules.  
\* <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001031290>  
\* <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001031291>

## Emergency Accessibility

- (March 27, 2015) Stout served on a panel for the Baltimore City's Office of Emergency Management at Towson University, Baltimore, MD. The event was titled, "Knowing What to Do and When to Do It: Emergency Preparedness for People with Sensory Disabilities."
- (Apr 2, 2015) Claude and Don gave a presentation titled "Text-to-9-1-1 and Other Options in Emergency Communications to over thirty members of the Frederick Deaf Seniors at Frederick County Senior Center in Frederick, MD. Don also played a key supporting role with the presentation.

## Other Issues

- (March 24, 2015) Stout joined with staff of the University of Colorado, Boulder, and Georgetown University law schools to give a presentation for Dr. Christian Vogler's Accessible Communication class on our regulatory efforts here with the FCC, and a few other federal agencies.

# Noteworthy News

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued from page 27

their needs as voting citizens might be lost in the shuffle in the coming election campaign as the federal parties squabble over the formats and hosts of the leaders' debates.

The proposal by the major TV networks, put to the federal parties, includes closed captioning in both French and English — as has been the case in previous debates.

However, the Conservative Party of Canada has rejected the proposal from the so-called broadcast consortium, which includes CBC/Radio-Canada, Global News and CTV.

As a result, the televised debates are in limbo; it's not clear whether the opposition parties would bother with a faceoff that doesn't include the prime minister.

The Conservatives have emphasized their desire for different formats, citing the fact many Canadians no longer watch traditional TV. But broadcasters are required by regulation to include closed captioning with their programming, even during commercials.

Will new debate proposals from Maclean's magazine, the Globe and Mail/Google Canada, the Munk Debates and others include services for the hearing impaired?



Rudyard Griffiths, organizer of the Munk Debates, said the organization is looking into closed captioning and sign language, as well as simultaneous French and English translation.

James Roots, executive director of the Canadian Association of the Deaf, said up to ten million Canadians with varying degrees of hearing benefit from closed captioning.

"We certainly are deeply concerned and distressed by the entire squabble over the proposed federal election debates," Roots said in an email.

"Without taking sides in the dispute, we emphasize that all Canadians — not just Deaf ones — have a legal and moral right to equal access to the debates, and that this access has traditionally been provided by means of captioning."

Regardless of whether they have hearing difficulties, many new

Canadians rely on closed captioning, said Susan Masters of the Western Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

New technology has not always been a good thing for people with hearing loss, she added.

"Not very much on the Web is captioned or accessible — very little of it is — so that leaves deaf and hard-of-hearing people behind in terms of information."

Geoff Smith, a former lawyer who began losing his hearing because of a brain tumour nearly 30 years ago, wrote to The Canadian Press with his concerns after reading about the negotiations over the debates.

"My concern is that I don't like being excluded from participating in the debates," Smith said in a text-message interview.

"As a deafened person, I work very hard making sure I am included. So this suggestion by (Stephen) Harper is more than attempt to control the media. He is manipulating me too by moving the debates onto the Internet."

"So this suggestion by (Stephen) Harper is more than attempt to control the media. He is manipulating me too by moving the debates onto the Internet."

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### Contact Person Information

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Business/Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Mailing Address

Street & Unit Number: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ USA? ☐ YES ☐ NO Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Video ☐ TTY ☐ TXT ☐ Voice ☐ Captioned ☐ FAX  
 Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Video ☐ TTY ☐ TXT ☐ Voice ☐ Captioned ☐ FAX  
 Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Video ☐ TTY ☐ TXT ☐ Voice ☐ Captioned  
 Website Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Check all items that you want to allow to be listed in the Blue Book:

☐ Name ☐ Mailing Address ☐ E-Mail Address ☐ Website Address  
☐ Main Phone Number ☐ Alternate Number ☐ Mobile Number

If you do not check any items above, your information will not be listed in the Blue Book.



May we send you TDI eNotes, our free TDI E-Mail newsletter? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes: ☐ Send to my E-Mail address ☐ Send to another E-Mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Select One TDI Membership Rate:	1 Year	2 Years
Affiliate (Business/Nonprofit/School/Library/Government)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$180.00

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

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## TDI Individual Membership Application Form

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### Mailing Address

Street & Unit Number: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ USA? ☐ YES ☐ NO Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Video ☐ TTY ☐ TXT ☐ Voice ☐ Captioned ☐ FAX

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Video ☐ TTY ☐ TXT ☐ Voice ☐ Captioned

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

Additional Person's Name Desired in Listing (If Any): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Video ☐ TTY ☐ TXT ☐ Voice ☐ Captioned ☐ FAX

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Check all items that you want to allow to be listed in the Blue Book:

- ☐ Name ☐ Mailing Address ☐ E-Mail Address ☐ Website Address  
☐ Main Phone Number ☐ Alternate Number ☐ Mobile Number ☐ Additional Person's Number

If you do not check any items above, your name and information will not be listed in the Blue Book.



May we send you TDI eNotes, our free TDI E-Mail newsletter? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes: ☐ Send to my E-Mail address ☐ Send to another E-Mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Select One TDI Membership Rate:	1 Year	2 Years	LIFETIME
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Individual-Senior Citizen (Age 60+)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$55.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000.00

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