



# **Arizona Commission**

for the deaf and the hard of hearing

2013 Fiscal Year Annual Report  
July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2013

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 2013 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 persons with speech difficulties. Numerous accomplishments are highlighted in this report.

On behalf of Arizona's more than 704,000 Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf-Blind and persons with speech difficulties, 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, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

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 (AZRS), the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (AZTEDP) and licenses American Sign Language Interpreters. In addition, 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 Telecommunications Relay Service
- Staying abreast of local, state and national trends
- Licensing American Sign Language Interpreters
- Certifying American Sign Language Teachers

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, proactive media relations efforts and agency social media outlets are provided. These resources keep the public well-informed on issues of importance.

### **Mission**

The purpose of the ACDHH is to ensure, in partnership with the public and private sectors, accessibility for the deaf and the hard of hearing 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.

### **2013 Fiscal Year General Highlights**

- The Commission reached more than ten million individuals through print and online media, telephone contacts, email correspondence, Facebook, Twitter and the weekly E-news distribution. Numerous newspapers around the state featured ACDHH, AZTEDP and AZRS in various sections of their publications. These articles were a result of proactive media relations efforts to promote the staff's ongoing efforts to provide trainings on deafness and hearing loss, educational seminars on telecommunication devices for the deaf and the hard of hearing and conference exhibits.
- To commemorate the agency's 35th anniversary, the Commission hosted an event on Friday March 22. The event was very well attended. Individuals receiving advocate awards were Mrs. Jeanne Hollabaugh, Ms. Donna Leff, Mr Michael Trailer and Ms. Rose Daley Rooney. These advocates were recognized for their contributions to the deaf and hearing hard of hearing and their communities. Approximately 160 individuals participated in the event.
- The Commission completed a statewide healthcare providers' curriculum in 2012, and focused on education of healthcare professionals by the implementation of this curriculum in 2013. The goal of the curriculum is to train all healthcare providers in best

practices for providing equal access to effective communication for Arizonans who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, Deaf-Blind and citizens who have speech difficulties. Since its completion, the Commission has reached over 1,000 Arizona healthcare professionals.

- The Commission provided training and education to more than 20,000 consumers, professionals and students during the year. This number is more than previous years because of the addition of a second Deaf Specialist.
- The Commission partnered with Phoenix Community College to offer a mentorship program for interpreters desiring to increase their skills in a variety of areas. Participants represented those pre-certified to professionals wishing to enhance current skills with the assistance of a mentor. The Commission provided \$5,000 for this project. This statewide initiative drew participants and mentors from Phoenix, Yuma, Tucson, Flagstaff and Sierra Vista. Many participants were able to participate remotely via GoTo Meeting technology. There were 66 participants. An initial workshop was provided to 28 participants of the program. The workshop focused on the foundations of mentoring including establishing rapport and effective methods to discuss the work of interpreters. A total of five monthly sessions were held for the participants. Topics in the meetings included building successful relations, AZ interpreter licensure law, working as a team with certified deaf interpreters, the four agreements of interpreters and building a sustainable mentoring program. Final evaluations indicated that the program was successful. Plans are underway with Arizona Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf to develop an ongoing mentoring program.

### **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 almost 2,000 subscribers for ACDHH E-news! The E-News distribution total 72,727 contacts during FY '13.
- The Commission provided 288,272 Information and Referral contacts.
- Website visits totaled 82,149.

### **Interpreter Licensure**

- During this FY 2013 the total number of American Sign Language licensed interpreters reached 414.
- A total of five complaints were filed.

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

- The Arizona Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program provided 951 telecommunication devices to citizens in need of TTYs, captioned telephones, amplified telephones or amplified telephones with accompanying large visual display.
- 118 equipment demonstrations were provided.
- The program maintained a 98% satisfaction rating.

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

AT&T provided excellent Arizona Relay Services through June 30, 2013. 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 1,102,563 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 2013 Budget**

Revenue:	\$4,587,730
Appropriation:	\$3,749,000
Expenditures:	
Personal Services/Employee Related Expenses	\$1,065,398
AZRS (Rely) Contract	\$1,350,082
AzTEDP (Equipment Distribution Program)	\$94,102
Professional and Outside Services	\$209,357
Other Operating Expenses	\$516,414
Total	\$3,235,353

## 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 parent of a deaf or hard of hearing child; one Arizona licensed american sign language interpreter, one licensed hearing aid dispenser; one clinical audiologist; one representative from the Department of Economic Security; one representative 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 retreat.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Term expiration</u>
Chris Schneck	Chairperson Hard of Hearing Representative	8/27/2015 Reappointed
Sherry Appleby	Secretary Hard of Hearing Representative	8/27/2014
Elizabeth Booth	Hard of Hearing Representative	8/27/2015
David Curry	Deaf Representative	8/27/2014
Tina Duresky	Deaf Representative	8/27/2014
Robert Hill	ASDB/PDSD Representative	8/27/2013
Robert Kirschbaum	Hard of Hearing Representative	8/27/2014
Sue Kay Kneifel	Department of Economic Security Representative	8/27/2014
Tom Muller, Au.D. CCC-A	Dispensing Clinical Audiologist Representative	8/27/2012
Kathy Roadlander	Parent of a Deaf Child	8/27/2016 Reappointed
Roslyn R. Siebold	Licensed Hearing Aid Dispenser Representative	8/27/2012
Maureen Sydnor	Deaf Representative	8/27/2014
Juliann Wasisco	Deaf Representative	8/27/2014
Vacant	Interpreter for the Deaf Representative	8/26/2014

**Commission Staff**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Position</u></b>
Sherri L. Collins	Executive Director
Carmen Green	Deputy Director
Lynn Wakefield	Business Manager
Curtis Humphries	Assistant Business Manager
Beca Bailey	Deaf Specialist
Bryanna Browder	Special Projects Coordinator
Shari Burda	Information & Referral Coordinator
Sean Furman	Deaf Specialist
Giselle Galindo	Accounts Payable Technician
Emmett Hassen	Licensing and Certification Coordinator
Christine Milano	Equipment and Inventory Technician
Michele Michaels	Hard of Hearing Specialist
Christi Smith	Interpreter Coordinator
Melinda Villela	Assistant/Executive Director
Vacant	Telecommunications Project Specialist
Vacant	Public Relations Planner