

RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING



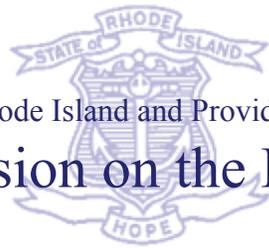
FY06 Annual Report **FY06 Annual Report**

July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

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State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

• COMMUNICATIONS • OPPORTUNITIES • EQUALITY •

November 15, 2006

The Honorable Donald L. Carcieri
Office of the Governor
State House, Room 222
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Governor Cariceri:

It is with my great pleasure that I submit to you the Annual Report of the Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (RICDHH).

I am proud to be part of the RI CDHH and to work alongside with the staff and commissioners that work tirelessly to improve RICDHHs' purpose to serve the constituents of Rhode Island. Patience, diligence and persistence have allowed our accomplishment to prevail over the past year.

The RICDHH has gone through a much needed "make over" transformation. The office has relocated from the back rooms of the service corridors to the front public hallways. We have created a new logo that exhibits RICDHH's united purpose to bridge communication, opportunities and equality. Our new logo, new office, new RICDHH website and several accomplishments over the past year have given us a renewed sense of spirit and motivation. I look forward to RICDHH future with its continued success.

There have been several accomplishments over the past year and one of the biggest ones was the implementation of the Emergency Interpreter Referral Service. It has taken several years to pull all of the strings together and success! RICDHHs' goal to create a "one stop center" is finally starting to manifest into reality. We still have several more goals to achieve. Some will come quicker than others. We have come a long way to bring RICDHHs' success presently and we are most certainly prepared to steadfastly strive and push RICDHHs' success even higher!

Sincerely,

Travis R. Zellner
Chairperson



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E-mail: cdhh@cdhh.ri.gov Website: www.cdhh.ri.gov

Commissioners - 2005 - 2006



Travis R. Zellner (Deaf)
Chairperson
Coventry, RI



Edgar "Ed" Rawlings (Hard of Hearing)
Vice Chairperson
Wickford, RI



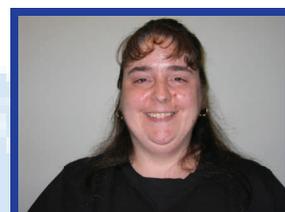
Lisa Liebermann Sack (Hearing)
Treasurer
East Greenwich, RI



Robert G. Cooper (Hard of Hearing)
Assistant Treasurer
North Providence, RI



Suzanne Goldenberg (Hearing)
Secretary
Cranston, RI



Kimberly C. Blue (Deaf)
East Providence, RI



Joanne Rose Daniels (Deaf)
Providence, RI



Jeannie Desmarais-Valdez (Deaf)
Tiverton, RI



John "Jack" Ronan (Deaf)
Johnston, RI



Patricia Thompson (Hard of Hearing)
Westerly, RI



John T. Tolento (Oral Deaf)
Warwick, RI

The Commissioners Meeting in FY2006

Thursday, **September 1, 2005**
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm
Newport Public Library
Newport, RI

Wednesday, **October 19, 2005**
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Wednesday, **December 14, 2005**
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Thursday, **February 16, 2006**
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Special Meeting
Tuesday, **March 21, 2006**
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Thursday, **April 20, 2006**
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Special Meeting
Thursday, **April 27, 2006**
4:30 pm - 6:30 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Wednesday, **June 21, 2006**
6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Commissioners' Committees

Bylaws Committee

Robert Cooper
Ed Rawlings
Lisa Lieberman Sack
John Tolento

Membership Committee

Lisa Lieberman Sack
Travis Zellner

Hospice Committee

Ed Rawlings

Healthcare Committee

Suzanne Goldenberg
Jeannie Desmarais-Valdez

Award Committee

Lisa Lieberman Sack
Jeannie Desmarais-Valdez

Staff



Steven A. Florio
Executive Director



Pamela Zellner
Program Manager



Curtiss James
Interpreter Referral Specialist



State House



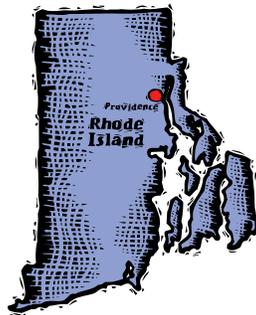
RI CDHH is located at the
Department of Administration Building

The Mission Statement

To provide innovative leadership in public policy, advocacy, service delivery and accessibility throughout the Ocean State, RI CDHH ensures opportunities for every deaf and hard of hearing person to become an empowered and contributing citizen.

POPULATION IN RHODE ISLAND

Over 90,000* people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, late deafened, and have other types of hearing loss currently live in Rhode Island.



What is RICDHH?

The Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (RI CDHH) is an advocating, coordinating, and service providing entity committed to promoting an environment in which the deaf and hard of hearing in Rhode Island are afforded equal opportunity in all aspects of their lives. The RI CDHH develops policy; initiates and lobbies for favorable legislation; fosters cooperations and awareness among state agencies and community organizations; and educates and advises consumers, state agencies, and employers about Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) rights to equal access. The RI CDHH also provides direct services in its operation of a Sign Language Interpreter Referral Service, a lending library of books and videotapes, and as a clearinghouse of information and referral on all topics related to hearing loss.

* Data based on Population information from United States Census Bureau 2001, Rhode Island Population = 1,048,319. Calculated by 8.6%, formula obtained from National Percentages from the National Center for Health Statistics, data from the National Health Interview Survey, Series 10, Number 188, Table 1, 1994.

