



WORLD

Technology News and Commentary for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People



TDI Conference in Baltimore: FCC Sets Tone for ACE Platform

Feature Story on page 10

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:

Shopping for a Phone/Tablet with Four Major
Wireless Carriers

Page 4

Starbucks Drive-Thru Joins the 21st Century
Page 26

Stay Connected.



SprintIP.com

- Fast internet relay connections.
- Make or receive calls.*
- Save or print your conversations.
- DeafBlind friendly.
- Experienced relay operators.
- Learn more at sprintrelay.com/sprintip



Sprint IP Relay Connections.

Sprint Mobile IP App

- Use with smartphones or tablets.
- Tap, connect and relay.
- Save or email conversations.
- Make or receive Sprint IP calls.**
- Learn more at sprintrelay.com/mobileip



Download the Sprint Mobile IP App:



Register at mysprintrelay.com for a Sprint IP or Mobile phone number.

* International calls are not allowed. ** Internet connection (i.e. wireless or WiFi) required.

Sprint IP Relay Service is a free service offered to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing and have a speech disability that allow them to place relay calls over the Internet between locations in the United States (including its territories). Available only in USA and US territories. International calls will either be blocked or terminated. Although Sprint IP Relay can be used for emergency calling, such emergency calling may not function the same as traditional 911/E911 services. By using Sprint IP for emergency calling, you agree that Sprint is not responsible for any damages resulting from errors, defects, malfunctions, interruptions or failures in accessing or attempting to access emergency services through Sprint IP; whether caused by the negligence of Sprint or otherwise. Other restrictions apply. For details, see www.sprintrelay.com © 2015 Sprint. Sprint and the logo are trademarks of Sprint. Other marks are the property of their respective owners.

TDI'S MISSION

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

FEATURE STORIES

21st TDI Biennial Conference Proves Historic!pg 10

Photo Gallerypgs 14 & 15

REGULAR COLUMNS

BOARD VIEWS by Sheila Conlon-Mentkowski, TDI Presidentpg 2

The 25th Anniversary of the ADA and What Lies Ahead

CAPITOL COMMENTARY by Claude Stout, TDI Executive Directorpg 4

Shopping for a Phone/Tablet with Four Major Wireless Carriers

TECH BYTES by Don Cullen, TDI World Managing Editorpg 26

Starbucks Drive-Thru Joins the 21st Century

NOTEWORTHY NEWSpg 30

TDI IN ACTION June 2015 - August 2015pg 37

TDI MEMBERSHIP FORMSpgs 39 & 40

Thanks to These Advertisers:

**ALDA, pg 5 • Comcast, pg 31 • CSD, inside back cover
Hamilton Relay, pg 19 • Maryland Relay, pg 27
Sprint Relay, inside front cover • Sorenson VRS, pg 9 • 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 46.3

Editor-in-Chief: Claude Stout

Managing Editor: Don Cullen

Advertising Manager: Don Cullen

Publication Production: Electronic Ink

TDI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NORTHEAST REGION

Cassandra Boryslawskyj
Cm.Boryslawskyj@tdiforaccess.org

SOUTHEAST REGION

Jan Withers
Jan.Withers@tdiforaccess.org

MIDWEST REGION

Stephanie Buell (WI)
Stephanie.Buell@TDIforAccess.org

CENTRAL REGION

Rebecca Rosenthal (MN)
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, Vice President
ALange@TDIforAccess.org

Alexa Schriempf, Secretary
ASchriempf@TDIforAccess.org

TDI OFFICE STAFF

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Claude Stout
Executive.Director@TDIforAccess.org

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Don Cullen
PubRel@TDIforAccess.org

BUSINESS MANAGERS

Terry Berrigan and John Skjeveland
Finance@TDIforAccess.org

VOLUNTEER

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
TTY: (301) 589-3006

To subscribe to **TDI eNotes**,
send an email to
PubRel@TDIforAccess.org

Follow **TDIforAccess** on



Shaping An Accessible World

Board Views



**SHEILA
CONLON-MENTKOWSKI**

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

“We must not only look back but also forward, to ensure that emerging telecommunications and technology incorporate deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf blind users from the design to testing to final use in the development.”

The 25th Anniversary of the ADA and What Lies Ahead

As I experienced the 21st Biennial TDI Conference in Baltimore recently, I reflected back to 1990 when the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted and what transpired since its accompanying rules and regulations were implemented and enforced. We must not only look back but also forward, to ensure that emerging telecommunications and technology incorporate deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf blind users from the design to testing to final use in the development. TDI was and is in the forefront along with a number of fellow organizations of by and for the deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind keeping abreast of the telecommunications and technological aspect of this national civil rights act, particularly in the following areas:

- E9-1-1
- TV captions and their quality
- Captions on the Internet
- VRS
- VRI
- IP Relay
- Mobile devices
- Public access to captions
- Warning alerts on TV
- Being able to find the captions on hotel TVs

And these are among the top items we are constantly monitoring and working on to improve going forward.

One highlight during the conference was attending FCC Chairman Wheeler's inspiring keynote address where he stated that "Video Access Technology Access Reference Platform" or "VATRP" was an awful name for something that is supposed to be innovative and exciting so

it has been renamed 'Accessible Communications for Everyone' or 'ACE' for short." It certainly is easier to remember as an acronym and the new label clearly indicates that it should and must be accessible for all users, including hearing users. He explained that this is the planned platform that is open source and what programmers call API that means that anyone with the know-how should be able to build into it ways that it can expand and enhance access to relay services. He showed a short video to give an idea of what ACE could conceivably look like when in action. We at TDI and fellow organizations as well as consumers will need to keep a constant eye on the development and roll out of the access platform and Chairman Wheeler's promise that: "ACE will be an important beginning, that working together, we can use broadband to attack challenges that have plagued the deaf and hard of hearing community since time began and we can together build a brighter future." TDI will follow and monitor this promising development and report updates when available in future issues of TDI World.

Chairman Wheeler also added that he had the opportunity to meet a student from RIT "who was exploring ways to use this platform to leverage the Internet of things to give her notification for sounds around the house such as when the microwave is done or the washer dryer cycle complete or when the water is left running." When I saw that last part of the notification list, I knew this would be an item that almost all of us deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf blind would embrace as how many of us have forgotten we left the water running in the sink or the bathtub only to our great dismay return to find the flood

Continued on page 3

BOARD VIEWS Continued from page 2

in the kitchen or bathroom!!! The ability to have this kind of notification available should definitely prevent such catastrophes from occurring in the future!

Now, on the fun side for me while at the conference. As a baseball fan and a diehard Red Sox fan, I was able to partake in a TDI planned outing, an Orioles' evening game at nearby Camden Yards with a number of other TDI attendees. It was a beautiful night to watch the game, weather wise, with a balmy and not too humid temperature.

I also encountered two other novelties for me, at least. One was viewing a monitor set up outside a meeting room that was capturing and displaying tweets by various TDI attendees, giving a flavor of the workshops or plenaries that were ongoing. The second was when I went to the ladies' room on that floor, when washing my

hands, I noticed the mirror in front of me was projecting a TV show with captions on. Imagine that! What else will we see in public places as we are bombarded by the media?

In closing, I would like to thank Claude Stout and his hard working staff, volunteers, and interns for all the work leading up to and during this very successful conference. We also did our best to make the conference as accessible as possible, both in communication modes and physically for all. Thanks to all the interpreters and CART providers for the communication access. Also, to one of our Board members, Joe Duarte for making sure our meetings are accessible for those using assistive listening systems. Many thanks to all our sponsors for supporting the conference. We also appreciate the speakers and exhibitors who were present. And I would also like to say thanks and farewell to two departing Board members, Fred Weiner, our Vice President, for his twelve years

of service to TDI. And to Bernard Hurwitz, our departing TDI Board member from the Northeast region for four years with us.

We sent out an evaluation survey to participants, which was completed by October 15th. It was clear participants were happy with the conference, and shared invaluable feedback on how we can make future conferences even better. We find that consistently asking for input helps us improve and know what worked and did not work during the conference; we will use this to continue to improve on the planning for the next conference which will be sometime in 2017, between the months of May and September. As soon as the date and location are selected, we will announce those so you can save your money and hold the date on your 2017 calendar.

All for access,

Sheila Conlon Mentkowski
President, TDI
West Region Board Member

A Fond Farewell to Departing Board Members



Bernard Hurwitz, Northeast Region.



Fred Weiner, Southeast Region.

Photos: Roger Voss

Capitol Commentary



BY CLAUDE STOUT
TDI Executive Director

“Like everybody else, deaf and hard of hearing consumers rely heavily on smart phones or tablets for everyday communication and information retrieval.”

Shopping for a Phone/Tablet with Four Major Wireless Carriers

The 21st TDI Biennial Conference in Baltimore last August was highly successful. We thank you all for your participation and funding support for the Conference. We deeply appreciate it very much.

During the Conference, we had Jeff Kramer (Verizon), Matt Gerst (CTIA), and Dennis Selznick (Sprint) serve on the four major carriers' wireless offerings, including phones, service coverage, monthly costs, and others. Shellie Blakeney (T-Mobile) and Vonda Dillard-Long (AT&T) were in the audience, too.

It was evident from the interaction between the panel and the audience that a number of issues need to be addressed by the industry on this very important topic. Like everybody else, deaf and hard of hearing consumers rely heavily on smart phones or tablets for everyday communication and information retrieval. Such issues are:

1. Some of us are not aware that the four major wireless carriers have customer service centers we can call anytime about an issue or to question them about a particular phone or the service coverage, etc.
2. Some of us do not know that the carriers are offering us text accessibility plans that are separate

from the regular plans that they offer to the general mainstream.

3. Some do not realize that some carriers do carry coverage well in areas where they live and/or work, and that other carriers do not.
4. For those who are hard of hearing and need to shop for hearing-aid compatible phones, they are frustrated with either the service representative in the retail store who cannot adequately answer their questions re: hearing aid compatibility issues, and/or they do not know that not every phone meets his or her hearing amplification needs. Not everyone has the same kind or level of hearing loss.

TDI wants to provide its members and others in the general public some information and material to understand more about the available options in the wireless market, i.e. phones, service coverages, etc. For this column, we sent a list of questions to all the four major wireless carriers (Verizon, AT&T, Sprint, and T-Mobile), and they were prompt and very willing to provide us the information. Many thanks to the representatives with the four major

Continued on page 5



Linda Vandeloop
Assistant Vice President
External Affairs/Regulatory
AT&T



Shellie Blakeney
Principal Corporate Counsel
T-Mobile USA



Jeff Kramer
Executive Director
Strategic Alliances
Verizon



Mark Seeger
Customer Relationship
Branch Manager
Sprint Relay

CAPITOL COMMENTARY Continued from page 4
wireless carriers as follows:

Here follows the questions that were asked of them, and their respective answers to the questions:

1.) Which of your phone offerings are hearing-aid compatible?

Sprint: Sprint Wireless offers many phones that are hearing aid compatible (HAC). For more information about our HAC phones please visit website: http://www.sprint.com/landings/accessibility/hearing_aid.html.

For a listing of our HAC phones please visit: http://www.sprint.com/landings/accessibility/docs/HAC_PDF_List.pdf

Verizon: The majority of devices are HAC rated. All M and T ratings are found within the "SPECS" section of the product description that can be viewed on line on Verizonwireless.com, once you select the device you would like to review. If you are in a Verizon Wireless store, all product description cards have the device M and T rating.

AT&T: AT&T's hearing aid compatible phone offerings as well as additional information about hearing aid compatibility are listed in the following link: <http://www.wireless.att.com/learn/articles-resources/disability-resources/hearing-aid-compatibility.jsp>

T-Mobile: T-Mobile currently offers a plethora of handsets at various price points that are designed to support specialized communications needs. Many of these handsets include options, such as: built-in vibration, visual indicators (flashing lights, written characters, and icons to notify the user of call functions), and hearing aid compatibility (HAC). T-Mobile's lineup of HAC handsets have minimum ratings of M3 (and T3 for users of the telecoil functionality

on their hearing aids) and are capable of a broad range of functions. HAC rating information is included in the device packaging, as well as, on feature cards most commonly found next to the device in a T-Mobile owned and operated store. And, upon request, T-Mobile's HAC handsets can be tested before purchase in T-Mobile owned and operated retail stores. Additional information can be found at www.t-mobile.com/accessibilitypolicy.

2.) If you offer text (video/voice) accessibility plans, what are they? Tell us where to find the rest of the information you have about them on your company websites.

