

# NETAC networks

Providing technical assistance to professionals working with students who are deaf or hard of hearing in postsecondary settings

February 1999

## 1999 C-Print training schedule



Photo by Bob Eddy

Gemma Wilson (left), C-Print captionist from Catonsville Campus of The Community College of Baltimore County, provides C-Print services at a recent Vermont workshop.

February 22-26 - San Diego	C-Print captionist training
March 22-26 - Connecticut	C-Print captionist training
May 3-7 - New Jersey	C-Print captionist training
June 7-11 - Rochester, NY	Train-the-Trainer program for veteran C-Print captionists (by invitation only)
July 19-23 - Rochester, NY	C-Print captionist training
August 2-6 - Rochester, NY	C-Print captionist training
September (dates TBA) - Connecticut	C-Print captionist training



Photo by Bob Eddy

Pam Francis (left), C-Print project coordinator, and Lucy Fosling-Hobart, C-Print captionist from Northwestern Connecticut Community-Technical College, provide C-Print services at the Vermont workshop.

If you are interested in participating in any of these workshops or would like more information, please contact Pam Francis at 716-475-6019 (voice/TTY); 716-475-7660 (fax); PGGNCP@rit.edu (email); www.rit.edu/~netac (Web).

## New from PEPNet: moderated chats

The PEPNet Chat Series will begin this month. Details are still in the works, and information will be posted on both the PEPNet Web site ([www.pepnet.org](http://www.pepnet.org)) and the NETAC Web site ([www.rit.edu/~netac](http://www.rit.edu/~netac)) as it becomes available. Topics through June include:

Date:	Topic:	Moderator:
2/24/99	Interpreting issues in higher education	Gary Sanderson, Western Region Outreach Center and Consortia
4/28/99	Access issues for students who are deaf or hard of hearing	Pat Billies, NETAC
5/19/99	Special competencies for deafness specialists in higher education	Marcia Kolvitz, Postsecondary Education Consortium
6/16/99	Academic preparation for college students who are deaf or hard of hearing	Debra Wilcox Hsu, Midwest Center for Postsecondary Outreach

Don't miss the upcoming PEPNet teleconference:

## Funding Services for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students in Postsecondary Education: Policies and Practices that Work

Featuring panelists:  
Ms. Lindsey Antle, Dr. Robert Davila (facilitator),  
Mr. Raymond C. Olson, Dr. Dean VanTreas

Thursday, March 18, 1999  
Noon-2 p.m. EST

For more information contact NETAC:  
716-475-6433 voice/TTY  
716-475-7660 fax  
email: NETAC@rit.edu  
Web: www.rit.edu/~netac

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### NETAC Networks

is produced three times a year. Articles should be submitted to

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through email to

SADDHD@rit.edu,

or by fax to 716-475-7660.

All articles are subject to editing.

Comments and suggestions are always welcome!

## The Director's column

by Karen Hopkins



Looking back over the past 20 years, we've seen many positive changes in educational opportunities for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. As we look to the 21st century, it's exciting to know that NETAC and the other three regional centers will have an active role in further expanding and enhancing possibilities for deaf and hard-of-hearing students at the postsecondary level.

In October, we began year three of our grant and hit the ground running! Site coordinators gathered at the NETAC central office to fine tune their state plans for the upcoming year. We were abuzz with energy and ideas, the fruition of which you will see in every state in our region.

In November, Jeanne Kincaid wowed Vermont professionals through her presentation, *Taking off the kid gloves: tackling the disability barrier in higher education*. Maine gathered together secondary students, parents, postsecondary educators, and VR counselors for *Voyage to the Future*, a day and a half of workshops focusing on students' career goals and aspirations. New Hampshire trained C-Print captionists with the assistance of Pam Francis from the NETAC office, so indeed we had a busy month.

In December, Brenda McGill joined NETAC as the new Rhode Island site coordinator. Brenda has worked at Simmons College in Massachusetts and for the Massachusetts Department of Education as a learning disability specialist. We welcome

her, an energetic addition to the NETAC team.

Coming up in March is a national satellite broadcast on funding issues. Dr. Robert Davila will facilitate the discussion on sharing best practices from institutions across the U.S. The broadcast will be on March 18 at noon EST. Contact your state NETAC coordinator to register.