RI CDHH SERVICES

- **Statewide Sign Language Interpreter Referral Service**

Emergency and non-emergency interpreter referrals are available for a variety of settings that require communication access.

- **Resource Library**

Lending Library has over 550 videos, DVDs, books, magazines, newspapers, and more about hearing loss. These items can be borrowed for up to 2 weeks at no cost.

- **Information and Referral**

RI CDHH is a clearinghouse for information and referrals on various issues related to hearing loss. Research, articles, fact sheets and resource lists related to deaf and hard of hearing are available by request.

- **Communication and Technology Access Resources**

Assistive devices are available for the RI residents to borrow including audio loops, FM systems, TTY's, Portable Infoloop, Videophones, and more. These items can be borrowed for short term at no cost. RI CDHH office has the Communication booth that offers public video relay service workstation, VCO and TTY equipment and internet access for consumers use.

- **Awareness and Outreach**

RI CDHH provides consulting, trainings, workshops, presentations, and exhibits. RI CDHH raises awareness on deaf and hard of hearing related issues through community partnerships. RI CDHH maintains an informational website, publish a quarterly newsletter, and conduct forums and town hall meetings throughout the state of Rhode Island.

- **Advocacy**

RI CDHH writes, lobbies, and proposes the legislative bills through the General Assembly and general policies posted by authorities. RI CDHH ensures that the activities and information at the State House are accessible to deaf and hard of hearing people in RI. RI CDHH monitors the compliances of American with Disabilities and Section 503 of the Rehab Act of 1973 as well as other relevant federal, state, and local laws in various settings and proposes recommendations for better and effective environment. RI CDHH through partnership with various resources and agencies on legal matters to ensure communication equality.

Legislative Mandates

- **Provide networking among agencies and organizations.**

CDHH promotes agency cooperation and coordination by networking with all entities that currently serve or have the potential to serve the needs of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and other RI citizens with hearing loss.

- **Engage in advocacy to promote accessibility of services.**

CDHH actively promotes accessibility to employment, education, health, and other services by recommending action to remove barriers to services, providing technical assistance when requested, intervening as a knowledgeable party when access is denied, and encouraging effective self-advocacy on the part of the consumer.

- **Conduct an ongoing needs assessment.**

CDHH understands and assesses the needs of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing population in order to identify service gaps and recommend improvements on an ongoing basis.

- **Promote awareness and provide information and referral.**

CDHH provides general awareness of the unique issues of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people by promoting the positive and productive aspects of their lives, and to provide information specific to this populations, its culture and concerns.

- **Initiate and lobby for legislation.**

CDHH initiates and lobbies for legislation benefiting Deaf and Hard of Hearing people, and monitors related legislation at local, state and national levels in order to lobby for favorable outcomes.

- **Administer a sign language interpreter referral service.**

CDHH provides the sign language interpreter referral service for the State of Rhode Island.

- **Work to improve the quality of life addressing: education, employment, health care, parenting issues a technology.**

CDHH takes any other necessary action to improve the quality of life for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and other RI citizens with hearing loss by addressing the unique needs of these populations in areas including, but not limited to, education, employment, health care, parenting and technology.

- **Develop a Statewide Coordinating Council which will coordinate the implementation of statewide strategic plan for Deaf/Hard of Hearing children in RI.**

CDHH establishes a statewide Coordinating Council in collaboration with the Department of Education and other agencies to implement a comprehensive strategic plan to promote the education and well-being of RI children who are Deaf or have a hearing loss.

- **Track the yearly service rendered by the non-licensed interpreters. (Added in 2006)**

CDHH tracks and monitors the number of hours allowed by the non-licensed interpreters. New RI General Law that was added after the Legislative 2006 session allows the interpreters to work in Rhode Island without a license for a maximum of 25 hours a year. The interpreters are still required to be certified recognized by the Board of the Interpreter with the Department of Health.

Information can be found at the Rhode Island General Laws, Section 23, 1.8 on RI Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

RI CDHH has identified two long-term (5 years or more) goals:

Establish a one-stop center, which will provide a variety of services to deaf and hard of hearing people directly at the same site. The center will also provide trainings and host a variety of social and leadership/empowerment activities. The center shall be totally accessible for the deaf and hard of hearing people by using accessible communications.

Facilitate opportunities for the development of a nursing home that is fully accessible for the deaf and hard of hearing by ensuring that the facility or placement is appropriate and is in the deaf-friendly environment where it has visual communications in place, all staff members are fluent and/or trained in communicating with deaf and hard of hearing, and providing appropriate service supports. This is done by convening the key state, private, and nonprofit players to dialogue on an ideal nursing home and conducting state agency research to document the need for such an entity.

RI CDHH has identified five goals, which will be the priority for the next 1-3 years:

Providing awareness trainings for police and fire departments throughout Rhode Island as well as EMT, FEMA/RIEMA, 911 center, and employers.