Verizon: Verizon Wireless does have specific plans for customers who do not use the voice channel to communicate, a full description can be found on: <http://www.verizonwireless.com/aboutus/accessibility/nationwidemessaging.html>. The plans do not include any voice. Any voice calls are billed at a per-minute rate. The plans are designed for smart phones that support video and basic devices that do not. We continue to assess the market and new plans may

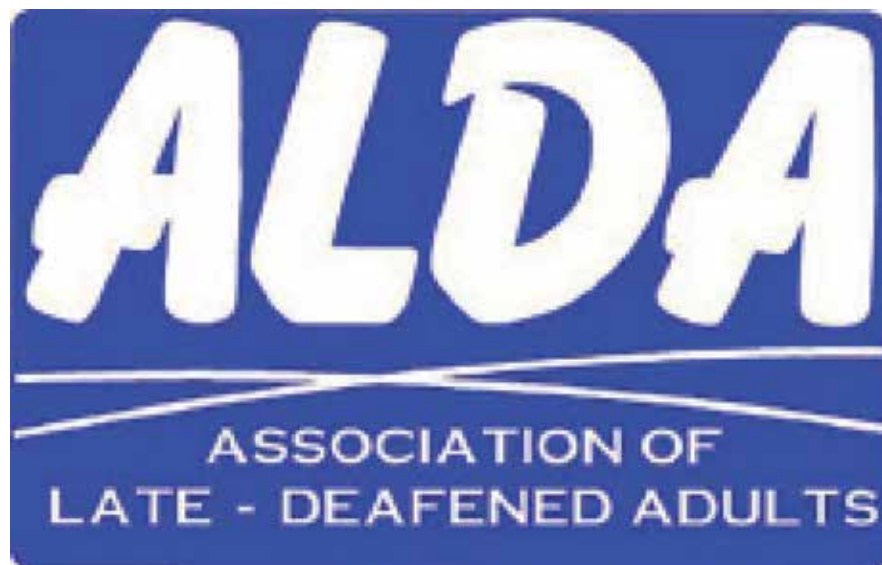
be introduced in the near future.

AT&T: AT&T offers Text Accessibility Plans for smart phones and features phones that don't require purchase of any voice minutes. We offer Text Accessibility Plans for smartphones and features phones that don't require purchase of any voice minutes. URL: <http://www.wireless.att.com/learn/articles-resources/disability-resources/hearing-aid-compatibility.jsp#tap> (Scroll to bottom for the plans). Cricket plans include unlimited text in all plans: <https://www.cricketwireless.com/cell-phone-plans>

T-Mobile: T-Mobile has data-only plan offerings for deaf or hard of hearing customers. For additional information about complementary service plans that support specialized communications needs, please contact T-Mobile Customer Care toll free by calling 1-877-453-1304 and via TTY at 1-877-296-1018.

Sprint: Sprint offers Data Only Plan for wireless customers who do not prefer to use the voice capability of wireless devices. This data only

Continued on page 6



CAPITOL COMMENTARY Continued from page 5

plan is all unlimited text (SMS) and unlimited data (email, video, internet) are available today with 1) subsidized devices – 2 year agreement or 2) leased devices – Sprint owns phone or Sprint Easy Pay – installment billing, please visit our website at: <http://www.sprintrelaystore.com/lease/> for more information.

3.) If our constituents want to contact your customer service, whom do they contact? They would want to know how accessible your customer services are, etc.

Do you have them contact you by email, text (live chat), phone, videophone (direct), or relay service? They would want to contact someone who is ready to serve their needs, not to then be referred to another person or service within the company.

AT&T: Customers can contact us via chat, Relay, or phone. AT&T has two dedicated customer service centers for customers with disabilities; one for wireless and one for wired services. URL: <http://www.wireless.att.com/learn/articles-resources/disability-resources/nccd.jsp>

T-Mobile: T-Mobile works diligently to provide an exemplary customer service experience. In addition to shopping for T-Mobile products and service plans online at www.T-Mobile.com, customers with hearing and speech difficulties can contact T-Mobile Customer Care toll free by calling 1-877-413-5903 and via TTY at 1-877-296-1018. In addition, T-Mobile's specialized Accessibility Queue, which is located within its Customer Care Department, is staffed with personnel that stand ready to answer questions and lend assistance. T-Mobile subscribers have the option to access and manage their accounts via the online web account management tool at www.MyT-Mobile.com, as well.

Sprint: Sprint offers Video Customer Service as a premium support service for our customers who are using American Sign Language, in addition to CHAT capability on our website. Our Video Customer Service is available at: VCS@sprint.com. Our CHAT feature is available. Both services are easily found under the Contact Us menu on the

<http://www.sprintrelaystore.com> website.

Verizon: Verizon Wireless does have the National Accessibility Customer Service (1-888-262-1999) team that can take voice calls or calls from a relay. There is also the ability to contact Verizon Wireless via chat,

<http://www.verizonwireless.com/wcms/contact-us.html#Chat> You can also send a message via Twitter or Facebook.

4.) If they are still not satisfied with your customer service, whom should they communicate with within your company?

T-Mobile: Customers are invited to escalate a matter to a supervisor in the Customer Care Dept. so that T-Mobile can learn more about any customer concerns and provide support toward a satisfactory resolution.

Sprint: Sprint offers our customers a choice of two National Account Executives, both who are both native users of American Sign Language, and are anxious to respond to any customer issues. Arthur Moore and Ken Goulston are available via email at arthur.s.moore@sprint.com and kenneth.a.goulston@sprint.com. Either Art or Ken would enjoy the opportunity to learn about any customer concerns and provide support toward a satisfactory resolution.

Verizon: Customers can access the FCC website www.fcc.gov and send

us an e-mail via accessibility@verizon.com and you will receive a response.

AT&T: Customers can ask to escalate using the same number. (Asking for a supervisor in the customer care center.)

5.) Do you have any plans on making video-based calls such as Video Relay Service and direct-to-direct, not counting against data, as it is one of the most frequently brought up concerns by our constituents? We use video as much as our hearing counterparts use voice.

Sprint: The Sprint Relay Only Plan has Unlimited Text (SMS) and Unlimited Data (email, internet - including use of VRS and video to video).

Verizon: We are cognizant of the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing communities and reassess our offerings on a regular basis to provide the best services to our customers. In addition to the recent opening of National Accessibility Customer Service (1-888-262-1999) we anticipate making adjustments to our data plans to better serve this constituency.

AT&T: At this time, AT&T is not ready to make any public information available about plans for video-based calling.

T-Mobile: T-Mobile, like other carriers, reassesses its offerings to provide the best services to its customers with specialized communications needs.

6.) We welcome other information that would be helpful for our members and the general public. Do you have any you would like to share?

Verizon: Customers should access our Verizonwireless.com website and click on the Accessibility tab to get all kinds of information about our products

Continued on page 7

CAPITOL COMMENTARY Continued from page 6

and services to include Free 411 and Alternate bills.

AT&T: AT&T has committed to move to a new technology called real-time text (RTT) that would better serve customers with hearing and speech impairments. RTT is more capable and user-friendly than TTY. As part of the transition, AT&T will make sure users that have RTT can still communicate directly with TTY users.

T-Mobile: For additional information, we invite your constituents to visit www.t-mobile.com/

accessibilitypolicy.

Sprint: Possible free phones through State EDPs - Sprint has a relationship with many State Equipment Distribution Programs and often times when purchasing a new phone through Sprint, the cost of the phone can be covered through those State Programs that include Wireless Devices as part of their telecommunications access programs. For additional information about a possible program in your state that might provide support for payment of a new Wireless phone, please contact either Arthur Moore arthur.s.moore@sprint.com or Ken

Goulston kenneth.a.goulston@sprint.com.

Use of Sprint IP Relay on your Mobile Device - Additionally, Sprint offers a variety of additional services such as IP Relay which can be used on Android or IOS devices, and on any wireless network. If desired, we can support the user with downloading a Sprint IP Relay App to their smart phone and registering to ensure compliance with FCC requirements, so that they may be able to access text based internet relay services on the go when Video Relay Services and Wi-Fi

Continued on page 8

Recommendations for Shopping for a New Phone/Tablet and Getting Adequate Coverage

Service Coverage

TDI encourages everyone to shop with all the four major wireless carriers, if they provide service in your area where you live and/or work. Ask for a graphic map from each carrier showing how much coverage you have in your area, also if you travel often throughout the nation or overseas, have them show you on the map that their coverage is good elsewhere.

Brand Name Phones

Ask for information on the pros and cons of getting an iPhone as opposed to getting an Android phone or any other brand. Some carriers add some cool apps to smartphone that they try to sell you. Not only that, some name brand phones have some unique features that their competitors don't have.

"Bundle" Deals

If you use a tablet to make phone calls - voice and/or video, make sure you get a good deal for just this device or in combination with your mobile phone. Make sure you get a good "bundle" deal with the carrier. Sometimes it is a more attractive deal to use just one carrier to meet your mobile wireless needs along with a cable modem and TV service at your house. Sometimes, one would find it "ain't so," and it would be best to arrange for separate deals, one for your phone, and another for your TV and cable modem. Sometimes if you buy a new phone with any one carrier, they have you pay a certain amount per month for the phone for some time, before it is paid in full, - then

you would resort to just paying for the monthly coverage.

Advice for Smart Shopping

Ask questions and get enough information until you are completely satisfied before you agree on the monthly price for the service coverage you get from your selected carrier. If you use video a lot for peer-to-peer chats or to make a lot of Video Relay calls, be sure to have enough GB for the coverage. If you just use video, not voice, then get a data plan. If you use both voice and video, then get a plan that covers use of voice and video. Make sure you get an unlimited rate, or get a good price for increased levels of GB you need. Make sure you know you are not paying for too much broadband. It is not just the amount you pay per month, if you multiply by twelve months a year, it adds up to a nifty amount that you pay per year, not only that, some carriers will have you sign a contract for a two years' commitment with them, others do offer shorter term arrangements. Competition for your business is fierce with all the four major wireless carriers. The advertisements on TV from them are eye-catching/tempting, but please know there is a saying that "the devil is in the details." Be sure to read the fine print or ask for clarification before you sign the paperwork for the purchase of the phone and/or to subscribe to their service coverage. They desperately want your business, but you have to look after your own needs first before you make the final decision. Make sure you get the most bang for your dollar!

CAPITOL COMMENTARY Continued from page 7

are not easily accessed. For more information about Sprint IP Relay, please visit: <http://www.sprintrelay.com/services/sprint-ip-relay>

Another good resource is CTIA: The Wireless Association is a trade group representing a number of wireless service companies and phone manufacturers, and it has been an active partner with TDI and other consumer groups on accessibility issues with the companies' phone and service offerings. Be sure to check its accessibility section on its website, www.AccessWireless.org. This website is the first stop of people with disabilities, older adults, caregivers and consumers, generally, looking for information about accessible wireless products and services. Among the many features and information on AccessWireless.org for the deaf and hard of hearing community are the

ability to:

- "Find a phone" by searching the GARI database for handsets based on their accessibility features;
- Identify features and services to consider before purchasing a new wireless handset or service, such as hearing aid compatibility (HAC), vibrating alerts, HD Voice, and closed captioning for video capabilities; and
- Directly access the accessibility webpages of CTIA's carrier and manufacturer member companies.

As Matt Gerst, CTIA's Director of Regulatory Affairs advises us again and again, after visiting AccessWireless.org, you will then be ready to work with a wireless service provider or manufacturer to find the right wireless handset and service to meet your unique needs. He emphasizes that we

must always remember to try before we buy! CTIA welcomes feedback at CTIAExtStateAff@ctia.org.

Conclusion

Hopefully this article helps in the event you plan to switch carriers, or to buy a new phone/tablet. Good luck, and please do keep TDI informed on your daily calling/browsing experience, either favorable or not so favorable. Let us thank all the four major wireless carriers for their commitment and resources to give us special attention and service. We are deeply grateful to have their text accessibility plans. The plans do commensurate fairly well with our unique calling needs and patterns that are usually different from our hearing counterparts. Be sure to give your selected carrier some input from time to time, that way this will help them develop better products and service for us in the future.

Contribution Form



☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$200 ☐ Other \$ _____

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

____ Sign me up for the free TDI eNotes at this email address _____

____ If donation is in honor or memory of an individual, please give name, address and any special instructions.

____ I want my donation to be anonymous.

*Mail or fax this contribution form (photocopies OK)
payment (check, money order or credit card information) to the TDI office:*

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 • www.TDIforAccess.org



JOURNEYS
ON THE DEAF PATH

Hangout



SVRS
www.svrs.com

© 2015 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. 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. For information on toll-free numbering, please visit www.svrs.com/tollfree.



21st TDI Biennial Conference Proves Historic!

TDI and ADA: Leveraging 25 Years of Achieving Access

TDI hosted the 21st TDI Biennial Conference at Baltimore, otherwise known as the “Charm City.” The conference took place during August 19-22, 2015, at the Hyatt Regency Baltimore Hotel.

This Conference offered 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 included award presentations, exciting workshops, exhibits featuring state-of-the-art technology for everyone’s telecommunication needs, and unique networking opportunities. Attendees were able 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 gave the latest information on accessible products and services. The conference also saw 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.

There were panels that covered research and other studies that have been conducted for accessibility in information, communication, hearing enhancement, and employment. There were 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. This also included benefits 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 spoke about recent initiatives from the Commission for relay services, captioning of video programming (TV and Internet), emergency communications, and advanced communication services, and so much more.