On April 15 and 16, NETAC is sponsoring a regional workshop entitled, *Teaching Mathematics to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students*. Look for details on page 4.

These are just a few of our past and upcoming events. You'll find even more as you read through this issue. We just printed *Teacher Tipsheets* on such topics as Interpreting, Working with Hard-of-Hearing Students, Working with Late-Deafened Students, Working with Deaf-Blind Students, C-Print Notetaking, Tutoring, Using Assistive Listening Devices, and National Resources. If any of these would be helpful to you, contact the NETAC office and we'll send you a supply to share on your campus. Our Web site is also a great source of information, including the most up-to-date news on national, regional, and state activities for professionals like you.

I hope you or a member of your staff will be able to join us for an upcoming event!

## NETAC offers internships

NETAC's Internship Program gives professionals an opportunity to develop their skills in a specific area and then directly apply this knowledge at their home institution. To be eligible, candidates should:

- be faculty, staff, or administrators in the NETAC region who want to enhance their professional skills and competencies in areas directly related to NETAC's goals (recruitment, retention, and graduation of deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals from postsecondary programs in the Northeast region)
- already possess basic knowledge and training in a particular field of professional activity and be able to demonstrate the potential for practically applying what they learn during their internship upon returning to their home institutions.

NETAC will pay travel expenses and provide a stipend for housing and meals. Internships can be completed at any institution in the Northeast. For more information or a copy of the internship application form, contact NETAC at 716-475-6433 (voice/TTY); 716-475-7660 (fax); NETAC@rit.edu (email); www.rit.edu/~netac (Web).

## Upcoming events by state\*

### CONNECTICUT

- “Funding Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students in Postsecondary Education: Policies and Practices that Work,” satellite broadcast, March 18, 1999, noon-2 p.m., Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven. A second site in eastern Connecticut TBA. For more information, contact Elaine Taylor, 860-738-6380 (voice/TTY) or through email at NW\_NETAC@commnet.edu.
- Training workshops that will include “Working Together: Deaf and Hearing People”; a panel of postsecondary deaf and hard-of-hearing students; and a demonstration of various technical support systems including C-print, CART, relay services, and assistive devices; spring semester, exact dates and locations TBA. For more information, contact Elaine Taylor.
- Northeast Regional ASL/ESL conference for postsecondary professionals, October 1999, Hartford. Exact dates and location TBA. For more information, contact Elaine Taylor.

### DELAWARE

- “Voyage to Your Future,” a career awareness program for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and their parents, spring 1999. Details TBA. For more information, contact Tracey Connolly, 302-761-8275 (voice); 302-761-8336 (TTY); or through email at tconnolly@dvr.state.de.us.
- “Working Together: Deaf and Hearing People,” fall 1999. Details TBA. For more information, contact Tracey Connolly.

### MARYLAND

- “Funding Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students in Postsecondary Education: Policies and Practices that Work,” satellite broadcast, March 18, 1999, noon-2 p.m. Locations TBA. For more information, contact Florence Cooney, Catonsville Campus of The Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC), 410-455-4369 (voice); 410-455-4553 (TTY); or through email at aafc@catmus.cat.cc.md.us.
- “Opening Doors—Accessibility and Accommodations for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students,” annual statewide conference sponsored by the Maryland State Steering Committee for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students, March 19, 1999, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Decker College Center, Western Maryland College, Westminster. Registration deadline February 19, 1999. Conference fee: \$45 (includes lunch). For more information, contact Louise Hansh, 301-694-1510.

### MASSACHUSETTS

- The Massachusetts NETAC office is collaborating with the Federal Interpreter Education Project at Northeastern University to provide training for interpreters and trainees working in or desiring to work in postsecondary environments. Scheduled events TBA. For more information, contact Jane Nunes, 978-556-3341 (voice/TTY), or through email at NETAC@nec.mass.edu.

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

- “Passport to the Future,” a career awareness program for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and their parents, April 9-10, 1999, NH Technical Institute, Concord. For more information, contact Cate Weir, 603-228-2084 (voice/TTY), or through email at cweir@cisunix.unh.edu.