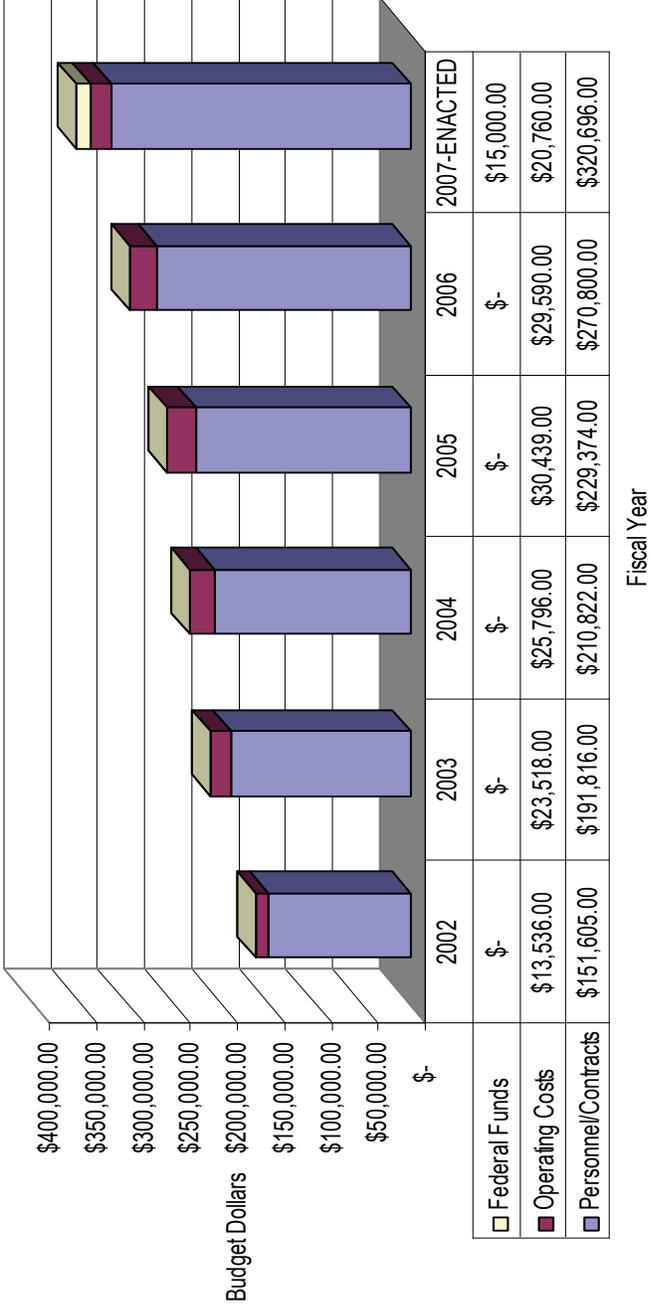
Enhancing the quality of communication access by increasing advocacy effort to ensure that announcements at the public places be visible to the deaf and hard of hearing, activities/presentations given by the state government officials be accessible to deaf and hard of hearing, medical service providers, hospitals and doctor's offices be accessible to deaf and hard of hearing, to name a few.

Enhancing educational opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing youth and children by collaborating with the Rhode Island Dept of Education to ensure the effective implementation of the strategic plan and to enforce it; providing quality assurance of educational interpreters; and ensure that all programs abide the federal and state laws pertaining to the education for youth and children.

Providing Deafblind services in Rhode Island by collaborating with the state agencies, private, and nonprofit sectors to survey information to identify who are deafblind and how many, and to ensure that deafblind live independently with appropriate support services such as Support Service Providers, visual services, .

Expanding and enhancing employment opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing people by coordinating with state agencies and private and nonprofit job search centers to be more accessible to deaf and hard of hearing when job positions are available. Educating employment agencies and libraries about these opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing. Ensuring that all state job positions are sent to RI CDHH for distribution.

RI CDHH Budget



NOTE: Personnel-Contracts include 3 Full-Time Employees, CART Services, Interpreting Services, and Emergency Interpreter Referral Service.

GENERAL OVERALL PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

Objective #1: Interpreter Referral

In FY03, 81% of the requests for interpreters were filled.

In FY04, 93% of the requests for interpreters were filled.

In FY05, 95% of the requests were filled.

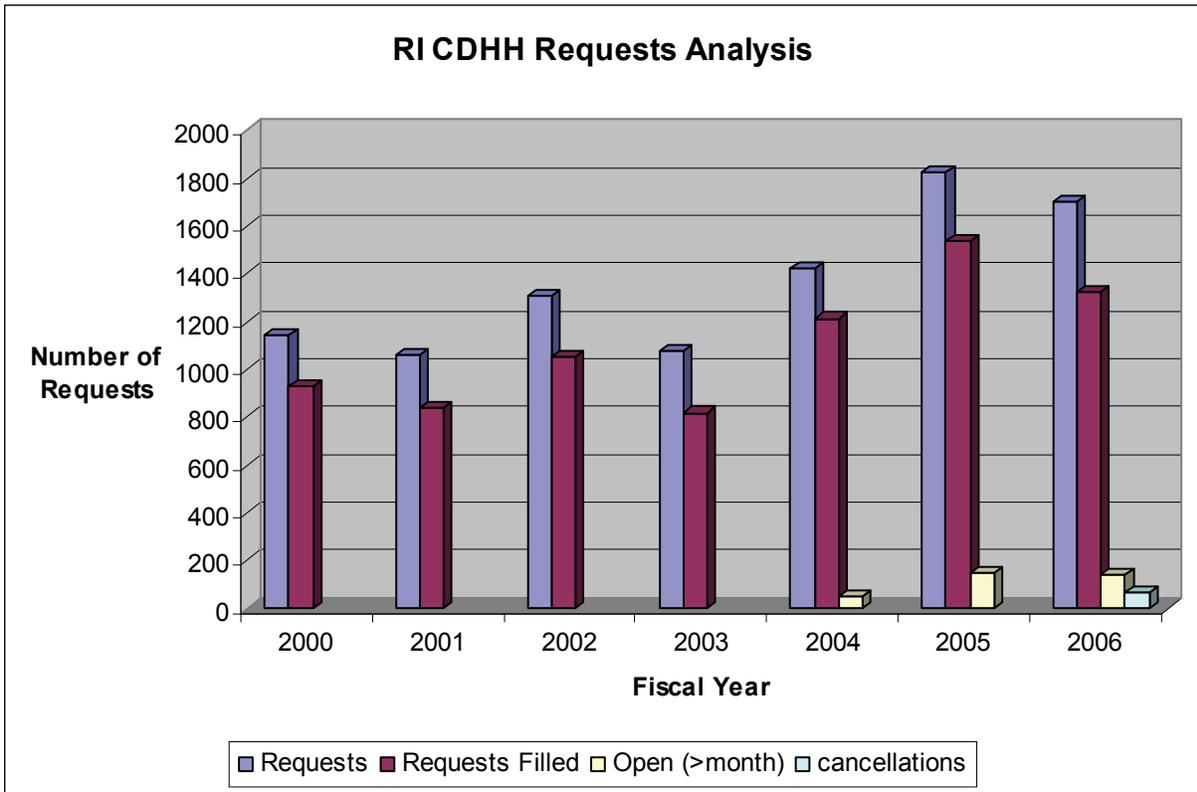
In FY06, 88% of the requests were filled.