For the first time ever, the conference hosted the new Technology and Youth Forum which gave 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). A number of individuals and companies were recognized during an Awards

Luncheon for their contributions in the community, engineering, telecommunication access, marketing and public relations, and public policy. Last but not least, the conference also marked a celebration of the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Keynote by Tom Wheeler, FCC Chairman

Tom Wheeler, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, gave a historic keynote address in the early morning of Thursday, August 20. In his keynote address, he acknowledged the importance of text-to-911. He emphasized the power and importance of broadband. He spoke about how last year in 2014, FCC adopted rules governing the quality of closed captioning in response to a petition that TDI filed in 2004. He mentioned the recent formation of the Disability Advisory Committee (DAC, of whom TDI Executive Director Claude Stout is a co-chair). This 40-member team of consumers, consumer groups, government and academic stakeholders, has a simple

Continued on page 11

Continued from page 10

mandate: To provide the Commission with actionable recommendations on policies to improve communications access. Tom reiterated the word 'actionable'. Wheeler did not just want a debating society; he also wanted an actionable society. Since DAC's first meeting in March, they've already come up with four recommendations for FCC to consider.

Additionally, FCC also endeavors to be a leader through their practices. FCC became the first federal agency in the USA to use broadband interactive video to allow callers to use ASL -- this endeavor has seen tremendous success. More than half of the issues raised by consumers who call the ASL video line are resolved on the spot, because of a deaf person, Robert McConnell, was hired to staff the line. McConnell communicates in ASL with callers to get to the heart of the issue swiftly and effectively.

Under Wheeler's leadership, FCC has been promoting the use of direct video communications across federal and local government agencies and businesses. FCC has been encouraging them to harness broadband video and hire ASL users to receive calls. Just to put this in context, and to understand what this issue is at the federal level, consider this: the Social Security Administration receives about three million minutes a year of VRS calls. In the broadband era, Wheeler saw no reason for Social Security or any agency that is the recipient of VRS calls to not have direct video communications. He also added that those agencies also should hire those who are deaf or hard of hearing and are fluent in ASL to take those calls.

Wheeler spoke about how in June, he was at Gallaudet University with the administrator of the Small Business Administration (SBA), when they became the first federal agency to follow in FCC's footsteps with their own broadband video line, so people could talk directly with the SBA about challenges that they were having



FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler

with the program. Wheeler and TDI both applauded Administrator Maria Contreras-Sweet for her vision and commitment. Further news was shared by Wheeler that the Census Bureau and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission announced that they would also follow suit in implementing broadband video ASL line for deaf/hard of hearing ASL users to use to call in.

Wheeler pointed out it's not just agencies that were following suit -- it was also industry leaders such as Microsoft. Jenny Lay-Flurrie of Microsoft incidentally was also in attendance at the conference, and grinned when Wheeler pointed out that Microsoft now has a Direct ASL video line. Wheeler also mentioned that Verizon has a similar program. Jeff Kramer of Verizon, whom was also attending the conference, smiled and nodded at this mention. It was clear that this remarkable trend was only beginning, but was an excellent beginning with federal agencies and industry leaders jumping on board.

Wheeler however wasn't quite done -- he pulled a 'Steve Jobs' "One More Thing" act. Wheeler announced a new platform that FCC has been building. Specifically, an open source, standards-based applications that works on mobile and desktop operating systems, which will allow for text, voice, and high-quality video calling into existing TRS providers. Think of this platform as a way of providing the basic building blocks that are common to any internet-

Continued on page 12





Continued from page 11

based application. The platform will also establish a much-needed set of interoperability standards to be used by current TRS providers, ensuring seamless usability, while maintaining freedom of choice for all TRS users. This was step one of the new platform.

Step two of the new platform was to make it easy for any entity to provide direct video communications. The challenge is that many video technologies used within the VRS network have not been compatible with video technology commercially available outside of VRS. That's because VRS has remained a closed system, with callers unable to call to videophones outside the system, and unable to receive video calls from individuals not on the VRS network. Other video calling systems that are outside the VRS network tended to be also closed systems as well. The new platform would allow those who speak with their hands and hear with their eyes to enjoy modern advancements in communication technologies while minimizing walled gardens. This technology would enable video products to work together, so you can call whoever you want, whenever, from anywhere.

Wheeler then jumped into step three of the new platform effort, which excited him most of all. Due to the new platform/software being open-source, it means anyone with the know-how will be able to build it in ways that can expand and enhance access. In other words, it will be publicly available for anyone to expand on the platform with new and innovative applications. By this time next year, even two guys and a dog in a garage will be able to hook on and create new accessible ways to send and receive communications and information. Wheeler originally called this new platform 'Video Access Technology Reference Platform' or VATRP. He renamed it to be Accessible Communications for Everyone, or ACE, platform. Team efforts has been in progress, involving those from

VTC Secure, students and professors at Gallaudet University, the National Technology Institute of the Deaf (a program of the Rochester Institute of Technology [RIT]), and TCS Associates. Wheeler estimated that ACE would be operational within a year. Wheeler predicted that there would even be some new ideas that will have been enabled and made operational thanks to the ACE platform. Wheeler described how he met a deaf student at RIT who was exploring ways to leverage the internet of things to give her notifications for sounds around the house, such as when the Microsoft or washer/dryer is done, or when the water is left running. VTC Secure is working on an app that will allow a person who is deaf-blind to use their Smartphone camera to transmit images in real-time to a call center where an assistant could return a description in Braille.

This incredible platform announced by Wheeler has intriguing possibilities, and definitely will create new jobs. It will create a demand for deaf ASL professionals to work in call centers. There will be growth opportunities for software development jobs. Wheeler wrapped up his address brilliantly: "This is the future. This is the promise of broadband. The beauty of internet protocol is that it is a lingua franca, which ends silos and niche technologies. This is not functional equivalence. This is full and equal access." The audience erupted into applause at that.

Wheeler then played a video in where the Mayor of New York, Bill de Blasio, confirmed that the city of New York City would be implementing Direct ASL Video lines in their key offices. This video proved to be a fitting way to end his keynote address.

"Dreams Can Come True" presented by Angela Officer, Senior Program Manager, Sprint Relay

Angela Officer, who is Senior Program Manager with Sprint Relay, gave

Continued on page 13

Continued from page 12

inspiring remarks for the Professional and Motivational Luncheon at noon on Friday, August 21. In addition to working at Sprint Relay for 23 years, she also serves on NTID's national advisory group, and has been recognized by RIT as the volunteer of the year.

Officer spoke to the audience about her life growing up, including showing the audience a picture of her as a baby. She chronicled her experiences in struggling with her deafness as she went through life growing up. She relied on her mother for interpreting in school, and for her telecommunication needs growing up. This became the primary building blocks in her life that led her to jump into the telecommunications industry and working for accessibility.

She actually graduated from RIT with a degree in graphic design. Her first job was as an Art Director for COBRA Associates in Washington, D.C. Two years after the ADA became law, Officer joined Sprint. Officer happily told the audience that this was the best decision she ever made, as it was the best job she ever had.

That job however did not come without challenges. She worked as an account manager. Conference calls took place through TTY, taking turns with every single member of the call. Each team player certainly had valuable feedback to add to the calls, but it took a while. This led to her goal to increase more awareness about relay services in the state of New Hampshire.

After much hard work by Officer, she was promoted to Program Manager of their Federal Relay program and FTS2001, for the network. At this point, she moved to Virginia and acquired Jim Payne (whom is on the board of associates at Gallaudet University) as a mentor. Officer cited Payne as a major influence in her life. Payne told her "Angie, never, never, ever get comfortable with your job." Officer clarified saying getting comfortable meant not growing within a company,



Sprint Relay Senior Program Manager Angela Officer

that it was important to grow, to take risks every day, to go the extra mile, to go above and beyond, and to think outside the box for different solutions.

Officer then spoke about Ed Bosson, the person most responsible for making Video Relay Services happen. Ed Bosson contacted Mark Seeger, who was the manager for Texas Sprint Relay and discussed the possibilities. Ed received national awards from the Smithsonian Computerworld, the Gallaudet Alumni, Gallaudet University, and TDI for his work with VRS. Ed also was awarded with an honorary doctorate degree in 2008. Officer decided to be frank, and said "Honestly, at the same we thought was impossible. We didn't have a solution. We didn't have a plan in place. But Ed said to do it, to make it happen, that we'd make it part of the contract requirement" for using ASL in order to communicate via the relay. Officer smiled at this memory, and said Ed was a wonderful customer, that they had a wonderful partnership. Ed Bosson, along with Officer and Sprint, were able to work together to develop a plan, giving birth to the Video Relay Service. This was Ed's dream, and also part of the company's dream, and thanks to their combined efforts, it became reality.

Officer then stated that what was so amazing and so inspiring about it so much was that the video relay had impacted every one, that there were so

Continued on page 16



SNAPSHOTS

of the 21st Biennial TDI Conference in Baltimore, MD.



Tom and Laurie Dowling, Steve Brenner, Alexa Schriempf, and Neil McDevitt during the President's Reception



Jenny Lay-Flurrie, Vikki Porter, John Fechter, Pam Holmes, and Matt Myrick on the "Interacting with Hearing Colleagues" panel



Lisa Astrom from Omnitor (Sweden) co-presenting with Dr. Christian Vogler from Gallaudet



Matt Gerst, Dennis Selznick, and Jeff Kramer on the wireless panel



Karen Peltz-Strauss speaks during the FCC Town Hall with Rosaline Crawford and Elaine Gardner listening.



Donna Platt, Suzy Rosen Singleton, Richard Ray, and Toni Dunne after they finished the 9-1-1 workshop.



Ultratec's trio - Rob Engelke, Jayne Turner, and Kevin Colwell smile for the camera prior to the FCC Chairman's keynote address.



FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler gives the keynote address, which Gerard Williams interprets



Joe and Meg Duarte visiting with Ron Vickery as a Med El representative looks on.

*Photos this page by Steve Brenner



Murray Margolin, Dr. Christian Vogler, and Neil McDevitt participate in a discussion.



David Weiss converses with Andy Lange during the President's Reception



Matt Myrick, Joe Duarte, and Clayton Bowen, with an unidentified person during the President's Reception



Jennifer Ann Cook "JAC" gives a show during the Conference dinner finale



Bryan Moseley, Jarrod Musano, Alok Doshi, and Jessica Aiello-Moseley



CJ Jones follows "JAC" with his show during the dinner finale.



Angela Officer, Judy Stout, and Katie Fishbein



Don Cullen, TDI Director of Public Relations gives remarks during the dinner finale



Dr. W. Scot Atkins with Gary Behm and Alfred Sonnenstrahl. Atkins and Behm are with NTID, and Sonnenstrahl is a former Executive Director with TDI.



Benro Ogunyipe, a current member of the National Council on Disability Board of Directors, visits with Pam Holmes, a former member.

*Photos this page by Roger Vass

Continued from page 13

many stories of how communications were improved with management, families, and more. People were getting promoted in their jobs because obstacles were removed thanks to the video relay service. Officer proudly said "It's a beautiful tool for all of us to use. Really, I want all of us to take a moment to recognize Ed for making that happen. Truly remarkable."

Officer shared an important message with the audience: "A lot of you have wonderful ideas, wonderful suggestions. Think about how you can improve your communication access. I have to admit, my attitude in the past, I thought dreams were impossible, they weren't attainable. I was very wrong. If you have the right attitude, if you have the right mindset, you can share your dream and get a clear plan to make it a reality. Don't be afraid to dream big. Don't think negative. You will be surprised what can happen. Walk the talk."

Teamwork was also another point Officer wanted to touch on: "We work together. It's a team effort. Teamwork is so important. There is no way that you, including me, we cannot do it alone. You can't do it alone. I've realized working with a team, you would be surprised how much you learn from each other. It gives you the chance to learn different perspective. "

Officer then concluded saying "My message to you today is that dreams are possible. Dream big! Please, work with your providers, work with the FCC, and work with all of us. All of us are working together in the community to provide the best functional equivalency and access as possible."

"Being Comfortable" presented by Jarrod Musano, Chief Executive Officer with Convo Relay

Jarrod Musano, Chief Executive Officer with Convo Relay shared his thoughts on what it is like to run a business under a challenging regulatory climate in relay services. Musano has been involved



Convo Relay CEO Jarrod Musano

in a number of businesses, many startups, and has been a very successful businessman with his latest focus being on video relay services. This focus has led him to many amazing successes, and it was a very good opportunity for Jarrod to share his thoughts and experiences.

Andy Lange, member of the TDI Board, in introducing Musano to the audience said "He is the CEO of Convo Relay. Throughout the years with Convo, you may have noted their software, their interpreters. Really, he has done so much to enhance the experience of relay. Jarrod has been involved in a number of businesses, many startups, and he's been a very successful businessman, and now he's focusing in on video relay service, and he has also been a success in this field."