### NEW JERSEY

- “Career Directions: Which Way to the Workplace,” a conference on transition to the workplace, March 5, 1999, New Law Center, Riders Lane, New Brunswick. Keynote speakers include Paul Gerber, learning disabilities specialist; John Lancaster, executive director of the President’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities; and Jo Anne Simon, an attorney specializing in issues related to persons with disabilities. Josie Durkow, Camden County College, and Beth Pincus, Bergen Community College, will be presenting a workshop, “Communication Access for Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened Adults in the Workplace.” For more information, contact Josie Durkow, 609-227-7200, x4506 (voice); 609-228-1897 (TTY); or through email at durkow@email.njin.net.
- “Let’s Talk Notetaking: A Team Approach,” sponsored by NJ NETAC, April 2, 1999, Brookedale Community College. For more information, contact Josie Durkow.

### PENNSYLVANIA

- “Working Toward Work,” a transition program for high school juniors, seniors, or recent graduates who are deaf or hard of hearing, presented by Ed Faver of the Lexington Center, Inc., June 20-25, 1999, Hiram G. Andrews Center, Johnstown. This program is a career exploration and job expectation workshop geared for students who most likely will not go to college, but who may attend a technical school or go directly to work. For more information, contact Ed Faver at 609-396-3433 (voice) or Lori Hutchison at 814-255-8275 (temporarily voice only) or through email at lorihut+@pitt.edu.
- “Make the Grade,” a mainstream transition program for college-bound students with any disability, June 1999, Greensburg Campus of the University of Pittsburgh. For more information, contact Marcie Roberts, 412-648-7890 (voice/TTY) or through email at mcrobt+@pitt.edu.
- “Make the Grade,” a NETAC-sponsored transition program for college-bound students who are deaf or hard of hearing, July 21-25, 1999, Ambler Campus of Temple University. For more information, contact Dorothy Cebula, 215-204-1280 (voice), 215-204-1786 (TTY), or through email at cebuladm@ym.temple.edu, or contact Marcie Roberts at the address above.
- Pennsylvania Educators of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (PESDHH) annual convocation, August 4-6, 1999. Additional details TBA. For more information, contact Anita Iurlano, 412-961-0294, ext. 221 (voice), or through email at iurlano@wisc.org.

### VERMONT

- “Voyage to Your Future,” a career awareness program for students who are deaf or hard of hearing and their parents, fall 1999. Details TBA. For more information, contact Rita Straubhaar, 802-985-3404 TTY, or through email at Rstraubh@aol.com.

\* *Updated information will be posted on the NETAC web site as it becomes available ([www.rit.edu/~netac](http://www.rit.edu/~netac)).*

# Get to know your friendly neighborhood Vocational Rehabilitation counselor for the deaf and hard of hearing

by Tracey Connolly

Did you know that every state vocational rehabilitation program has at least one rehabilitation counselor for the deaf and hard of hearing (RCDHH)? For postsecondary education programs that have limited experience with deaf and hard-of-hearing students, these counselors can provide a wealth of information.

I recently talked to some of the RCDHHs in my state and asked them how postsecondary education programs can best tap into their knowledge. Here are some of their suggestions:

Ask RCDHHs to participate in team meetings before classes start to discuss accommodations. The team may include the student, instructor(s), and others involved with the student such as notetakers and tutors. This is a great opportunity for participants to ask questions and for the student to express communication needs.

Ask RCDHHs to act as liaisons and to provide information as needed. If the student is struggling, or if instructors have questions during the course of a semester, have the student keep the RCDHH in the loop. He or she may be able to assist by providing services like counseling or assistance with transportation.



Tracey Connolly

Ask RCDHHs for general information on hearing loss or serving students who are deaf and hard of hearing. RCDHHs can often provide written materials or videotapes at no charge.

Ask RCDHHs to provide the incoming student's name and disability (with a release form signed by the student). Sometimes knowing upfront the student's disability and accommodations that have worked in the past will save a few steps. It may also ease the process needed to fund accommodations if the information is in writing.

Ask RCDHHs to provide referrals if they cannot answer your questions. When the RCDHH is unable to assist, he or she may know of resources such as the state coordinator of services for the deaf and hard of hearing, local and national organizations for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing, local sign language classes, and other agencies familiar with hearing loss.