7% decline was mainly occurred in these 5 months (Oct, Nov, Jan, Feb, March and April) when all interpreters were often already booked as many assignments repeatedly overlapped on the same day or hours. However, from the RI CDHH's perspective, that is pretty steady and stable figure when to compare FY2006 to FY2003 when the interpreter referral service was transferred into in-house. Despite the fact that many of the vendors who requested an interpreter for one assignment secured the interpreter for follow-on assignments outside of the service, the demand for interpreters continues to grow. It is important to note that the number of requests is not necessarily a valid indicator of the overall need for interpreters. Many requests were filled outside of the referral service, and unfortunately, many requests that should have been made to provide reasonable accommodation to people with hearing loss were not made at all. These numbers are, however, evidence of the increasing commitment by state agencies, schools, hospitals, and private businesses to provide communication accessibility. The CDHH anticipates this number will remain steady in stability or better, especially when the referral service functions more efficiently.

Of concern as well are the many requests that go unfilled (12%), even with sufficient advance notice. This can be attributed to the shortage of freelance interpreters who can be called upon as needed. Most interpreters work as independent contractors who bill on an hourly fee-for-service basis. Full-time freelance interpreters often take predictable, ongoing assignments working in educational institutions. As a result, interpreter availability in Rhode Island is minimal during regular business hours when most requests were made, especially during the school year. This frequently resulted in a serious situation in which Deaf consumers were denied their civil rights to full communication accessibility.

Court and hospital settings do require interpreters with specialized training, and there are very few who work in RI. Long assignments often require at least two interpreters who take turns, increasing the demand but not the resources.

CDHH continues to enjoy having a positive reputation of successfully securing interpreters and of better communication on all requests since the interpreter referral service moved into the CDHH office in the 4th Q of FY2003. CDHH intends to maintain its reputation by committing the quality of service for the consumers and service providers.



Objective #2: Emergency Interpreter Referral

The RI CDHH created the performance measurement for the Emergency Interpreter Referral Service after implementing the service on November 10, 2005 to ensure the maximum of quality of the Emergency Interpreter Referral Service.

Please see below.

Goal #1: 100% of shift slots to be filled by “on-call” interpreters.

Result in FY2006: 54% of shift slots were filled.

Goal #2: 100% of times “on-call” interpreters respond to emergency calls.

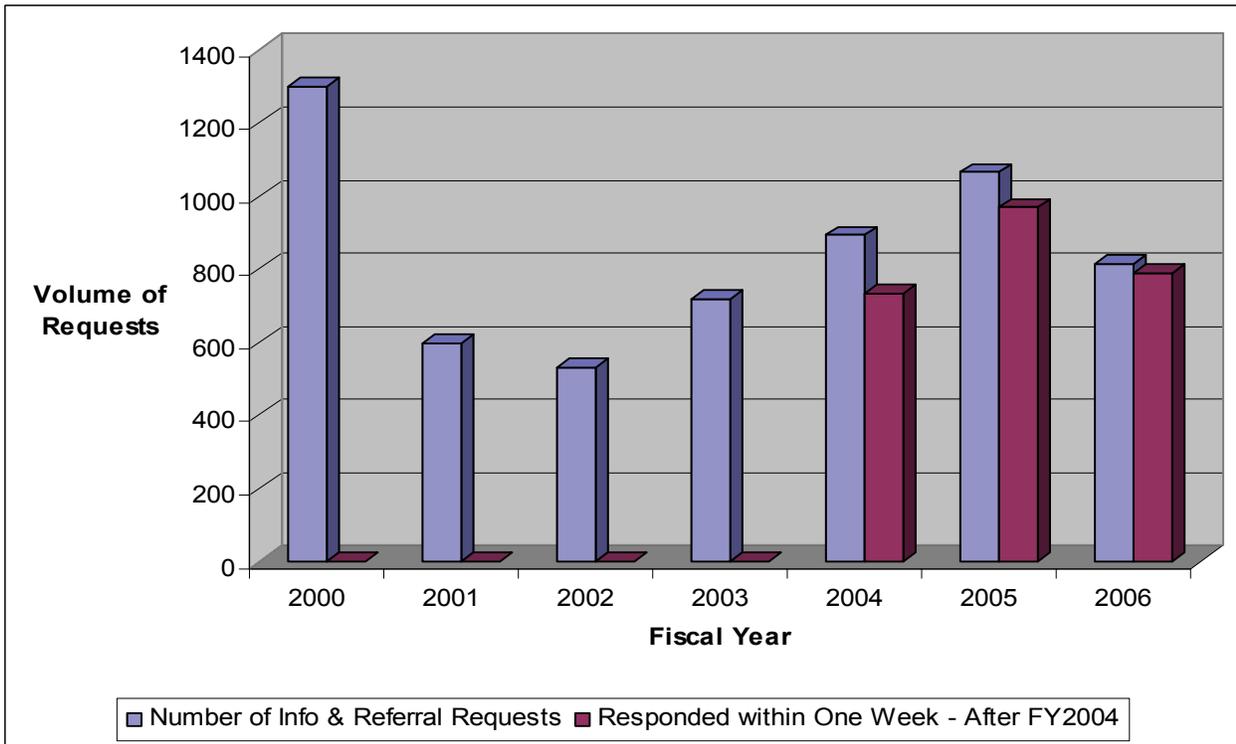
Result in FY2006: 83% of times “on-call” interpreters responded.