Musano shared his childhood experiences in seeing his father operating his real estate business, of being groomed to take over the business. He also spoke about how he grew up without captions, having to rely on his family to tell him what was happening on TV. He also shared about his experience at being denied the opportunity play high school football because the doctor and coach felt his deafness would be a serious issue. Fortunately, he was able to play football in college.

At some point, Musano was not quite happy working in real estate, in spite of having found success in it. When he

Continued on page 17

Continued from page 16

was offered the CEO position for Convo Relay, he realized his true calling. He could stay comfortable and stay in real estate where everything was easy and taken care of; or he could get uncomfortable and jump into VRS. He thought long and hard about what his options were, and had to do some soul searching. He shared a bit of insight into that as he explained what happened when he broke the news to his dad of the opportunity with Convo that Musano had been offered:

"I have this opportunity to be involved with this company, Convo. And to my surprise, there was no support for that. We had a huge fight over it. He said what are you doing? You're going to leave the real estate business? What for?"

And I said, but I see the opportunity. I see the opportunity for me to change the world, dad! To use technology to give back to my community. I mean, I had such a hard life for many, many years, and now I have the opportunity to give back. And real estate is, you know, not my thing.

And he was crushed. He had groomed me to take over his real estate business, and he wasn't happy. And he said, if you want to do that, you're on your own. No support from me. So, now, I'm pretty uncomfortable, so I'm thinking, okay, so should I take that giant step forward? Or stay here and milk the gravy train in a comfortable place?

And always feel empty.

So I decided to go with Convo. I put every penny I had at that time, every dollar went into Convo. People thought it was crazy. They thought, what are you doing? With the rate cuts coming. We went from 54 providers down to 6 certified providers. A lot of things are happening in that business. It's not a good game to go into now.

But I could see the light at the end of the tunnel. I knew there was

an opportunity to create change, and I had learned from my father's business. He was a micromanager, and I had seen some of his style, which I didn't really like, but I was able to take what I had learned from him and adapt it for Convo.

I came in for CEO of Convo. And in the first year the company grew 50%, and in two years another 50%. I started with 50 employees, and today I have 150.

My VP of Technology is deaf. All of our technology is created and built by deaf engineers. Our VP of Interpreting is a CODA. We're a very deaf centric company."

Musano elaborated further on his successes:

"And this is a really proud moment for us. Interestingly enough, us adapting these lights was the shot heard round the world. The FCC recognized us, and awarded us for achievement in the internet of things. The Philips lighting company who manufactures those lights contacted us and asked us if we would fly to the Netherlands to give a demonstration on how we use the lights.

So my partners and I thought, yeah, sure, that would be a cool experience, let's do that. Go give some demos. I'm sure that there will be a lot of other companies there showing their goods and wares too.

But hold on a second, folks, that's not what happened at all. We flew in there and we realized that of the 132,000 employees of Philips, they were bringing them all together in one place to show their portfolio of products, so that the employees of Philips understand what they offer and so that the employees are easily able to talk about the products, and make appropriate referrals.

So in the Philips headquarters in the Netherlands, we were the most popular demonstration. We gave

Continued on page 18



Continued from page 17

over 200 demonstrations over 2 days. And I can remember every word of the demo, we did it so many times.

So we got to meet the CEO of Philips and the CSO, and interestingly enough, they have, like, 20 CEOs. Everybody's a CEO of this or that but all these divisions but we met the guy at the top. And we gave him the VRS experience. We blew his mind. He was laughing with excitement. Because we were able to use their product to meet their mission statement: Improving the Lives of Many."

Indeed, like his father said: "When you're too comfortable, you stop succeeding." Kudos goes out from TDI to Musano for his successes, and our best wishes to all of his endeavors!

Technology and Youth Forum

This was TDI's first ever Technology and Youth Forum panel at TDI's Biennial Conference, and it was no less than a rousing success, even with only half of the panel present. MotionSavvy nor Glide could not make it due to unavoidable causes, so Alexa Schriempf (TDI board member) presented on their behalf. Even with two companies in attendance, there was much to hear from the other presenters, Neil McDevitt of DHCC and Thibault Duchemin of Ava.

McDevitt discussed about his experience in being part of a hackathon, and why it was important for the deaf and hard of hearing community. McDevitt first clarified what a hacker and hackathon means, and we'll be borrowing his most excellent explanation here:

"So there's actually two definitions for what a hacker is. This is the first one. That definition is your typical, traditional 1980s, remember the movie War Games, where somebody was trying to change the graphics and trying to make everything exposed worldwide or global, to create a global thermonuclear war? And

that's the old definition that kind of relates to that.

We still accept this definition today, we still use it, but that kind of definition has been evolved. It's starting to evolve a little bit into a new definition. And this is sort of an addition to the previous one. So the second one is the code, it can be changed, like changing a computer program.

And it's in a better or more clever way. It's something that you guys typically do, it's something that makes life a little bit easier in an informal way. I know many of you guys know the website called lifehacks, or lifehacker? They kind of just give you these ideas of how you can better organize your information or to maybe like if you're hosting a party, what's the best way to host a party, or how to calm yourself down before you do a presentation in front of a live audience. How you can breathe. It's just ways to teach you how to do something better.

So now what I want to discuss is what hackathon is, and I want to talk about that definition, the second part. We also have this vision of what we think hackathons are, or hackers. And we think of it as, like, they're in a darkroom. They have, like, empty pizza boxes stacked up, a ton of empty coffee cups surrounding them, and their skin just looks they just look pale and there's no sun and they're in a dungeony atmosphere, but what they really look like is what I'm about to show you.

It's bright, as you can see, in the room. There's a lot of young programmers, young college students who are close to graduation, and they tend to just come together, and what they do is they actually have some challenges. And they challenge themselves to address certain issues that need to be resolved.

And the students, the young

Continued on page 22

See what they say*

HamiltonCapTel.com

Caption her imagination



It was her first school play and she is telling you all the details. She isn't concerned about your hearing loss – and neither are you, because your Hamilton CapTel® phone is displaying word-for-word captions of everything she's saying. So the only question is whether it's her imagination that's running wild or yours?

There's more in sight
with Hamilton CapTel.

Call: 888-514-7933

Visit: HamiltonCapTel.com/550315

Mention Promo Code 550315
and receive Free Shipping!

See what they say*

HAMILTON
capitel®

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

Copyright © 2015 Hamilton Relay. All rights reserved. CapTel is a registered trademark of Ultratec, Inc.

081515

Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Service (IP CTS) is regulated and funded by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and is designed exclusively for individuals with hearing loss. In order to use IP CTS, you must have telephone service and high-speed Internet connectivity where the phone will be used.

TDI Biennial Awards

The time came again for TDI to recognize some outstanding individuals and corporations that have helped to shape an accessible world for people who are deaf and hard of hearing. It was a pleasure for TDI to give kudos for those receiving recognition at the 21st Biennial Conference of Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. in Baltimore.

Every two years, TDI takes the time to recognize individuals, companies, and organizations that have made a significant impact on telecommunications, media, and information technology access. The three most recent winners for each award are listed below for your reference. The complete list of past winners can be found in the Blue Pages of the TDI Blue Book, or on our website. Thank you for helping us to recognize those who deserve recognition!

Without further ado, please join us in congratulating the recipients of the 2015 TDI Biennial Awards:

The H. Latham Breunig Humanitarian Award

In recognition of outstanding contributions to the program or activities of TDI.



Awarded To: Andrea Saks

For her many, many years of service as a representative of TDI, and the deaf and hard of hearing community in America in the official activities of International Telecommunications Union (ITU). Because of her steadfast commitment and dedication for evolving and improved access standards of telecommunications, media, and information services, the world today is a much better place for the United States and its sister countries abroad for accessible communications and information that equate people who are deaf or hard of hearing toward a level playing field with their hearing families and friends.

Past Award Recipients:

- * 2009 - National Technical Institute of the Deaf
- * 2011 - Eliot Greenwald, Washington, D.C.
- * 2013 - Carol Sliney, Albuquerque, NM



The Robert H. Weitbrecht Telecommunications Access Award

In recognition of outstanding contributions by any means to improve accessibility to telecommunications, media and information technology in the United States.



Awarded To: Donna B. Platt & Richard L. Ray

For their many, many years of service in emergency communications for the deaf and hard of hearing community in America. Both have made steady progress on 911 issues, and have consistently proven to be the consumer advocacy leaders within the FCC, and National Emergency Number Association circles on 911 accessibility issues. Thanks to them, NENA has a permanent standing committee on Accessibility. This Committee has had impact on current topics like text-to-9-1-1, wireless indoor location accuracy, and MLCS - Media Communication Line Services (where one can in the future make emergency calls directly in ASL or a foreign language to a national 9-1-1 center that has expert interpreters on call in emergency situations). Without question, both commands broad respect from the 9-1-1 profession, and the FCC.

Past Award Recipients:

- * 2009 - Pat Graves, Monument, Colorado
- * 2011 - Apple, Inc.
- * 2013 - James D. House, Portland, Oregon



The Andrew Saks Engineering Award

In recognition of outstanding contributions to improving accessibility to telecommunications, media and information technology in the United States through efforts in design, electronics or engineering.



Awarded To: Glide

Glide is widely acclaimed for their remarkable innovation of its video messaging technology. Some of the TDI Board members and staff have met many Americans who are deaf and hard of hearing that have become captivated with using this technology. And it is a significant reminder to others in the industry that principles of universal design do pave the way for such a product or a service that works extremely well for our special population, even though it was originally intended for a different, broader market.

Past Award Recipients:

- * 2009 - Kevin Colwell, Madison, Wisconsin
- * 2011 - Google
- * 2013 - Microsoft



The James C. Marsters Promotion Award

In recognition of outstanding contributions to improving accessibility to telecommunications, media and information technology in the United States through efforts in promotion, marketing, or public relations.

CONVO

Awarded To: Convo Relay

Convo Relay has been brilliant in their unique, creative promotion of its VRS brand name services. Convo Relay has continued to produce classy videos again and again, and they have helped develop a highly visible brand name for its VRS services. They demonstrated insight and innovation with their new light bulb alerting technology. Its videos have demonstrated its sincere commitment to celebrate the best there is in the deaf and hard of hearing community, including Deaf Culture and American Sign Language. The messages it has tried to convey through recent years are that there are many deaf and hard of hearing individuals that do contribute with their top-level abilities and skills for their area communities.



Past Award Recipients:

- * 2009 - AT&T & Verizon
- * 2011 - ZVRS
- * 2013 - Hamilton Relay

The Karen Peltz Strauss Public Policy Award

In recognition of outstanding contributions to improving accessibility to telecommunications, media and information technology in the United States through efforts in public policy development.



Awarded To: Commissioner Tom Wheeler

For his unique leadership and efforts as Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission for accessible communications and information that elevate people who are deaf or hard of hearing toward a level playing field with their hearing families and friends. With him at the helm of the Commission, regulatory action was completed for areas like video clips, TV caption quality, national deaf blind equipment distribution program, wireless indoor location accuracy, text-to-9-1-1, etc. His significant backing and budgetary resources were absolutely essential for the new Disability Advisory Committee, a consumer advocacy mechanism which invites diverse input and collaboration among various sectors of the disability population on pending issues before the Commission.



Past Award Recipients:

- * 2009 - U.S. Senator John McCain (R), AZ, U.S. Representative Edward Markey (D), MA
- * 2011 - FCC Commissioner Michael J. Copps, Washington, D.C.
- * 2013 - Blake E. Reid, Boulder, CO

The I. Lee Brody Lifetime Achievement Award

In recognition of an individual who has devoted significant time and energy over an extended number of years to improving accessibility to telecommunications, media and information technology in the United States.



Awarded To: Cheryl A. Heppner

For her many, many years of service as a national consumer advocate, primarily as a representative of Association of Late-Deafened Adults, a Vice Chair of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumer Advocacy Network, and last, but not least, the Executive Director of Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons, Fairfax, VA. Her remarkable work is of unquestionable note, particularly her authorship of the Emergency Communications report, which was disseminated a year or two after the 9/11 terrorist events. This report had spurred a number of Federal agencies to improve their policies and operations to meet our emergency information and communication needs.



Past Award Recipients:

- * 2009 - Dr. Judy Harkins, Washington, D.C.
- * 2011 - Ed Bosson, Wimberly, Texas
- * 2013 - Philip W. Bravin, Chester, Vermont



Continued from page 18

kids today, they really get into it. They spend hours and hours just discussing, coming up with ideas and clack rating together, and they spend a lot of time basically developing codes, and they're spending time building devices and all kinds of stuff, whatever, just all kinds of stuff involved."

EvoHaX, which is the name for the accessibility for the hackathon that happens to be part of a large technology week project in Philadelphia, where a lot of different project people, or a lot of different projects were going on at the time. This year's theme is going to be considered women in technology.