Don't be afraid to call your local VR office to see if there are other ways to work together. VR and postsecondary programs have the same goal in mind: to successfully educate deaf and hard-of-hearing students so that they are prepared to lead productive lives.

*Tracey Connolly is the NETAC site coordinator for the state of Delaware.*

## NETAC to offer mathematics workshop

On April 15-16, 1999, NETAC will offer *Teaching Mathematics to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students*, a workshop designed for postsecondary mathematics teachers who work with students who are deaf and hard of hearing within the Northeastern U.S.

The workshop will be held at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, a college of Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, New York. There is no registration fee, and NETAC will pay for accommodations, travel costs, and meal stipends for two people from each state in the NETAC region. *Teaching Mathematics* emphasizes visual aspects that impact the teaching/learning process; use of math labs; alternative means of assessment; enhancing instruction utilizing groups; language/writing/communication in the content area; support services that strengthen instruction; math anxiety issues; and Deaf culture. Presentations will include NTID curriculum review; developmental mathematics: preparation for algebra; introductory and/or intermediate algebra courses; visual presentation of mathematics materials: trigonometry and composition of functions; preparation for statistics; designing major-specific math courses; research findings; and how calculators have changed mathematics instruction.

Registration forms are available from each state site coordinator. For more information, contact Pat Billies, NETAC project coordinator, 716-475-5980 (voice/TTY); 716-475-7660 (fax); PABNCA@rit.edu (email); www.rit.edu/~netac (Web). For content information, contact Vince Daniele, chairperson, NTID Science and Mathematics, 716-475-6744 (voice/TTY) or VADNTM@rit.edu (email).

## Photo Gallery



Photo by Kallie Fagan

Parents and students at Maine's "Voyage to the Future" career awareness workshop, November 1998 at the University of Southern Maine



Photo by Bob Eddy

Jeanne Kincaid at her workshop, "Taking off the kid gloves: Tackling the disability barrier in higher education," November 1998 at the Vermont Technical College

### "Primary consideration to the request..." What does *that* mean?

by Jane Jarrow

In the discussion surrounding the provision of "effective communications," Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) seems to impose a requirement on public entities that goes beyond those of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Specifically, the regulations state:

"§35.160 (b) (2) - In determining what type of auxiliary aid and service is necessary, a public entity shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individual with disabilities."

[Note that this same statement does *not* appear in Title III of the ADA, but there is specific reference to the necessity of providing "effective communications" - §36.303 (c).]

How does that translate to practice in providing sign language interpreters for students with disabilities in higher education?

1. Does the deaf individual have a right to say, "I want an ASL interpreter, not a Signed English interpreter?" (And is the institution obligated to provide an ASL interpreter on request?)
2. Does the deaf individual have a right to say, "I don't want John Doe as my interpreter because I cannot understand his signing and/or because he doesn't understand the subject matter well enough to interpret it for me?"
3. Does the deaf individual have a right to say, "I want Janet Jones as my interpreter?"

Answers: Yes, Yes, and a qualified No!!!

1. The individual *does* have a right to choose the format for the communication (in this case, ASL over Signed English). In fact, this subpart of the regulations would seem to be crafted to assure just that. If the individual is an ASL user, the information conveyed through a Signed English interpreter may be available, but not effective (sort of like making the chemistry lab accessible so that someone in a wheelchair can roll in the door, but having all the lab tables too high for the wheelchair user to participate). The rule of thumb is that unless the institution can show there is another comparably effective means of providing information to *this* deaf individual, the user's preference of format should be respected.
2. Can the deaf student reject a specific interpreter because that individual is not effective in communicating the information in a manner that *this* user can benefit from? Yes, within reason. If the interpreter is clearly not adequate to the task, then the deaf individual is certainly within his rights in saying, "This individual is unacceptable." But if it is an interpreter who works well and effectively for everyone else, and it is *only* this one student who refuses to work with the interpreter for reasons *other than* ease of communication, in my opinion the student is "pushing the envelope."
3. Does the deaf student have a right to insist on a given interpreter? No. The key word in this sentence is "right." Is it inappropriate for the deaf individual to request a specific interpreter if she has a preference for the signing style and fluency of that individual? Not at all. Is it inappropriate for the institution to do whatever it can to honor reasonable requests for providing a

specific interpreter? Certainly not. It only makes good sense to try to maximize the effectiveness of the communications one is providing. But the student does not have a "right" to the interpreter of choice. The student is conferred only the "right" to have the *type* of aid/service of choice.