This is no question very valuable service for the deaf and hard of hearing people who communicate in ASL during the emergency calls. 83% responded to the emergency calls was quite a success in its first 8 months of service in FY2006. The RI CDHH is prepared to do the better job in FY2007.

Objective #3: Information and Referral

The goal is to have 100% of all requests for information received a time response within a week. The goal was amended from 100% of all requests responded within TWO weeks to within ONE week effective in

FY2004. In FY2006, the RI CDHH had seen a big improvement all because of newly database installed in late FY2004. 82% in FY2004, 91% in FY2005 and finally, 97% in FY2006. The goal is to meet at least 95% because the cost effective and efficient computerized database for information and referral service. RI CDHH shall continue anticipating a significant improvement in FY2007 as the database system would cut down the manual and statistical work and respond to all requests within one week with the high rate of success.



NOTE: The RI CDHH Website launched in June 2004 (last month of FY2004). The consumers may obtain the information they needed from our website on their own.

Objective #4: Favorable Legislation

In FY2006, CDHH monitored only 6 bills plus 3 identical bills that potentially impacted deaf and hard of hearing people. These bills were supported by the agency, and all 5 out of 6 bills were passed. The legislations for Hearing Aid and Budget for new RI School for the Deaf that were passed in FY2006 were a big accomplishment! The RI CDHH is comfortable with the legislative process and will seek more proposed legislative bills in FY2007. Also, the RI CDHH plans to host the RI President Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, which will be held in the Autumn of 2006 to collect input from the deaf and hard of hearing population concerning the public policies in Rhode Island. RI CDHH's goal is to submit the legislative package of its own written or created by the deaf and hard of hearing constituents. Also, RI CDHH is working with the State House to ensure that the interpreters and CART services will be provided for the hearings, even in the short notice. This has been a problem in the past and the RI CDHH ensures that this will not happen again in FY2007.

The Legislation Section



1) Separation of Power - Board of the Examiners of Interpreters for the Deaf (Passed)

[House Bill 6751aa](#)

[Senate Bill 2140a](#)

Requires all appointments shall be made by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate and authorizes the board to elect from among its members the chairperson, vice chairperson and such other officers as it may deem necessary.

2) Budget for FY2006 Revision - RI CDHH and RISD (Passed)

[House Bill 7121](#)

RI CDHH Budget for FY2006 - \$352,084

Rhode Island School for the Deaf Budget for FY2006 - \$6,752,518

3) Budget for FY2007 - RI CDHH and RISD (Passed)

[House Bill 7120](#) ([Article 001](#) and [Article 007](#))

RI CDHH Budget for FY2007 - \$373,729

Rhode Island School for the Deaf Budget for FY2007 - \$6,854,212

Rhode Island School for the Deaf Budget for Building in FY2007 - \$31.25 million

4) All Televised Political Advertisements Must Be Closed-Captioning. (Failed)

[House Bill 6963](#)

This would require all political advertisements on TV be closed-captioning.

5) Enhanced Language of Law on Board of the Examiners for the Interpreters for the Deaf (Passed)

[Senate Bill 2750](#)

[House Bill 8122](#)

The changes proposed are 1) to remove "archaic" language and replace with language consistent with contemporary practice and 2) to add the 9th Legislative Mandate of RI CDHH to track the yearly interpreting service by non-licensed certified interpreters. (A certified interpreter without license is allowed to work in the State of Rhode Island up to 25 hours a year.)

6) Mandated Hearing Aid Coverage (Passed)

[Senate Bill 2383](#)

[House Bill 8254](#)

To increase from \$400 to \$1500 for children under 19 and to increase from \$400 to \$700 for adults, age 19 and up.



List of Accomplishments

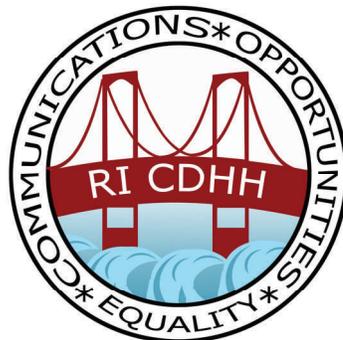
Emergency Interpreter Referral Service Launched

Lt. Governor Charles J. Fogarty, Travis R. Zellner, Chair, Edgar Rawlings, Vice-Chair, Steven A. Florio, Executive Director, and Curtiss James, Interpreter Referral Specialist officially cut the yellow ribbon to launch the Emergency Interpreter Referral Services on November 9, 2005 at our Annual Coffee Hour at State House. The Emergency Interpreter Referral Service officially started at Midnight of November 10, 2005. This service was made possible by the state fund of \$40,000. This would enable the communication access between the deaf and hard of hearing individuals who use sign language and emergency personnel/responders.