McDevitt was asked to be one of the experts. As an expert, his job was to provide the expansion of the information that the students and the team need to start thinking about the solutions and trying to resolve that problem, or whatever problems they have, and maybe think about, what's the history of that problem? Or how can technology today address those issues?

McDevitt worked with the students by explaining how to do things as well as provided essential information about the hackathon. Afterwards, the team emailed him ideas and asked questions about how best to go about it. The next day they sat down and showed him what they had done, which made it clear today's youth has much to offer for the deaf and hard of hearing community. What they had done will be covered later in this article.

McDevitt shared what was really challenging for evoHaX. Some challenges were really simple: to build tools and resources that make the worldwide web more accessible. The hard part was figuring out how to make it happen. It was one thing to build accessibility with tools, and a whole another thing to build the tool themselves to enable accessibility.

Each team had different experts. McDevitt's team focused on the

deaf and hard of hearing. The other teams were focusing on people with challenged vision, and the others were also focusing on people who had apraxia, and that means it's similar to dyslexia. They can read and they can get that information, but it's for specific situations. So they're all working together to build solutions to make the worldwide web easier and more accessible to use.

For McDevitt's team, with the Swarthmore Project, they opted to work on making YouTube more accessible. YouTube has the capability to have the video captioned. There are many tools right now, like many programs have available tools to involve caption. Anyone can build their own caption files easily. So what the team challenge was: How could we basically convince people to caption their videos?

As of April, 1.8% of all the videos on YouTube were captioned. For instance, if we only focus on one category -- say, education -- 21.8% of education videos on YouTube are accessible. This basically meant 80% of the videos were absolutely not accessible for the deaf and hard of hearing. This was the intent of this project, which was to show people a clear picture of how little of YouTube is accessible.

Fast forward to August; 2.1% of the videos on YouTube are accessible. Keep in mind this does not include auto caption. This only includes ones that the captions have been fixed.

Some of the best ideas that we see today, especially from McDevitt and Duchemin, came out of hackathon projects. MotionSavvy also resulted thanks to a hackathon. Many of the best ideas and the new stuff and the solutions are coming out of these processes. The power of collaboration is really strong, and shows how essential hackathons are to the deaf and hard of hearing community. By exposing these young programmers to have accessible needs and diversities in people, we are

Continued on page 23

Continued from page 22

reminding them of their obligation to make the web accessible for all of us. If we catch them early, we don't have to keep bugging them down the road after it's made.

McDevitt exhorted people to get involved: "How can you all get involved? If you're an owned and run organization for example David Amtrak you can host a hackathon and work with the community in your area, to let everyone know, call on your universities and young programmers to come and come together, and all you really need is pizza, drinks, doughnuts in the morning, set some guidelines and Rules, some break opportunities, like sometimes there's movies we can take a break and watch movies, stuff like that. It's not resource intense. It's very, very simple. Volunteer yourself to be an expert. You don't have to know the programs. You don't have to know everything about coding languages. You just need to be an expert in your life experiences."

Schriempf also presented on behalf of Glide and MotionSavvy.

While Glide is a hearing-owned/operated company, their product has proved to be a boon for the deaf/hard of hearing community. Glide is an application (app, for short). It's not a device. It's an app that was built to do a video equivalent of text messaging. So when text first came out, it was pretty intuitive. You send a text to somebody, you get one back, back and forth. Glide simply substitutes video for the text.

Glide was built and released without any consideration for the deaf community, but deaf folks, as we all know, despite not being familiar with the tech experts in our community, are always breaking the barriers of technology. We found this app and started using it like crazy. Sarah Snow, Glide's community manager, noticed the high degree of deaf people using the app, and wanted to know what was going on. Sarah checked into it and realized that it was the communication tool being used by deaf/hard of hearing

people. She decided to find out exactly what it was about, and started taking ASL classes, started communicating with the deaf/hard of hearing users. She discovered that because it makes it easy to do video messaging, doesn't consume memory on the devices, it became the go-to app for messaging for ASL users.

Sarah Snow is not the only the community manager, but also Glide's contact point for any questions anyone may have for Glide. Feel free to reach out to her and Glide for more information. Do also try out Glide and let us know what you think!

The next company to present was MotionSavvy, whom Schriempf also presented on behalf of. Motion Savvy is a deaf owned company with origins in Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) in Rochester, New York. The founder, Director, CEO, hacker, lead technology guru extraordinaire is Ryan Hait Campbell. MotionSavvy has a product called UNI, which is a combination of hardware and software. UNI allows ASL users to sign what they want to say to a hearing person. A deaf person would have the device in front of them. They simply sign, and the device translates the signs into text and speech.

So as you're communicating to a hearing person, they will have the option of hearing your signs, or seeing your signs in text. Their device borrows technology from a company called LEAP, and LEAP is a motion sensor that is able to recognize gestures. LEAP technology is easy to use: just plug it into your computer, and put your hands into the computer, and play with it. MotionSavvy saw the potential in this technology, and combined it with tablets, developed the app to tie it all together. Thus, UNI was born.

The UNI is still in it's infancy. It's not like you can plug this in and start and go, and it will be perfectly seamless, but this is certainly where we're heading.

MotionSavvy's UNI will also transcribe the spoken words from the hearing

Continued on page 24





Continued from page 23

person into text. To achieve this, they're borrowing a technology from a company called Nuance. You may have heard of Dragon Speaking Naturally; it's a product by Nuance. MotionSavvy uses this technology to do speech recognition of hearing people's speech and turn it into visible text for you. While not 100% accurate, it has proven useful – and someday can be quite accurate.

Next came the presenter for Ava: Thibault Duchemin, CEO. Schriempf had the opportunity to have a personal demonstration of Ava the day before the presentation, and it was enough to make her extremely excited.

At 24 years old, Duchemin was the youngest CEO to attend the conference. He had this to say for his opening: "I'm not going to say our product is the best. I'm going to explain you why we'd like you to try it. I'm not going to say a list of features. I'm going to explain you why we're working on it. And I'm not going to say buy today. I'm going to say: Try it, because we loved it."

As McDevitt stated earlier, Duchemin invented Ava as a result of a hackathon competition. They started during what Duchemin called the 'startup weekend', which was where he found Ava's co-founder and other team members.

A bit of background on Duchemin: he was born in Paris, France. Duchemin's entire family are deaf, and Duchemin is hearing. His primary language is FSL (French Sign Language). Because he was a CODA (child of deaf adult), he identified himself as a bridge between the deaf world and the hearing world.

Prior to Duchemin coming to America, he had heard that it was "the heaven for accessibility, that TV was captioned, that people could talk and had IP Relay services", and was excited to see this. However, once he came to America, while he saw captioners

doing an amazing job, but there was no funding for beyond the classroom. Students could not communicate more, even in group studies. For team projects, it proved challenging to maintain.

While the team could converse via phone, in person was a whole another story. It was clear that an affordable solution was needed. Thus Ava was born. Ava has three cofounders. The first was Duchemin. The second co-founder is Pieter Doevendans, who is Dutch and is hearing. The third is Skinner Cheng, who is Taiwanese and is deaf.

Ava stands for "Audio visual aid". It's not just a hearing aid. When there's multiple people speaking around us, it can be easy to miss what the other people say if they speak too fast. Something visual is needed to catch up. So Ava uses speech recognition technologies that was developed for face to face communications, in the same physical space. It's not the same technology as TV or video or phone. It's different. The point is to help in group conversations.

This is how the technology works: you need to have a smartphone. Then you need the Ava app running on the smartphone. The app isn't available on the Apple or Android app stores, but will be later when it is ready for release. Next, you invite your friends around the table. It could be family members. It could be your friends, co-workers. And they're all connected. And what happens is with magic now: everybody speaks to their own phone, and the phone recognizes what they say based on their voice, as Ava recognizes everyone individually. While it's not yet 100% accurate, it's accurate enough to be very useful.

Duchemin added saying "And I can tell you, I wouldn't come here if it wouldn't have helped already a lot of people. First, us. So I told you about

Continued on page 25

Continued from page 24

my co-founder that is deaf. Skinner is using it every day with us, for dinner, for lunch, for the company meeting or just when we walk on the street to grab lunch or to grab a coffee.”

It's mobile, so you can use it anywhere where you have internet. Ava is working on making it possible to use Ava without the internet.

As to cost: the first month is free. Ava wants people to try it and see how it works. However, conversations are capped at 5 hours per month. Afterwards, if a person decides they'd like to make regular use of it, it is \$30 dollars per month. Thibault clarified saying that if one does not go above 5 hours for the month, the \$30 is refunded for that month. Ava also works in French.

Duchemin concluded saying: “What we dream of is this: Is really a connection of the deaf world and the hearing world. Some people are fighting for the accessibility of the deaf world. I love this battle. But what we're trying to fight for is the battle of communication, not just information.

I want hearing people to also discover the wealth and the importance and incredible relationships that you can create with deaf people.

I've seen this all my life, and I was frustrated to see that even in America it was not done. So that's why we're doing what we do.

So join us in this mission. It takes in the beginning always started by a small room of people, and then it grows and it grows and it grows. But try it. See by yourself and I'll show you afterwards.”

If you would like to learn more about their product, you can visit their website at www.ava.me.

Entertainment Dinner Finale

At the conclusion of the Conference on Saturday evening, August 22, we enjoyed a good dinner at the hotel, and

then watched a great entertainment show featuring Jennifer Ann Cook and CJ Jones, both from the state of California. The audience were busting at the seams from laughter! It was a good way to wrap up the conference.

This was 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, has worked hard to make this Conference a huge success. Based on the results of a survey we had the attendees complete, it was clear their efforts reflected in the conference's success and many of the attendees enjoyed their time! Our gratitude goes out to Claude, the TDI board, exhibitors, sponsors, speakers, panelists, and especially the attendees – thanks to them all, the conference proved yet again to be quite memorable!



Jennifer ("JAC") Ann Cook



CJ Jones



Tech Bytes

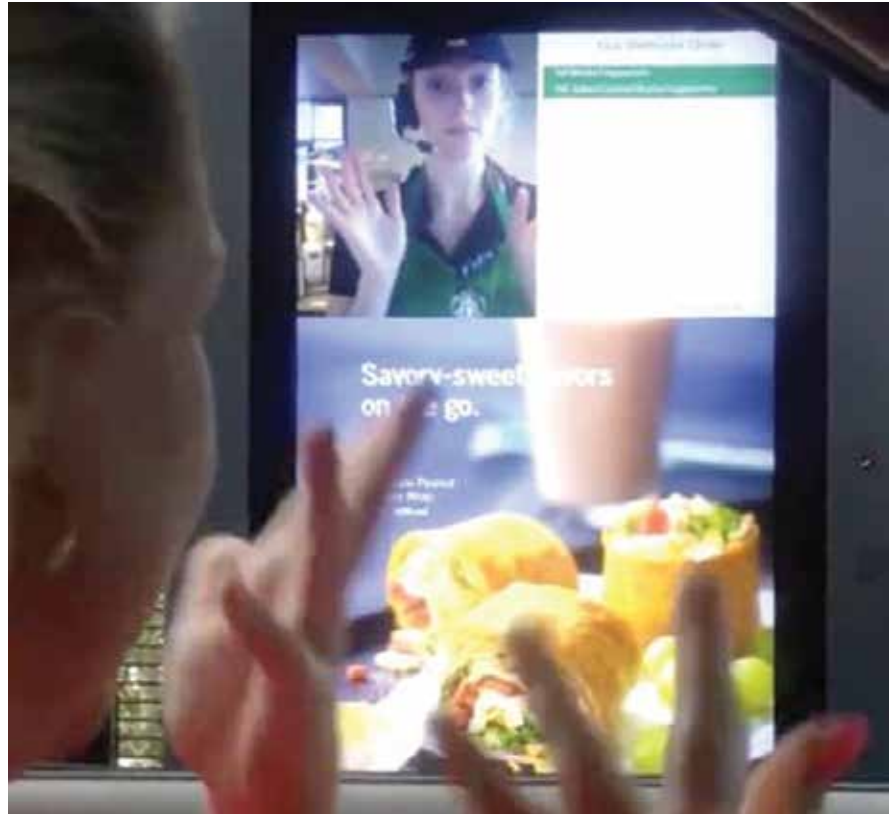


DON CULLEN

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!

Full disclosure: TDI neither sponsors nor endorses this product. Any opinions expressed are strictly those of the author of this column.



Snapshot of Rebecca King's Video

Starbucks Drive-Thru Joins the 21st Century

A video of an exchange between a deaf customer and a Starbucks barista while the customer was in a Starbucks drive-thru has been making the rounds on the Internet. But it didn't go viral because of what was said, but because of how it was said. The deaf customer was using American Sign Language (ASL), and the barista was also using ASL. The customer was able to place an order using the video ordering screen, which happens to be also where the menu is.

Such exchanges happen often in Starbucks stores – especially in the St. Augustine, Florida store, where the video was recorded by Rebecca King, a Starbucks customer. It's located near the Florida School for the Deaf and

Blind (FSDB). Established in 1885, FSDB is a fully accredited state public school.