We all know that logically. I don't think many service providers would seriously entertain a demand by a student that her mother, sibling, friend be hired—at your expense—to be an interpreter at your institution because the student feels more comfortable with someone she knows. Then why is it that service providers agonize over what to do when a deaf student says, "I won't work with anyone except Janet Jones." This gets especially sticky when Janet Jones is the interpreter-of-choice for two deaf students who are in classes meeting at the same time. Who gets their preference—and is there institutional liability for not being able to clone Janet?

Policies regarding provision of sign language interpreters should include reference to the fact that preference of the user for the mode of communication shall be given primary consideration. There should also be a clear statement to suggest that every effort will be made to honor student requests for specific assistance as possible/appropriate, but that the institution's focus is on assuring effective communication through whatever means are available.

*Jane Jarrow, Ph.D., is president of Disability Access Information and Support (DAIS). An expert in disability services, she has been providing technical assistance and training to service providers on access and support services for persons with disabilities in higher education and has co-authored or authored numerous books and articles in the field of disabilities in higher education over the past 16 years.*

### New publications from NETAC

NETAC now has Teacher Tipsheets available on the following topics:

- C-Print: A Notetaking System
- Interpreting
- The Role of Assistive Listening Devices in the Classroom
- Teaching Students Who Are Deaf-Blind
- Teaching Students Who Are Hard of Hearing
- Tutoring
- Working With Students Who Are Late-Deafened
- Resources (Resources cited in the Tipsheets)

Contact your state site coordinator or the NETAC office (716-475-6433 voice/TTY; 716-475-7660 fax; email: NETAC@rit.edu) for copies.

## Maximizing distance learning opportunities in Maine

by Barbara Keefe

Distance learning is not a new phenomenon nationally or internationally. Colleges and universities have focused attention in this area, with varying degrees of success, over a long period of time. What is new is the manner in which distance learning is delivered today and the diversity of those delivery systems. The implications of these new delivery systems are staggering for people with disabilities.



Barbara Keefe

New technology is ramping its way onto a highway that is global in scope. In the past two years American higher education has been given a "wake up" from the University of Phoenix, an institution with 48,000 degree-credit students at 57 learning centers in 12 states. Students are no longer bound by the campus-based courses in their states. Traditions of the past are changing rapidly.

In Maine and within the University of Maine System, students can access courses from a variety of locations other than "traditional college campuses." An interactive television (ITV) network connected to seven university campuses and 120 high school sites offers courses that students would not otherwise access on their own campuses. Courses are offered over a compressed video system within the university system as well as over asynchronous transfer mode (ATM), a new infrastructure being deployed throughout the state of Maine. One hundred fifty for-credit classes are accessed over Maine's telecommunications systems.

Distance learning changes the learning environment for students in a very dramatic way, and postsecondary institutions need to explore the accommodations necessary to meet the challenges of the distance learner with a disability.

As we build these new networks, we need to seize opportunities to maximize their accessibility for all students. To that end University of Maine System Network (UNET), in collaboration with NETAC, will:

1. provide a C-Print captionist for a philosophy class this January over the ITV network;
2. initiate a 10-month environmental access study of the ATM location and make recommendations on universal design for each site location;
3. sponsor a seminar in April on interpreting at a distance for all RID-certified interpreters; and
4. collaborate with the Telecommunications Relay Advisory Council and AT&T to demonstrate the use of video relay interpreting over the ATM network in May.

Federal law and institutional policies have prescribed the accommodations necessary to support a person with a disability since the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Educational institutions have developed procedures and safeguards to support the federal laws and provide guidance for students, faculty/staff, and administrators to support the learning needs of students with disabilities, but most of these policies

revolve around campus-based classes. As new distance learning possibilities emerge for students, postsecondary personnel must review their policies and work toward providing new support policies for students with disabilities. Distance learning changes the learning environment for students in a very dramatic way, and postsecondary institutions need to explore the accommodations necessary to meet the challenges of the distance learner with a disability. NETAC is helping to lead the way in Maine.