RICDHH's New Logo

The Commissioners had unveiled the new logo of the Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on November 9, 2005 at our Annual Coffee Hour at State House.



United Healthcare agreed to cover communication access for any doctor appointments for state employees. (to honor Blue Cross/Blue Shield Insurance policy during transition.)

During the transition from the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Insurance to the United Healthcare Insurance, the United Healthcare insurance would overlook the significant coverage of communication access that Blue Cross/Blue Shield Insurance provided. The Office of the RICDHH was able to restore this coverage by having frequent dialogues and meetings with the officials of the United Healthcare Insurance and developed agreement made by the United Healthcare Insurance to continue covering the costs of communication access for the state employees.



Two positions were upgraded including additional roles/responsibilities.

- 1) New Position: RI CDHH Program Manager
Old Position: RI CDHH Coordinator

- 2) New Position: Interpreter Referral Specialist/Administrative Officer
Old Position: Interpreter Referral Specialist/Administrative Assistant

Databases upgraded for Info and Referrals and Interpreter Referral Services

Two databases were upgraded to improve efficiency to handle data for information referral and interpreter referral service. These databases are heavily utilized by RI CDHH staff to ensure that all sources and information are organized and up to date on a regular basis. The features were added to simplify the way the staff members handle the services.

Relocation of the RI CDHH office

The RI CDHH office relocated to other office space on the same floor in the same building. The office has better functional settings including conference room, multi-media Resource Library, Communication Booth, Offices for Staff, and storage space. What's new is the RICDHH office has the yellow flashing light that was on when the front door opens and closes to acknowledge anyone who could not hear that someone is leaving or coming in the office. The new location of the RI CDHH office has great visibility because the office is next to the cafeteria entrance where hundreds of people walk by daily.



Approval of Policies and Procedures:

RICDHH Interpreter Referral Service

RICDHH Emergency Interpreter Referral Service (New)

RICDHH Conflict of Interest Policy for Interpreter Referral Specialist (New)

The Commissioners approved three policies and procedures that are listed above to maintain the expectations and integrity.



Makeover of the RI CDHH website including ASL Video Clips/captioning.

The RICDHH Website has exclusive ASL video clips, some with captioning and some texts in the PDF format to accommodate the video clips. The Commission continues to ensure that both languages, English and American Sign Language, are equally presented so everyone including the Deaf and Hard of Hearing population in Rhode Island understand the messages clearly. You may check our website, WWW.CDHH.RI.GOV.



Purchase of Assistive Device:

- Superloop Pro System III

This loop system is quite expensive and much newer version than the old version loop systems that the RI CDHH office had for years. This enables individuals to hear the speaker's voice clearly with 'T' on their hearing aids. This is ideal for meetings, conferences, workshops, trainings, etc. Also, this new loop has more power to cover the whole room where anyone with hearing aids can pick up the speaker's voice.



Major Challenges

Shortage of Interpreters/CART

We continue to experience the shortage of interpreters/CART services. This is not new. This is a nationwide challenge. We experienced difficulty placing interpreters and/or CART services with “less than 72 hours” notice. In some situations, improvements can be made. And many other instances, it would require years of planning and implementation. Rhode Island does not have an Interpreter Training Program that would produce more professional interpreters annually. The closest training program available is at Northeastern University in Boston, Mass. The CART captioners are using the same technology the stenographers use for the court but the demand is still higher than the supply. The accredited stenography training program is held at one of the universities in RI but it does not increase the supply of CART captioners instantly. We continue to explore more viable technologies to accommodate communication needs.



Mental Health Services especially for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children

The RI CDHH Health Care Committee continues to meet and discuss the strategies as to how to improve the health care services in Rhode Island. The committee is comprised of various representatives including professional clinicians, consumers, service providers, and advocates. The committee is looking forward to the FY 2007 for more productive results such as the development of survey questionnaires, data collection, documentation, and recommendation. The committee hopes to see positive impact on mental health services to be more accessible to the deaf and hard of hearing population including children.

Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation

Based on the RI CDHH’s preliminary observations in FY2006, the Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation plans that are supposed to be accessible to the deaf and hard of hearing population are far behind in terms of communication rather than those people who are able to acquire emergency messages through audio-based broadcasting during emergencies. The RICDHH staff continues building

relationships with various organizations and agencies that specialize in providing emergency services. This purpose is to ensure that all individuals regardless their hearing loss shall obtain the same and clear message during the emergency.