Katie Wyble, who's been a Starbucks partner (employee) at this store since May said "I've had a passion for sign language since I first saw a teacher use it when I was in preschool, and I've studied ASL ever since."

Wyble was working the night shift when a customer who was deaf drove up to the order screen. At the Starbucks store where Wyble works, the menu board has a two-way camera that allows baristas to see the individual placing an order. The customer is also able to see the

Continued on page 27

TECH BYTES Continued from page 26

partner taking an order. Wyble recognized King, a regular customer, soon after she pulled up and the two communicated the order entirely in sign language.

More than 260,000 have shared the video, with dozens of comments about the “awesome customer service.” The very same video has become a viral moment of connection viewed by over 11 million people around the world.

I just had to try this for myself. I headed to the nearest Starbucks that had a drive-thru, which was in Frederick, Maryland – incidentally also where the Maryland School for the Deaf was located. I waited for a minute, occasionally signing asking them to activate the video. After a minute, the video did activate showing a cheerful barista. She grinned and asked what I would like to get started with. I placed my order easily, and saw my order appear in the blank area to the right of the video of the barista, making it very easy to confirm what I ordered was correct. The entire experience was mostly smooth and easy – much easier than the usual process where I’d have to write down my order while looking at their menu, then heading onto the window to place my order. This almost invariably always resulted in a pile up of cars behind me waiting to be able to place their orders. Starbucks has hit on the right solution that works for everyone!

The order wasn’t entirely uneventful, as there were some challenges – not enough to completely cancel out the benefits of the new technology. Those



Waiting for the Starbucks Barista to activate video



Placing an order

Continued on page 28

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 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

TECH BYTES Continued from page 27

were:

- No way to tell the barista to activate video. I had to sit there and wait, occasionally sign until the barista figured out why I wasn't responding to verbal interactions and finally activate video.
- The sun was shining right into the barista's camera, making it very difficult for the barista to see me signing.
- The camera wasn't adjustable, so if the car was too far ahead (so the customer could read the menu better), the barista would have a bit of trouble seeing the driver, and the driver wouldn't be able to back up due to other cars waiting.
- When I stepped in the store so I could see the other end of the system, to see what the barista was using to communicate with me – I saw the video portion of the screen, and it was very small. That would make it difficult

to read fingerspelling. This would necessitate familiarity of the barista and the customers' preferences to be able to determine what the order is. If the barista hadn't worked with the customer before, this would prove to be somewhat of a challenge.

- There was no real-time captioning. Even if not entirely accurate in captioning, this would come a long way at making the drive-thru more accessible to those who are deaf/hard-of-hearing and aren't ASL users. With the advent of voice-recognition technology, this would be possible for Starbucks to implement. This would also help when the sign language skill of the barista isn't quite up to par and the deaf ASL user is struggling to understand what is being said.
- While not a challenge for me personally, one challenge is that this technology isn't yet widespread at all Starbucks; this is a work in progress for

Starbucks.

- It isn't a policy (yet!) to ensure most (if not all) baristas to be fluent in ASL. Starbucks however does make basic sign language training available to their baristas.

I shared my experiences with Starbucks, along with my suggestions. Hopefully they will incorporate the suggestions from me and other deaf/hard of hearing customers to make the drive-thru experience as easy and smooth as much as possible.

In spite of those challenges, I thoroughly enjoyed my experience, especially with it making it much easier than usual for me to place my order. Starbucks deserves kudos for undertaking this endeavor!

With tens of millions of people checking out the video by Rebecca King ordering from Starbucks via video at the drive-thru, and over 250 thousand people sharing the video with others, it is clear. Starbucks is onto something big here, those providing drive-thrus would be wise take notice and learn from!



Message from Starbucks

Starbucks continually looks for ways to enhance the customer experience, how to surprise, and delight people, to make the human connection. When we were thinking of our drive-thrus, we wanted a way to connect with customers. We have also been thinking about deaf customers and their experience. The video terminal was a universal design approach that seems to have benefit for many customers, including deaf customers – particularly if the barista knows sign language.

Additionally, our work on access and disability continues with stores connecting with their local communities. While we cannot guarantee that our baristas know sign language, there is basic training on communicating with deaf customers. We also have deaf baristas working at stores in the U.S., particularly in areas that have a school for the deaf (such as St. Augustine, Florida) or large concentrations of deaf people (NTID, Washington D.C.), the stores are making efforts to connect with the community to learn about culture and communication.

If anyone has suggestions or ideas, please share them online at MyStarbucksIdea.com. The team monitors all ideas and it is a great way to share innovative ideas and desires.



Marthalee Galeota

*Manager, Equal Opportunity Initiatives
Starbucks' Law & Corporate Affairs*

Noteworthy News



A message from Skyview Drive In: "We were happy to have a large group of deaf and hard of hearing folks at Skyview last night. We will have another night next Thursday and then we move the open captioned nights to Sunday when we go back to just weekend operations."

SKYVIEW DRIVE-IN DRAWS DEAF AUDIENCES WITH CAPTIONS

Source: Belleville News-Democrat
<http://bit.ly/1WetsSD>

BY WILL BUSS, BND BUSINESS WRITER

A message from Skyview Drive In: "We were happy to have a large group of deaf and hard of hearing folks at Skyview last night. We will have another night next Thursday and then we move the open captioned nights to Sunday when we go back to just weekend operations."

Belleville, IL, August 26, 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."

The Skyview Drive-In in Belleville reached out to a new audience this summer.

The drive-in theater introduced captions for movies screened on Thursday nights to appeal to deaf consumers. Outdoor theater owner Steve Bloomer said, "It's like watching a caption of the movie on TV. All of the dialogue comes up on the screen." And the deaf community has responded.

"It's a pretty significant audience on Thursday nights," Bloomer said. "We increased the number of cars by 50 percent over the night before."

Now, the drive-in is open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through Labor Day weekend, and captioned movies are being shown on Sunday nights.



FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler

FCC TO BUILD AN OPEN SOURCE VIDEO PLATFORM FOR ASL USERS

Source: Engadget
<http://engt.co/1Ra6TYD>

BY ANDREW TARANTOLA,
ENGADGET

August 20, 2015 -- Washington, D.C. -- The FCC is developing a video access platform that will allow American Sign Language (ASL) users to communicate with businesses and government agencies more easily, Chairman Tom Wheeler announced on Thursday. With it, users will be able to make video calls as well as send text and audio to the person on the other end of the line. What's more, the platform will not only enable the creation of function-specific desktop and mobile apps that, say, allow users to connect with FCC reps through a relay service staffed by people fluent in ASL. It will also serve as an interoperability standard for existing IP-based video conferencing apps like Skype or Google Hangouts. And, since the code is open source, any developer will be able to integrate this functionality into their app.

"It is time for people who speak with their hands and hear with their eyes to enjoy modern

advancements in communications technologies," Wheeler stated during the announcement. "It's time for you to be able to have your video products work together, so you can call whomever you wish, whenever you wish, from anywhere." The FCC plans to have a beta version ready by the end of this year and release the final version by next spring.



A woman interacts with a video operator using a computer and webcam.

NEW TECH HELPS DEAF CITIZENS GET FEDERAL AGENCIES ON THE LINE

Source: GCN
<http://bit.ly/1kJ2scY>

BY AMANDA ZIADEH, REPORTER/
PRODUCER FOR GCN

August 5, 2015 -- The Census Bureau and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission will be the next agencies to provide direct video calling to ease communications with the deaf community.

The technology will connect a deaf citizen with an American Sign Language-fluent call operator at the agency in order to improve customer service and incorporate digital tools to benefit those with hearing or speech impairments, according to a White House blog.

A woman interacts with a video operator using a computer and webcam.

Without direct video capabilities, deaf citizens contact government

Noteworthy News

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued from page 30

agencies through a third-party interpreter. In most cases, a deaf caller makes a call through a video relay service (VRS) administered by the Federal Communications Commission. The call is routed through the Internet to a VRS sign-language operator, who then relays information and inquiries back and forth between the citizen and service representative. This is also the process deaf citizens go through to make a 911 emergency call.

According to the FCC, 125 million minutes of these types of calls were made in 2014.

Agencies are now finding ways to utilize broadband Internet connections to offer a direct and clear call to customer service departments, without the VRS middleman.

According to the blog post, the FCC was the first federal agency to provide direct

video calls last year using the Internet and any computer or mobile device with a camera. In June, the Small Business Administration followed with a direct video communication pilot offering services in a more efficient way to deaf entrepreneurs.

To encourage the expansion of direct video calling, the FCC is also funding Video Access Platform, a free open-source software application designed to work in collaboration with direct video calling technology. The program will allow users to use texting and video-calling capabilities simultaneously on any computer or smartphone while communicating with customer service representatives.

The platform is expected to be released in May 2016. It and will be HIPAA compliant and available for state and local governments, nonprofit organizations and companies.

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued on page 32

TORNADO SIRENS FOR THE DEAF APPEAR IN WENTZVILLE

Source: Fox2now St. Louis
<http://bit.ly/1LSG3k9>

BY STAFF WRITER - NEWS

August 27 -- WENTZVILLE, MO (KTVI) - It's been a quiet week of weather across the bi-state region, but that's not stopping one city in St. Charles County from preparing for the next big storm.

The new siren with LED lighting was installed Wednesday at the intersection of Wagner Street and S. Linn in Wentzville.


City officials said this siren is only the beginning in a series of replacements in the city.



Tornado Siren with LED lights that flash when the alarm is activated.



ACCESSIBILITY






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 31

SIGN LANGUAGE, TECHNOLOGY BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS BETWEEN DEAF, HEARING PEOPLE

Source: *The Washington Times*
<http://bit.ly/1TvSZji>

BY MANDY MORGAN, HOME/CULTURE/
HEALTH WRITER FOR THE WASHINGTON
TIMES

July 7, 2015 -- WICHITA, Kan. -- When Laurence Whitworth went out to play or to school as a child, his mother couldn't enjoy the peace of mind of knowing that her son could pick up a phone and call if something was wrong.

Faridna Hunter uses American Sign Language to speak to a remote client over the internet at ASL Services in Kissimmee, Fla. She can translate signing into speech, and speech into signing. ASL Services is growing into one of the nation's largest sign-language call centers. Technology like Skype and video-conferencing are making this more possible.

That would have been more than just a convenience, considering Mr. Whitworth is deaf.

"My mom would have to let me go and basically pray that nothing happens to me," Mr. Whitworth recalled in an interview using Google Chat.

Mr. Whitworth doesn't experience that anxiety as a parent today.

He and wife Elise, who is also deaf, have two boys who can hear, and communication is the least of their challenges in the home.

In fact, for the boys, ages 11 and 13, speaking into a cellphone is foreign: They use texting and video messages to communicate with their parents.

Communication has always been key to opportunity for the deaf



Faridna Hunter uses American Sign Language to speak to a remote client over the internet at ASL Services in Kissimmee, Fla. She can translate signing into speech, and speech into signing. ASL Services is growing into one of the nation's largest sign-language call centers. Technology like Skype and video-conferencing are making this more possible.

community. Technological advances, which have changed the way everyone communicates, and a growing popularity among college students to learn American Sign Language (ASL) have now made it even easier for deaf and hearing communities to connect.

"Recent technology advances have been very good to bridge gaps between deaf and hearing people," said Christopher Krentz, an English and ASL professor at the University of Virginia, using video-phone technology to speak.

In A Hearing World

For Mrs. Whitworth, gaining a varied language education made all the difference. Being exposed to sign language and English — speaking and writing — was what has shaped her ability to communicate with many people.

She graduated with degrees in journalism and business management, and now runs two businesses with her husband.

The real challenges came when she became the mother of two hearing boys.

"Growing up, communication challenges were there, but it only affected me. So it was easy to 'shrug

my shoulders' and miss out on half the communication with the hearing people in my life," Mrs. Whitworth said.

"But when I had kids, hearing people would talk to my kids and not make sure we are reading their lips OK, and I'd get all 'mama bear' and frustrated," Mrs. Whitworth recalled. "When it was just me, I'd move on and live life. With my kids I can't just move on -- so that made me feel truly 'deaf' for the first time in my life."

The couple runs a creative marketing services firm, Satdaya Studios, near St. George, Utah, which helps clients increase their customer bases through events, websites, and other marketing projects.

They also run VAME: Visual Arts Media & Entertainment, which is an association for deaf creative professionals, "with the goal of creating more job opportunities and discovering and recognizing talent," among those in the deaf and hard of hearing community, Mrs. Whitworth said. "This is something we do to give back to the community."

Learning to communicate through ASL, speaking, writing and lip reading has given Mrs. Whitworth

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued on page 33

Noteworthy News

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued from page 32

and her husband more opportunity to communicate with people in both the hearing and deaf communities, and it has given them advantages in their self-run and owned business, as well as in communicating with their children.

Opening Hearing Ears

Communication opportunities haven't just been for the deaf community.