*Barbara Keefe is the NETAC site coordinator for the state of Maine.*

## Connecticut's distance learning project

by Elaine Taylor



Elaine Taylor

The Connecticut NETAC office at Northwestern Connecticut Community-Technical College (NCCC), in collaboration with Capital Community Technical College (CCTC) in Hartford, has begun the process of establishing the first distance learning course to use the newly installed Picture-Tel technology. Picture-Tel uses a compressed video technology that is broadcast over telephone lines, allowing people in two different locations to converse with one another with full access to

both audio and visual signals.

A developmental writing course using this new technology will be offered in the fall 1999 semester for deaf and hard-of-hearing students within Connecticut. The course requires two classrooms, one at CCTC and one at NCCC. Instruction will occur in the Hartford classroom and will be broadcast live to the NCCC classroom. Interpreters and technicians will be working in each classroom to provide full communication access for students and instructor and to ensure the smooth transmission of the signal over telephone lines. We at the Connecticut NETAC office are very excited about this project (and a tad nervous to be the first to use this technology) and want to express our sincere gratitude to the NETAC central office for their confidence in our work, to the NCCC administration for their support and encouragement in this project, and to CCTC for their willingness to venture into this new technical arena with us. Stay tuned for future details.

*Elaine Taylor is the NETAC site coordinator for the state of Connecticut.*

Five reports of the  
National Task Force on Quality of Services  
in the  
Postsecondary Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students  
are now available on our web site at  
[www.rit.edu/~netac](http://www.rit.edu/~netac).

Additional reports are in the works!

# Massachusetts' Northern Essex Community College

by Jane Nunes

Northern Essex Community College offers unique and comprehensive services to the largest population of students who are deaf or hard of hearing in the Commonwealth. Its innovative English Language Cluster Program is the only publicly funded program in the state serving this population and is taught in American Sign Language by a professor who is Deaf. Twenty hours of English instruction are offered in the areas of English structure, reading, and writing.



Jane Nunes

Through interpreting services, CART services, notetaking services, assistive listening technology, and the specialized English enhancement program, 40-50 students who are deaf or hard of hearing per semester access campus activities, programs, and events. Staffing includes a director, staff assistant, secretary, interpreter coordinator, and three staff interpreters.

More than 40 students annually enter Northern Essex's Deaf studies: sign language interpreter/American Sign Language academic

programs, addressing the increase in state-wide demand for interpreters and individuals fluent in American Sign Language.

Since 1980, Northern Essex has collaborated with Gallaudet University, through its Gallaudet University Regional Center, to bring the resources and expertise of the university to at least 4,000 individuals annually in New England and New York. Conferences, trainings, workshops, and technical assistance are provided in the areas of family involvement, literacy and transition, and transition to postsecondary educational programs/workplace.

As the Massachusetts site for NETAC, Northern Essex has worked with more than 100 postsecondary institutions serving students who are deaf or hard of hearing since receiving funding from Rochester Institute of Technology. Activities have included co-sponsoring the first annual Deaf Services/Technology Expo and a public forum series hosted with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission on funding services for students who are deaf or hard of hearing in postsecondary environments.

*Jane Nunes is the NETAC site coordinator for the state of Massachusetts.*

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## New Jersey and NETAC: Perfect Together

by Josie Durkow

Camden County College is the NETAC state site for New Jersey as well as the larger of two New Jersey Regional Centers for Collegiate Deaf Education funded by the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education. As a New Jersey Regional Center, the college is responsible for providing direct services and technical assistance.



Josie Durkow

The Centers for Collegiate Deaf Education were established in 1988 through the Special Needs Grant Program. The grant program originated from New Jersey legislation, the Higher Education Services for Visually Impaired, Auditorily Impaired and Learning Disabled Students Act in 1985. The New Jersey Commission on Higher Education administers this program.

Currently, there are eight Special Needs Regional Centers located throughout the state. Five centers provide direct assistance to students who have a learning disability. Two centers provide assistance to students who are deaf or hard of hearing: Camden County College in the southern part of the state and Bergen Community College in the northern part of the state. The latter center provides loans of adaptive equipment to New Jersey colleges to be used by special needs students. All eight centers provide technical assistance to New Jersey colleges and universities.

