



# **Arizona Commission**

for the deaf and the hard of hearing

2011 Fiscal Year Annual Report

July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2011



The Honorable Jan Brewer

Governor, State of Arizona

1700 W. Washington  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Governor Brewer:

In accordance with A.R.S. §36-1944, I am pleased to submit the 2011 Annual Report on behalf of the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing (ACDHH).

The ACDHH staff, with the leadership of Executive Director Sherri Collins, worked hard in the past year to achieve the overall goal of improving the quality of life for Arizona's deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and speech-impaired citizens. Numerous accomplishments are highlighted in this report.

On behalf of Arizona's more than 720,000 deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and speech-impaired citizens, I thank you for your strong support of the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Schneck". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Chris Schneck

ACDHH Chairperson

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## **About ACDHH**

The Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing (ACDHH) was established in 1977 to improve the quality of life for deaf and hard of hearing residents. ACDHH serves as a statewide information referral center for issues related to people with hearing loss, oversees the Arizona Relay Service, the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program and licenses American Sign Language Interpreters. The agency serves citizens who are deaf-blind and who have speech difficulties as well. The agency name was changed in 1985 to the Arizona Council for the Hearing Impaired, and in 2000 was again changed to its present name.

ACDHH aspires to be a national leader in communication access, support services and community empowerment throughout the state. ACDHH staff members serve as the statewide resource on issues concerning the deaf and the hard of hearing communities by:

- Providing information and referral
- Conducting training and outreach events
- Distributing telecommunications equipment
- Overseeing Arizona Relay Service
- Staying abreast of local, state and national trends
- Licensing American Sign Language Interpreters

Keeping the deaf and hard of hearing community and the general public informed and connected are key services at ACDHH. It is for this reason a weekly email newsletter, a comprehensive resource library, electronic news systems and agency social media outlets are provided. These resources keep the public well-informed on issues of importance.

Due to budget cuts the Commission was forced to end its weekly television talk show Community View that aired on AZ-TV and KUAT throughout Arizona. Community View, formerly known as "Sign Out" was the longest running show focusing on the issues of deafness and hearing loss in the nation! Previous programs are available at [www.acdhh.org](http://www.acdhh.org). 2011 marked the third year that the program has been discontinued.

### **Mission**

The purpose of the ACDHH is to ensure, in partnership with the public and private sectors, accessibility for the deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and *persons with speech difficulties* to improve their quality of life.

### **Vision**

The energetic and innovative ACDHH team aspires to be a national leader in the provision of communication access, support services and community empowerment throughout the Grand Canyon State.

### **Statute and Regulatory Requirements:**

#### **The ACDHH Statute:**

To remain at the forefront of service delivery for deaf and hard of hearing Arizonans, ACDHH continues to work towards its specific regulatory obligations:

The Commission shall act as a bureau of information to the deaf and the hard of hearing, state agencies and institutions providing services to the deaf and the hard of hearing, local agencies of government and other public or private community agencies and programs. In this capacity, the Commission shall:

- Inform the deaf and hard of hearing of the programs and activities of the Commission and other services available to them at all levels of government.
- Develop and foster a framework for consultation and cooperation with the rehabilitation services bureau of the Department of Economic Security and with all institutions represented on the Commission.
- Study issues relating to the deaf and the hard of hearing, review the administration and operation of various programs and make recommendations concerning these issues to the programs and to the agencies represented on the Commission
- Submit an annual report to the Governor and the legislature concerning its findings and recommendations.
- Review the problems of the deaf and the hard of hearing as they relate to the need for effective and appropriate auxiliary aids in public places.
- Maintain contractual compliance for Arizona Relay Service and enhance public awareness of relay service.
- Review and compile information on the development of acoustical technology for the hard of hearing and advocate the use of this technology if it deems appropriate.
- Make recommendations to state agencies, political subdivisions and institutions on how to meet the needs of the deaf and the hard of hearing.
- License American Sign Language Interpreters and certify teachers of American Sign Language.
- Make recommendations to the legislature regarding statutory changes needed to implement a statewide newborn child hearing loss screening program.
- Establish and administer a statewide program to purchase, repair and distribute telecommunication devices to residents of this state who are deaf, severely hearing or speech impaired.

## **2011 Fiscal Year General Highlights**

- The Commission reached more than one million individuals through print media, telephone contacts and email correspondence. Numerous newspapers around the state featured ACDHH, AZTEDP and AZRS in various sections of their publications. These articles were a result of staff providing trainings on deafness and hearing loss, educational seminars on telecommunication devices for the deaf and the hard of hearing, attendance at conference exhibits and serving as a resource to the media on issues impacting the deaf and hard of hearing community throughout the state.
- The Commission hosted the 2011 Visioning Conference around the state. These community forums were held in Prescott, Phoenix, and Tucson. Members of the deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind communities, services providers and family members were in attendance. The needs of the communities were documented and have been implemented into a strategic plan for improving equal access to public health, public safety, mental health and other public services. These events were well attended and well received.
- The Commission relocated offices from 1400 W. Washington Street to 100 N. 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The new office space allows easy access to services for citizens who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and speech-impaired. Some of the amenities for these citizens include several looped meeting spaces and offices, assistive listening devices; computer assisted real time transcription and advanced technology for accessing communication in meetings and enhancing communications with staff. The Commission is the one and only office where all aspects of communication access are fully available to these citizens.
- The Commission partnered with local, state and national organizations during the year to continue to improve services for the deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and speech disabled. Organizations included the Governor's Council on Aging, The Governor's Council for the Blind and Visually Impaired Deaf-Blind Subcommittee, Statewide Independent Living Council, The City of Phoenix, The City of Scottsdale, Adult Loss of Hearing Association (Tucson), Phoenix College, Coconino Community College, The National Association of the Deaf, The National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and many more.
- The Commission was granted permission to fill the Equipment and Inventory position vacancy in the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program. The position had been vacant for more than two years.
- The Commission provided training and education to 32,836 consumers, professionals and students during the year.