More and more hearing people are learning sign language, opening up opportunities for interaction with people from a different culture and with unique experiences.

A report released in February from the Modern Language Association (MLA) showed that enrollment in ASL courses in U.S. universities and colleges had increased by 19 percent from 2009 to 2013.

ASL is now the third most studied language behind Spanish and French, displacing German to fourth place.

"I'm thrilled more people are learning sign language. It's great," Mrs. Whitworth said. "There are benefits to it ... where basically it 'exercises' the visual center of the brain."

The number of students graduating with degrees in sign language and teaching ASL is also increasing, MLA reported.

"If hearing people can sign, it brings deaf and hearing people closer together," said Mr. Krentz, who started to lose his hearing at age 9.

"It's not just learning a language but also having an attitude and desire to go out and meet people. If a hearing person has a good attitude, they are respectful of the deaf community and the language, that's what they need."

"I think the language barrier between the deaf and the hearing cultures is of primary importance, because I know for a fact that if the language and the

NEW ONLINE VIDEO SERVICE GIVES DEAF PEOPLE BETTER LINKS WITH LEICESTERSHIRE POLICE

Source: *Melton Times*
<http://bit.ly/1WeBZQ8>

BY STAFF WRITER, COMMUNITY NEWS

July 4, 2015 – Leicestershire, England -- An online video service enabling Melton people who are deaf or hard of hearing to communicate with police using British Sign Language has been launched.

The innovative service, offered by Leicestershire Police, enables people who can't use the force's 101 telephone line to go online with a webcam where, within seconds, they will come face-to-face with a fully qualified sign language interpreter. The interpreter will take their message and pass it promptly to police 101 operators.

It works on any computer, tablet, or phone connected to the Internet with a webcam.

The service, which is running as a pilot for six months, is available everyday between 8am and midnight. It is only to be used for non-emergency 101 calls, not the 999 emergency response line.

Leicestershire is only the second force in the country to offer the service which is being run by the not-for-profit social enterprise InterpreterNow.

Assistant Chief Constable Phil Kay said: "We're very keen as a force to improve accessibility to our services. We understand how important it is for everyone within our communities to feel included and we want to provide

them with a service that meets their needs. That includes the deaf community."

The force already has a group of officers and staff who are trained in British Sign Language, known as the Police Link Officers for the Deaf (PLOD).

Sergeant Emma Gilbert, the manager of PLOD, said; "We recognize that British Sign Language users find it difficult to contact the police by telephone. To overcome this communication barrier we've teamed up with InterpreterNow.

"You will need to register for the service if you download the app or you can connect directly from your home computer – and all you need is a computer or device with a webcam and Internet connection. At the moment the service can only be used for non-emergency calls."

John Maidens, managing director of InterpreterNow, said; "InterpreterNow is proud to be working with Leicestershire Police on this service, enabling deaf people to connect with the county's police officers simply and instantly for the first time.

"Our hope is that other police forces follow this lead, to give deaf people across the country the access that hearing people take for granted. InterpreterNow's ambition is to end the communication difficulties and isolation that deaf people face and to allow them to lead fuller and more connected lives."

cultural differences are understood, then hearing people will not perceive the deaf as a disabled group," said Freeman King, an ASL instructor and director of the ASL/English Deaf Education division at Utah State University.

More than 90 percent of deaf children are born to hearing parents, and two to three out of every 1,000 children in the U.S. are born with a detectable level of hearing loss in one or both of

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued on page 34

Noteworthy News

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued from page 33

their ears, according to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders.

Over 5 percent of the world's population — 360 million people — are deaf, reports the World Health Organization.

"The deaf community is a socio-cultural group of people who are primarily visual learners, with their own traditions, culture, folklore that sets them apart," said Mr. King.

Mr. King said his department's goal is to help prepare those who want to teach those who are deaf, offering minors in ASL and ASL teaching. Those who want training as interpreters can enter other programs outside of the university.

"I think that society's perceptions of a deaf person is of a pathological nature — that the deaf person is disabled,"

Mr. King said. "But it's interesting to note that the disabling comes from the attitudes of those who really do not understand the deaf individual or the deaf culture."

Unknown capability

Cathy Haas, the only deaf professor at Stanford University, finds it hard to imagine why people see the deaf as extremely limited in their abilities.

She was 2 years old when she became sick with scarlet fever, and the disease took her ability to hear.

The setback didn't stop Ms. Haas' parents from helping her experience life like her two hearing brothers. But when she showed up at dance class or to join the swim team, the response from coaches and teachers was the same: How do we help a deaf child do this? And her parents gave the same answer every time: Show her, have patience, she can do it.

"It seems a lot of people don't really understand how much deaf people

are capable of," Ms. Haas said. "There are a lot of deaf people who run businesses, restaurants. Maybe people think they are limited, I don't see it that way. I think it's very important for people to know deaf people are capable of quite a bit."

Ms. Haas spoke with the Deseret News through the use of video-phone technology, where she signed to an interpreter as the interpreter spoke into the phone. Because the interpreter is watching the signer, they are able to see the emotions of what they are saying and relay that.

Ms. Haas has been a professor in ASL and linguistics programs for nearly 40 years, and is often met with a surprised reaction when she tells people what she does. She often uses Video Relay Services to counsel and meet with students who don't know ASL by communicating to an interpreter through video on the computer.

Communicating and thriving in a hearing world is entirely possible, no matter the educational route parents choose for their children, she said.

Although hearing loss can be a difficult thing for parents to absorb, when finding out that their children are deaf, parent shouldn't make more of it than that, Ms. Haas said.

"Try to not be in a panic and really grieve," she said. "If they're healthy otherwise, it's just an inability to hear."

DEAF FILM-MAKER BREAKS BARRIERS

Source: *The Gleaner*
<http://bit.ly/1H5goCD>

Jamaica, WI — July 19, 2015 -- The Shattered Mind won Best Narrative Short at the recently concluded Jamaica Film Festival. Inspired by true events, it chronicles the life of misplaced teenager Zhane Rain, who struggles with a traumatic past and suffers from nightmares and flashbacks that take her back to childhood. As she tries to discover herself, Rain leads



Ann Marie Bryan with the award for Best Narrative Short, won by her film 'The Shattered Mind', at the Jamaica Film Festival's closing ceremony on Saturday, July 11.

a double life as a hearing person and a deaf person.

Although many realize that the film-maker, Ann Marie Bryan, is deaf, what they may not know is that she is Jamaican. In an exclusive interview with *The Sunday Gleaner*, Bryan spoke about how she overcame the challenges posed by the barriers of sound.

Bryan left Jamaica when she was around four of five years old, when her parents decided to chase the American Dream. As far as she knows, Bryan was born with the ability to hear.

Ann Marie Bryan with the award for Best Narrative Short, won by her film 'The Shattered Mind', at the Jamaica Film Festival's closing ceremony on Saturday, July 11.

VAGUE MEMORY OF HEARING

"A relative told my sister that I fell and hit my head," she said, communicating with *The Sunday Gleaner* via email.

"I also have a reason to believe I suffered from amnesia, because I don't remember much about my childhood in Jamaica throughout the age of five. They (her family) said I was born hearing and I remember hearing some things vaguely."

As a film-maker, Bryan says she wants to produce films about her experiences living as a deaf person in a world awash with sound.

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued on page 35

Noteworthy News

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued from page 34

"I want to tell and expose stories to different audiences. I want to make films that expose the human side of deaf and hard of hearing people from all backgrounds, especially people of color," she said. "My films are geared towards a universal audience. It's the kind of films or stories I prefer to target and they are not limited to just deaf people. My goal is to increase positive representation about the black deaf perspective or people of color."

Through her films, Bryan addresses a variety of issues such as the mistreatment of deaf and hard of hearing people, race, family conflicts, same-sex relationships, domestic violence, rape, police brutality, and interpersonal relationships between deaf and hearing people.

NOT INITIAL PASSION

Although film-making is now her passion, Bryan told The Sunday Gleaner that it wasn't always what she wanted to pursue.

"It (film-making) found me. I always loved sports. I played basketball and softball," she revealed. "I had an interest in physical education and physical therapy, in exercise science, and it wasn't until I was studying at New York University that I started to have a passion for film-making."

Bryan was presented with the Best Narrative Short award for Shattered Mind by the Jamaica Film Festival at the closing ceremony on Saturday, July 11, at the Courtleigh Auditorium, New Kingston. A surprised Bryan thanked the organizers, stating that she wasn't expecting to win an award and felt honored by the recognition.

She also thanked them for implementing structures that enabled her to participate, adding that in the coming years, they should make some adjustments to ensure that the deaf gain full access to the festival. She also

thanked Tamra and Janelle Ferguson for making her stay in Jamaica enjoyable.

"If not for them, I'd be a lost cat in the woods. I am grateful for their assistance," Bryan said.

SOFTWARE HELPS DEAF AND HEARING COMMUNITIES INTERACT

Source: MedicalXpress
<http://toronto.ctvnews.ca/text911-service-available-for-deaf-speech-impaired-ontario-residents-1.2328171>

BY JESSICA ARRIENS

Abdelhadi Soudi works to put assistive devices into Moroccan classrooms for students including the ones pictured here. Soudi and Corinne Vinopol, president and CEO of the Institute for Disabilities Research and Training Inc., built technology that works as a real-time translation device and an instructional tool. It converts Standard Arabic into Moroccan Sign Language and offers resources like games and quizzes to help students and parents learn sign language.

July 23 -- Maryland -- For most Americans, communication is an oral endeavor. We learn to speak and read through sound, to distinguish between hard and soft k's, to make the hiss of a double "s" or the slight lisp of a "th."

A large chunk of the population, however, relies on their eyes to speak. These are the millions of people who use American Sign Language (ASL), a visual language built on movement, gesture, and facial expression.

This difference between English and ASL—auditory versus visual—has implications for how the deaf and hearing communities interact. There's no translation app to help a deaf person navigate a doctor's visit, for example, or to aid a teacher trying to understand why a deaf student struggles to read.

That's where the Institute for Disabilities Research and Training Inc. (IDRT) comes in. With funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Maryland-based small business has created translation software and assistive technologies to build bridges between English and ASL. And through a partnership between NSF and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), they've adapted those technologies for use in Morocco, a country in desperate need of resources for deaf children.

"We do this to make life better for deaf people, and those who work with them," says Corinne Vinopol, president and CEO of IDRT and principal investigator on the NSF grants. "It's become clear to me that all this IT we've developed over the years can go out into the world and do some more good."

That technology includes software with an extensive translation database, which allows users to enter English words or sentences, and see images and video of how to express it in ASL. Think of it as Google Translate for sign language: Users can translate into both signs and fingerspelling, which spells English words with the ASL alphabet. The software also supports real-time ASL translation.

Much of that technology was developed with support from NSF's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program, which catalyzes commercialization at startups and small businesses.

IDRT's current SBIR award includes research on gesture recognition technology through the AcceleGlove, a high-tech glove embedded with sensors. It works with 3-D camera technology to capture hand movements.

AcceleGlove has implications beyond ASL translation. It could replace

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued on page 36

Noteworthy News

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued from page 35

a joystick to maneuver sensitive robotics—the kind that venture into dangerous environments or control heavy machinery. Or it could be adapted for artificial simulation, to help train medical technicians.

About five years ago, Vinopol was contacted by Abdelhadi Soudi, a computational linguistics professor at Morocco's Ecole National de l'Industrie Minérale. He'd found Vinopol's research and wondered if she would be interested in adapting that technology for Moroccan Arabic sign language.

"I really didn't know anything about Arabic when we started," Vinopol says. "I don't think he knew anything about sign language."

And yet their collaboration—and assistive technology developed by their team—has been so successful, Morocco's government is interested in using the technology in classrooms throughout the country.

Soudi and Vinopol received funding through Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER), which links NSF-funded researchers in the U.S. with researchers in developing countries. USAID provides funding for the foreign scientist, and the ensuing collaboration benefits both countries.

Vinopol's research is the only SBIR-supported work to ever receive supplemental funding from NSF's Office of International Science and Engineering.

"The research promised international cooperation between the U.S. and Arab nations, at a time that couldn't be more important," says Glenn Larsen, a program director in NSF's Engineering Directorate, which funds the SBIR program. "We saw it as a great broader impact to handle the needs of deaf students both here and abroad."

A Country In Need

More than 85 percent of deaf children



Top: Abdelhadi Soudi works to put assistive devices into Moroccan classrooms for students including the ones pictured here. Soudi and Corinne Vinopol, president and CEO of the Institute for Disabilities Research and Training Inc., built technology that works as a real-time translation device and an instructional tool. It converts Standard Arabic into Moroccan Sign Language and offers resources like games and quizzes to help students and parents learn sign language.

Middle: Abdelhadi Soudi shows students how to use the translation software in a Moroccan classroom.