The direct service component at Camden County College, the MidAtlantic Postsecondary Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, provides a comprehensive program to 65 students who are deaf and hard of hearing from New Jersey and surrounding states. Services include developmental English classes for the deaf using English as a Second Language methodologies, counseling, interpreting, tutoring, notetaking, C-Print captioning, and assistive listening devices. Both developmental English and math classes are taught in American Sign Language.

Students can enroll in any of the college's degree or certificate programs for which they qualify. The New Jersey Commission on Higher Education, the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and Camden County College fund the Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Programs and services for the individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing do not end with the Center. The College houses the South Jersey Evaluation and Employment Services for the Deaf (SEED) program, which provides employment assistance to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Services include vocational evaluations, job readiness classes, job placement, and job retention assistance. Both students of the college and community members benefit from this service. SEED serves more than 130 individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing annually.

The technical assistance outreach component at Camden County College is enhanced by NETAC. The Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, along with the seven other regional centers, collaborate on statewide activities to provide technical assistance to New Jersey colleges.

NETAC enriches and expands the educational opportunities of students who are deaf and hard of hearing in New Jersey postsecondary programs. It enables technical assistance to be provided to not only colleges and universities, but also to vocational training and proprietary programs as appropriate. Camden County College's 10 years of experience serving students who are deaf and hard of hearing gives credibility to the technical assistance it provides. NETAC is the perfect compliment to a state that is already providing technical assistance to the higher education community.

*Josie Durkow is the NETAC site coordinator for the state of New Jersey.*

## Responsive teachers make a difference!

by Brenda Battat

Teachers can make a big difference in a student's comfort level using assistive technology in the classroom and ultimately in their academic success. For example, assuming the disability services office has arranged for an FM system for a hard-of-hearing student, that effort alone is not the total solution. It takes assertiveness and know-how to actually use the system and benefit from it fully, and that level of confidence can be greatly affected by the teacher's responsiveness.

Going to a class cold and asking a teacher to use a strange device when she is trying to get the class off to a good start is not a good idea. Ideally, the student would go to the teacher at the start of the semester to introduce himself and describe and demonstrate the system. This way the teacher knows the student and becomes familiar with the technology and what is expected of her. The teacher's reaction, negative or positive, will have a major impact on how and if the student uses the technology in the future.

A responsive faculty member makes a difference not only in the individual student's comfort level but also in setting the tone for the rest of the class. This is particularly important in interactive classes where it will be necessary for other students to use the microphone to ensure that the student with hearing loss can hear everyone's comments and questions in addition to the teacher's presentation. The teacher is the best person to orchestrate any access solutions in the classroom such as passing around the microphone. Therefore she should be thoroughly familiar with assistive technology, CART



Brenda Battat

services, interpreters, and notetakers and the "etiquette" surrounding their use, such as only one person speaking at a time when using an assistive listening device or speaking directly into a microphone and not waving it around for emphasis when speaking. Teachers should also know and use presentation skills that will enhance a student's ability to hear what's going on in the class. The NETAC office recently published a Teacher Tipsheet titled, *The Role of Assistive Listening Devices in the Classroom*, which provides additional information on the use of this technology.

A student with hearing loss is probably embarrassed at having to use accommodations in the classroom and at being singled out as different. Having a responsive teacher who is willing to understand and to use accessible presentation skills, thereby getting everyone else to understand and cooperate, goes a long way in enabling the student to feel confident and be able to fully participate in a class conducive to learning.

*Brenda Battat is Deputy Executive Director of Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc. (SHHH), a national educational organization of and for people who are hard of hearing. SHHH provides its educational offerings in a number of ways, including written materials such as the bimonthly magazine, **Hearing Loss: The Journal of Self Help for Hard of Hearing People**, other publications and videos, an annual convention, and participation in research activities. The address is: SHHH, 7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200, Bethesda, MD 20814; 301-657-2248 voice; 301-657-2249 TTY; 301-913-9413 fax; Web [www.shhh.org](http://www.shhh.org).*

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