Serving on the Council/Committees representing the RI CDHH

National Association of State Directors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency
Rhode Island Statewide Independent Living Conference
Rhode Island Rhodes to Independence
Rhode Island Hearing Assessment Program
Rhode Island Office of Rehabilitation
Rhode Island Department of Elderly Affairs' Health Care Resource Center
Northeast Educational Technical Assistance Center
Governor's Commission on Disabilities' Election Assistance Committee
Northeastern University Interpreter Education Project Advisory Council
Dorcas Place Disability Advisory Committee

Collaborations at different levels:

List of State Agencies:

The Office of Governor
The Office of Lieutenant Governor
The Office of Attorney General
The Office of the Secretary of State
Rhode Island General Assembly
Rhode Island Joint Committee on Legislative Services
Rhode Island Department of Administration
Rhode Island Department of Health
Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families
Rhode Island Department of Elderly Affairs
Rhode Island Department of Human Services

Rhode Island Department of Education
Rhode Island Department of Mental Health, Retardation, and Hospitals
Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency
Emergency 911 Center
Rhode Island Public Utility Commission
Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights
Rhode Island State Police
Rhode Island Adaptive Telephone Equipment Loan Program
Rhode Island Assistive Technology Access Partnership
Rhode Island Board of Interpreters
Rhode Island Commission on Women
Rhode Island Governor's Commission on Disabilities
Rhode Island Office of Rehabilitation Services
Community College of Rhode Island
Rhode Island College
Rhode Island School for the Deaf
Rhode Island State Council on the Arts
Rhode Island State Courts
University of Rhode Island
RI.GOV
NetworkRI

List of State/Local organizations of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Alumni Association of the Rhode Island School for the Deaf
Corliss Center
Hearing Loss Association of Rhode Island
Providence Club of the Deaf
Rhode Island Association of the Deaf
Rhode Island Chapter of the Alexander Graham Bell for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Rhode Island Deaf Senior Citizens
Rhode Island Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

Other State/Local agencies/organizations:

39 Municipal Police Stations
Blue Cross & Blue Shields of Rhode Island
Bradley Hospital
Brown University – American Sign Language Program and Research on Health Wellness
Butler Hospital
Care New England Health System
Goodwill Industries of Rhode Island
Hamilton Relay
Hasbro's Hospital
Home and Hospice Care of Rhode Island
Kent Hospital
Kent House Treatment Center
Lifespan Corporate Services

Memorial Hospital
Miriam Hospital
Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island
Newport Hospital
Ocean State Center for Independent Living
PARI
Perspectives Corporation
Rhode Island Disabilities Law Center
Rhode Island Hospital
Rhode Island Speech-Language-Hearing Association
Roger Williams Medical Center
Saint Joseph Health Service of RI
Sorenson Relay
South County Hospital
Sprint Relay
United Healthcare of Rhode Island
Westerly Hospital
Women and Infant Hospital

National Association of State Directors of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Purpose

This association was established in early 1980's to exchange ideas and to work toward common solutions on issues. They meet every two years at the national organization's conference.

Meeting: June 27, 2006 in Palm Desert, CA

35 State Directors including Steven A. Florio, RI Executive Director were convened at the Desert Spring Resort for a full-day conference.

They formed the following committees to do the tasks for one year.

"Think Tank" Committee

Communication Access Committee

Demographics Committee

Emergency Preparedness Committee

New England State Commissions for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Purpose

This group represents all state directors from the neighboring states in New England. In order to share resources and to create new programs/resources through partnership.

Meetings: November 2005 in Providence, RI

March 2006 in Concord, NH.

Steven A. Florio, Executive Director of Rhode Island
Heidi Reed, Commissioner of Massachusetts
Stacie Mawson, Executive Director of Connecticut
Carrie Foster, Director of Vermont
H. Dee Clanton, Director of New Hampshire
Jan DeVinney, Director of Maine

RI President Council of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Purpose

To establish the network between deaf and hard of hearing organizations within the state, to resolve common issues within the state, and to exchange the information that would benefit others.

Meetings: April 2006, June 2006

Beth Wilson, Hearing Loss Association of Rhode Island (formerly known as RI Chapter of SHHH)
Tina Thompason, Hearing Loss Association of Rhode Island (formerly known as RI Chapter of SHHH)
Allen Bradley, Providence Deaf Club
Bruce Bucci, Rhode Island Association of the Deaf
Todd Murano, Rhode Island Association of the Deaf
Laura Peterson, RI Chapter of Alexander G. Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Iraida Williams, RI Chapter of Alexander G. Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Elizabeth Morrissey, Rhode Island Chapter of Speech, Language, and Hearing Association
Alice Rodriguez, Rhode Island Deaf Senior Citizens
Christopher Haas, Rhode Island Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
Mary Lomastro, Rhode Island School for the Deaf Alumni Association

RI CDHH Healthcare Committee

Purpose

To enhance the healthcare services to be more accessible to the deaf and hard of hearing consumers.

Suzanne Goldenberg, RI CDHH Commissioner

Martha Brunzos, Perspectives Corporation

Jeanne Panarace

Jeannie Desmarais-Valdez, Office of Rehabilitation Services (ORS)

Bonnie Abols, Ocean State Center for Independent Living (OSCIL)

Sarah Lincoln, Hearing Loss Association of Rhode Island (HLA-RI)

Tom Mack, National Alliance on Mental Illness of RI (NAMI-RI)

Christine Harkins, Kent House

Debra Raiche, Kent House

Richard Hillman, Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)

Caroline Obrecht, Butler Hospital

Carmen Oldmixon, Rhode Island School for the Deaf (RISD)

Michelle Florio, Rhode Island School for the Deaf (RISD)

Christine Thompson, Hearing Loss Association of Rhode Island (HLA-RI)

Suzanne Borstein, Private Practitioner

James Simon, Perspectives Corporation

Maribeth Ponte, Perspectives Corporation

James Litvack, PARI

Jessica Haas, Rhode Island Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RIRID)

Jessica Tunison, Office of Rehabilitation Services (ORS)

Laura Drury, Butler Hospital

Thomas Dwyer, Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)

Stephanie Horridge, Department of Mental Health, Retardation, and Hospitals (MHRH)

Robert Raphael, Rhode Island School for the Deaf (RISD)

Tony Marino, Providence Center

Jennifer Maloney, Rhode Island Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RIRID)

Conference Appearances

National:

American Society for Deaf Children Conference in Pittsburgh, PA

Jr. National Association of the Deaf Conference in Indianapolis, IN

National Association of the Deaf Conference in Palm Desert, CA

National Association of State Directors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Meeting in Palm Desert, CA

State of the Science Conference: Accessible Emergency Notification and Communication at

Gallaudet University in Washington, DC.