Bottom: Computational linguist Abdelhadi Soudi, on the right, works with two students in a Moroccan classroom. Soudi and Corinne Vinopol, president and CEO of the Institute for Disabilities Research and Training Inc., are joint investigators on a NSF-USAID award. They built software that allows for real-time translation between Standard Arabic and Moroccan Sign Language.



in Morocco lack access to education past primary school. The country has few well-trained deaf educators and has almost no sign language interpreters, which means deaf children are kept in segregated classrooms, with sparse instructional materials and little opportunity to interact with their hearing peers.

Soudi has spent the last 15 years working on machine translation between spoken languages—software to translate Arabic into French, for example. He was interested in the mechanics of translating a spoken language into a visual one.

"Translation between native spoken and sign languages involves not only analyzing linguistic differences, but also rendering translation from one cognitive processing modality (auditory) to another (visual)," he says.

Image Caption - 4: Computational linguist Abdelhadi Soudi, on the right, works with two students in a Moroccan classroom. Soudi and Corinne Vinopol, president and CEO of the Institute for Disabilities Research and Training Inc., are joint investigators on a NSF-USAID award. They built software that allows for real-time translation between Standard Arabic and Moroccan Sign Language.

It's not a word-for-word translation. For example: Vinopol's company previously helped Wal-Mart use ASL translation for employee training, which included teaching people how to hang clothes on a rack. In English, "rack" is one word. In sign language, it depends on what the rack looks like: Is it thin or thick? High or low?

Soudi and Vinopol built technology that

Continued on page 38



TDI In Action

June - August 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

■ (May 23, 2015) Claude Stout, TDI sent an email to the offices of the Chairman and four Commissioners, FCC commending them for their May 21, 2015 formal action for the national deaf-blind equipment distribution program and accessible emergency information in video programming for those who are blind or have low vision. And he also expressed appreciation to all the five offices for meeting with TDI, other Consumer Groups, and RID on the proposal for skills based routing in Video Relay Service. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001076002>

■ (June 4, 2015) TDI, NAD, RID, DHHCAN, HLAA, ALDA, AADB, CPADO, DSA, and CCASDHH submitted comments to the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, FCC on the provider compensation rates, funding requirement, and carrier contribution factor proposed by Rolka Loube Associates, the

Interstate TRS Fund Administrator, for Telecommunications Relay Services that are to be compensated by the Fund for the period from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001076829>

■ (May 23, 2015) Claude Stout, TDI spoke with Gregory Hlibok, Chief, Disability Rights Office, CGB, FCC to clarify the position of Consumer Groups and Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. regarding their June 4, 2015 filing. Stout explained that in Part I of this filing, Consumer Groups and Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. intended to advocate service quality standards for all TRS services, but intended to call for a freeze on rates only for VRS. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001082818>

Captioning, Subtitles, and User Interfaces

■ (June 8, 2015) TDI, NAD, HLAA, ALDA, DHHCAN, and

Gallaudet TAP submitted an ex parte filing regarding caption quality issues jointly with Media Access Group at WGBH, NCRA, NCI, VITAC, and Caption Max. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001083271>

■ (June 29, 2015) TDI, NAD, HLAA, ALDA, DHHCAN, and Gallaudet TAP submitted comments to the FCC supporting the extension of the Commission's existing and proposed information collection requirements relating to Internet Protocol (IP) closed captioning and apparatus closed captioning capabilities. *Link: (not available on the FCC's electronic filing system).*

■ (July 13, 2015) TDI, CPADO, DSA, ALDA, and CCASDHH filed a consolidated opposition to petitions for exemption from the Commission's closed captioning rules. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001114961>

The petitions opposed by the Consumer Groups were from the

Continued on page 38



TDI In Action

June - August 2015

Continued from page 37

program producers as follows:

- A.) First Baptist Church of Beaver
CGB-CC-1345
- B.) Delaware Standardbred Owners Association
CGB-CC-1346
- C.) Seeking the Lost Ministries
CGB-CC-1347
- D.) Word of Life Full Gospel Baptist Church
CGB-CC-1350
- E.) Fallah Productions, Inc.
CGB-CC-1352

- (August 17, 2015) TDI, CPADO, AADB, and ALDA filed comments on the petitions for exemption from the Commission's closed captioning rules. We chose not to oppose the exemption petitions, provided that the waivers are granted for a short time period. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001122030>

The petitions opposed by the Consumer Groups were from the program producers as follows:

- A.) Providence Transformation Church International
CGB-CC-1354

B.) Alfaro & Associates, LLC
CGB-CC-1358

- (August 17, 2015) TDI, CPADO, ALDA, and AADB filed a consolidated opposition to petitions for exemption from the Commission's closed captioning rules. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001122035>

The petitions opposed by the Consumer Groups were from the program producers as follows:

- A.) Greater Community Temple COGIC
CGB-CC-1357
- B.) Brushy Creek Baptist Church
CGB-CC-1359

- (August 17, 2015) TDI, CPADO, ALDA, and AADB filed an opposition to a petition for exemption from the Commission's closed captioning rules. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001097806>

The petition opposed by the Consumer Groups was from the program producer as follows:

- A.) Charles Perry Ministries, Inc.
CGB-CC-1344

Other Issues

- (June 10, 2015) TDI, NAD, Gallaudet TAP, DHHCAN, HLAA, ALDA, AADB, CPADO, DSA, and CCASDHH submitted comments to FCC to support expanding the availability of broadband services under its Lifeline program. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/view?id=60001077680>
- (August 24, 2015) TDI, AADB, ALDA, CCASDHH, CPADO, DSA, HLAA, NAD, and RERC-TA submitted comments regarding the petitions (one for a rulemaking and another for a waiver) filed by AT&T Services, Inc. for substitution of Real-Time Text (RTT) for text telephone technology. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001098505>
- (September 9, 2015) TDI, AADB, ALDA, CCASDHH, CPADO, DHHCAN, DSA, HLAA, NAD, and RERC on Telecommunications Access submitted reply comments regarding the petitions (one for a rulemaking and another for a waiver) filed by AT&T Services, Inc. for substitution of Real-Time Text (RTT) for text telephone technology. <http://apps.fcc.gov/ecfs/comment/view?id=60001299107>

NOTEWORTHY NEWS Continued from page 36

works as a real-time translation device and an instructional tool, converting Standard Arabic into Moroccan Sign Language (MSL) and offering resources like games and quizzes to help students and parents learn MSL.

A second PEER award, received in 2013, supports the creation of a MSL thesaurus, which will allow users to describe signs (the right hand is making this shape, the left hand looks like this) and find the Arabic word equivalent.

To get this technology into the hands of

schools, the team has traveled all over the country, met with over a dozen deaf associations, and caught the attention of government ministries.

The robust intellectual collaboration between Vinopol and Souidi is a core criteria for international activities funded by NSF's international office, says Lara Campbell, a program director in that office.

"The unusual partnership between a small business and a foreign university brings a unique perspective to the table in terms of fundraising and structure,"

she says. "I think the business perspective may help the work of this project expand not just across Morocco but eventually across the region."

The most impressive results right now, however, may be how this technology affects deaf students and their families.

"Teachers, parents and students were positively astounded that software of this kind could be developed," Souidi says. "It generated hope and advocacy on the part of parents that there could be better education and higher expectations for their children."

TDI Affiliate Membership Application Form

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: \$

(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 Check or Money Order, please make it payable to "TDI" (\$35 fee for bounced checks).

If paying by Purchase Order, please attach the Purchase Order.

If Paying by Credit or Debit Card:



Card Issued by: <input type="checkbox"/> American Express <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard <input type="checkbox"/> Visa
Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____
Name of cardholder: _____ CCV Security Code: _____
Signature: _____ Today's Date: _____

Mail the completed form with check or payment information to:

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

Phone (Video/Voice): 301-563-9112 • TTY: 301-589-3006 • E-Mail: listings@TDIforAccess.org

Save Time and Postage—Join TDI or Renew Your Membership Online at www.TDIforAccess.org

TDI Individual Membership Application Form

First Name: _____ Middle Name: _____ Last Name: _____

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
Individual-Regular:	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000.00
Individual-Senior Citizen (Age 60+)	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$55.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000.00

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 Check or Money Order: Please make it payable to "TDI" (\$35 fee for bounced checks).

If Paying by Credit or Debit Card:



Card Issued by: ☐ American Express ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Name of cardholder: _____ CCV Security Code: _____

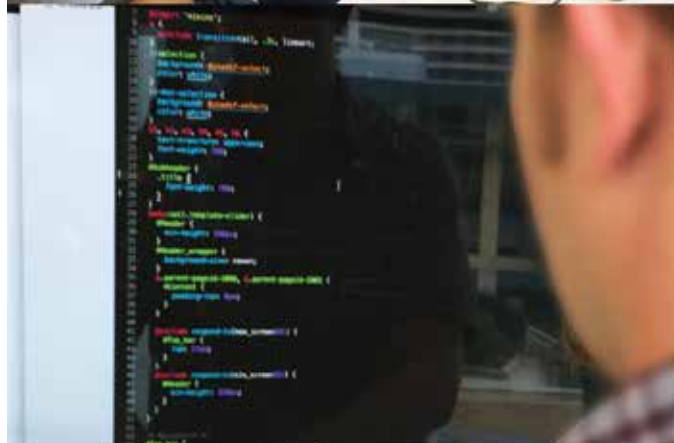
Signature: _____ Today's Date: _____

Mail the completed form with check or payment information to:

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

Phone (Video/Voice): 301-563-9112 • TTY: 301-589-3006 • E-Mail: listings@TDIforAccess.org

Save Time and Postage- Join TDI or Renew Your Membership Online at www.TDIforAccess.org



CSD Creative

Ready to Take Your Business to the Next Level?

As a deaf-run organization,
we clearly understand
the challenges involved in
marketing a deaf-owned
business.



Web Design
& Development



Photography
& Visual Design



Digital
Advertising



Video
Production

Work with us today!

csd.org/creative



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.



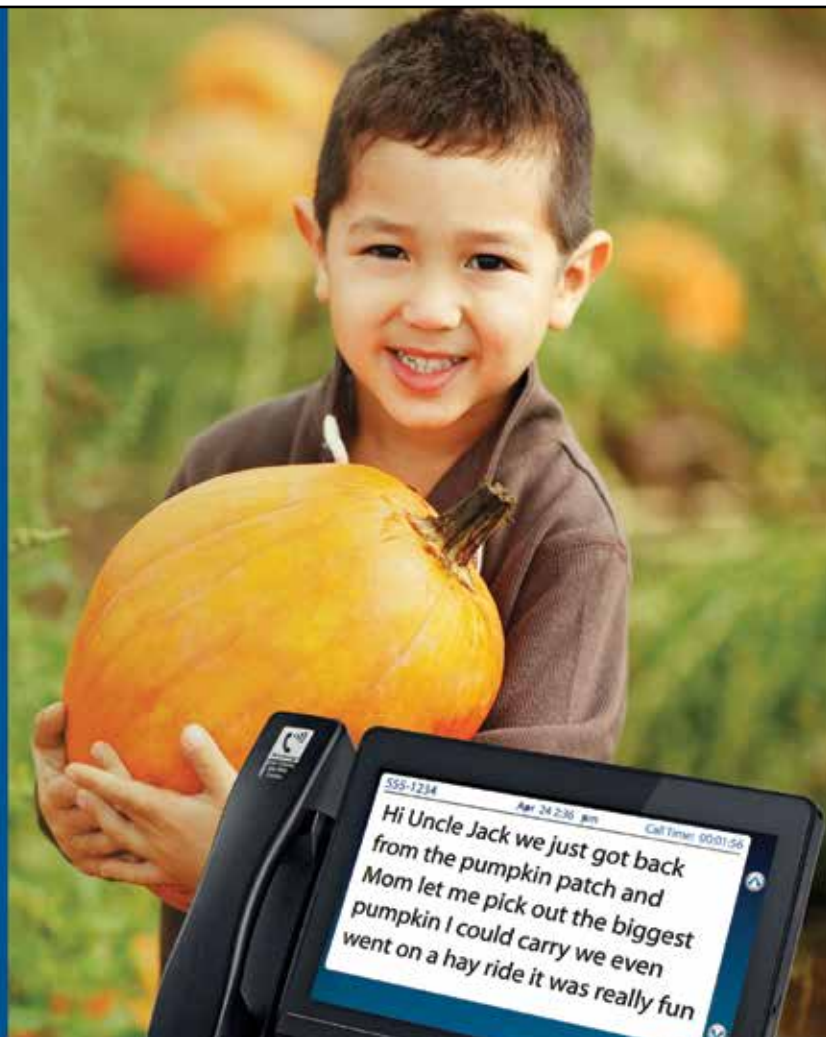
Also featuring TTYs

Ultratec.

www.ultratec.com

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

service@ultratec.com



CAPTIONED TELEPHONES THAT FIT YOUR LIFESTYLE.



CapTel®
2400i



Large Visual Display



Traditional Phones



Touch Screen Phones



Mobile Apps



THE WORLD LEADER IN TEXT TELECOMMUNICATIONS