## **Information and Referral**

- The Commission provides a weekly E-News email distribution for sharing information with the community. The announcements range from community events, agency activities and special agency projects and much more. There are more than 2,300 subscribers for ACDHH E-news. The E-News replaced the agency newsletter Clear Channels. Prior to cancellation, 37,947 issues of Clear Channels were distributed.

- The Commission provided 245,282 Information and Referral contacts.

### **Interpreter Licensure**

- During this fiscal year, 293 American Sign Language interpreters were licensed. This includes initial licenses and renewals.
- A total of five complaints were filed.
- ACDHH is an approved National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf sponsor for continuing education units. As part of its interpreter recruitment campaign ACDHH partnered with the Arizona School for the Deaf and the Blind to sponsor a variety of educational workshops for interpreters in the K-12 settings. A total of 379 hours of training was provided with the support of ACDHH. While these interpreters are exempt from state licensure the Commission recognizes the benefit of educating all interpreters about licensure and its impact on quality services for consumers and professionals alike.

### **Arizona Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program**

- The Arizona Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program provided 900 telecommunication devices to citizens in need of TTYs, captioned telephones, amplified telephones or amplified telephones with accompanying large visual display.
- The AzTEDP was highlighted in approximately 12 media outlets
- 126 equipment demonstrations were provided
- The program maintained a 97% satisfaction rating

### **Arizona Relay Service (AZRS) General Highlights**

Hamilton Communications continues to provide excellent relay services. AZRS is funded by a surcharge on all Arizona ratepayers' landline telephone statements. The funds are administered by ACDHH.

Outreach and education activities were conducted to inform the general public about the Arizona Relay Service and to interact with relay users to obtain their input and feedback.

- AZRS completed 907,938 call minutes.
- AZRS maintained a 99.9% customer satisfaction rate for the year.

Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing

Fiscal Year 2011 Budget

Revenue: \$6, 475,134

Appropriation: \$3,768,000

Expenditures:

Personal Services/Employee Related Expenses \$877,199

AZRS (Relay) Contract \$1,512,726

AzTEDP (Equipment Distribution Program) \$113,199

Professional and Outside Services \$366,827

Other Operating Expenses \$371,426

Total \$3,241,377

### **Board of Commissioners**

The Board oversees the policymaking, budget planning, and strategic planning of ACDHH, in addition to evaluating the ongoing performance of the executive director. Each board member also acts as an advocate for ACDHH and the particular group they represent.

The ACDHH Board consists of 14 members appointed by the Governor to three-year terms. Of the representatives, four are deaf; four are hard of hearing; one is a parent of a deaf or hard of hearing child; one is a licensed sign language interpreter; one is a licensed hearing aid dispenser; one is a clinical audiologist; one is from the Department of Economic Security; one is from the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind in Tucson or the Phoenix Day School of the Deaf.

The Board meets four times a year, one of which serves as their annual retreat.

| <b><u>Name</u></b>      | <b><u>Position</u></b>                                      | <b><u>Term expiration</u></b> |
|-------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Jack Clevenger          | Hard of Hearing Representative                              | 8/27/2012                     |
| Roslyn R. Siebold       | Licensed Hearing Aid Dispenser Representative               | 8/27/2012                     |
| Vacant                  | Hard of Hearing Representative                              | 8/27/2011                     |
| Robert Hill             | ASDB/PDSD Representative                                    | 8/27/2010                     |
| Tom Muller, Au.D. CCC-A | Chairperson, Dispensing Clinical Audiologist Representative | 8/27/2012                     |
| Angel Manuel Ramos      | Vice Chair, Deaf Representative                             | 8/27/2011                     |
| Vacant                  | Department of Economic Security Representative              | 8/27/2011                     |
| Dawn Bolduc             | Vice Chair, Interpreter for the Deaf Representative         | 8/27/2011                     |
| Jeanne Hollabaugh       | Parent of a Deaf Child                                      | 8/27/2010                     |
| Vacant                  | Hard of Hearing Representative                              | 8/27/2009                     |

|                      |                                   |           |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| William Schafer      | Hard of Hearing<br>Representative | 8/27/2011 |
| Juliann Wasisco      | Deaf Representative               | 8/27/2011 |
| Debra Detwiler Jones | Deaf Representative               | 8/27/2011 |

**Commission Staff**

| <b><u>Name</u></b> | <b><u>Position</u></b>                  |
|--------------------|---|
| Sherril L. Collins | Executive Director                      |
| Carmen Green       | Deputy Director                         |
| Lynn Wakefield     | Business Manager                        |
| Bryanna Alton      | Administrative Assistant                |
| Beca Bailey        | Deaf Specialist                         |
| Emmett Hassen      | Licensing and Certification Coordinator |
| Christine Milano   | Equipment and Inventory Technician      |
| Vacant             | Special Projects Coordinator            |
| Vacant             | Telecommunications Project Specialist   |
| Vacant             | Public Relations Planner                |
| Belva Masaquaptewa | Administrative Assistant                |
| Michele Michaels   | Hard of Hearing Specialist              |
| Christi Smith      | Interpreter Coordinator                 |
| Vicki Thompson     | AzTEDP Planner                          |
| Melinda Villela    | Assistant/Executive Director            |