Regional:

Community Emergency Preparedness Information Network (CEPIN) Project in Allston, MA
New England Deaf Senior Citizens Conference in Sturbridge, MA
New England Regional Mentorship Conference in Bedford, MA
61st Annual Men's and 16th Annual Women's New England Athletic Association of the Deaf 2006
Basketball Tournament in Providence, RI

State:

Deaf Awareness Week in Providence, RI
Community Opportunities for All Conference in Warwick, RI
Disability Employment Awareness Fair in Newport, RI
Open Government Summit, Roger Williams University, Bristol, RI
Partnership Conference in Providence, RI
Rhode Island Association of the Deaf Conference in Providence, RI
Rhode Island Hearing Assessment Program Seminars in Providence, RI
RI's 1st Better Hearing and Speech Day in Warwick, RI
Statewide Independence Living Council Conference in Providence, RI
TechACCESS Conference in Warwick, RI

Community Projects

Annual Coffee Hour at the State House (November 9, 2005)
Deaf Awareness Week (September 20-24, 2005)
1st Annual Better Hearing and Speech Month (May 6, 2006)
Legislative Forum (September 12, 2005)
Rhode Island Relay Forum (October 26, 2005)
American with Disabilities Act Public Forum (July 25-29, 2005)

Membership

National:

Alexander Graham Bell for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AGBDHH)
American Association of the Deaf-Blind (AADB)
American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC)
Association of Late Deafened Adults (ALDA)
Conference of Educational Administrators of School and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD)
Deaf Seniors of America (DSA)
Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)
National Association of the Deaf (NAD)
National Association of State Directors of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID)

Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc. (TDI)
Deafness Research Foundation (DRF)

State:

Hearing Loss Association of Rhode Island (HLA-RI)
Rhode Island Association of the Deaf (RIAD)
Rhode Island Chapter of the Alexander Graham Bell for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AGB-RI)
Rhode Island Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RIRID)



International Symbol of Deaf/Hard of Hearing

This symbol indicates individual(s) who is deaf, hard of hearing, or having **some degrees of hearing**



Closed Captioning (CC)

This symbol indicates a choice for whether or not to display captions for a television program, videotape, or DVD.. TV sets that have a built-in or a separate decoder are equipped to display dialogue for programs that are captioned when selected by the viewer. The Television Decoder Circuitry Act



Opened Captioning (OC)

This symbol indicates that captions, which translates dialogue and other sounds in print, are always displayed on the videotape, DVD, movie or television program. Open Captioning is preferred by many including deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals, and people whose second language is English. In addition, it is helpful in teaching children



Assistive Listening Systems

These systems transmit amplified sound via hearing aids, headsets or other devices. They include infrared, loop and FM systems. Portable systems may be available from the same audiovisual equipment suppliers that service conferences and meetings.



Telephone Typewriter (TTY)

This device is also known as a text telephone (TT), or telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD). TTY indicates a device used with the telephone for communication with and between deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired and/or hearing persons.



Sign Language Interpretation

The symbol indicates that Sign Language Interpretation is provided for a lecture, tour, film, performance, conference or other program.



Volume Control Telephone

This symbol indicates the location of telephones that have handsets with amplified sound and/or adjustable volume controls



Recognition

The RI CDHH Recognition 2005 Award –

Cardi's Furniture

The RI CDHH Recognition 2006 Award -

The "Save ASL" Committee of Brown University

Elaine Piccirilli, Allied School of Court Reporting

Cathleen Burnham, Allied School of Court Reporting



The RI CDHH Legislative 2006 Award -

Rhode Island House of Representative Robert Jacquard



Volunteers

The total of volunteer time for FY06 is 271 Hours

Here is the list of volunteers:

Janet Cepada – Rhode Island School for the Deaf, Providence, RI
Julianne D'Agostino - Bristol Community College, Fall River, Massachusetts
Cara Dalton - Bristol Community College, Fall River, Massachusetts
Ariel Cohen, Brown University, Providence, RI
Brandie Lee Gaudet - Bristol Community College, Fall River, Massachusetts
Jessica Hardy - Bristol Community College, Fall River, Massachusetts
Zachary Lewis - Bristol Community College, Fall River, Massachusetts
Laura Lund
Sandra Lygren
Michelle MacNevin – Bristol Community College, Fall River, Massachusetts
Diane Bromley, Community College of Rhode Island, Warwick, RI
Manny Martin, Staff of the Friends of the Rhode Island School for the Deaf
Saul Rivard, Brown University, Providence, RI
Clare Sullivan – Northeastern University Graduate, Boston, Massachusetts
Sarah Swett – Brown University, Providence, RI



Mission Statement:

To provide innovative leadership in public policy, advocacy, service delivery and accessibility throughout the Ocean State, RI CDHH ensures opportunities for each deaf and hard of hearing person to become an empowered, contributing citizen.

