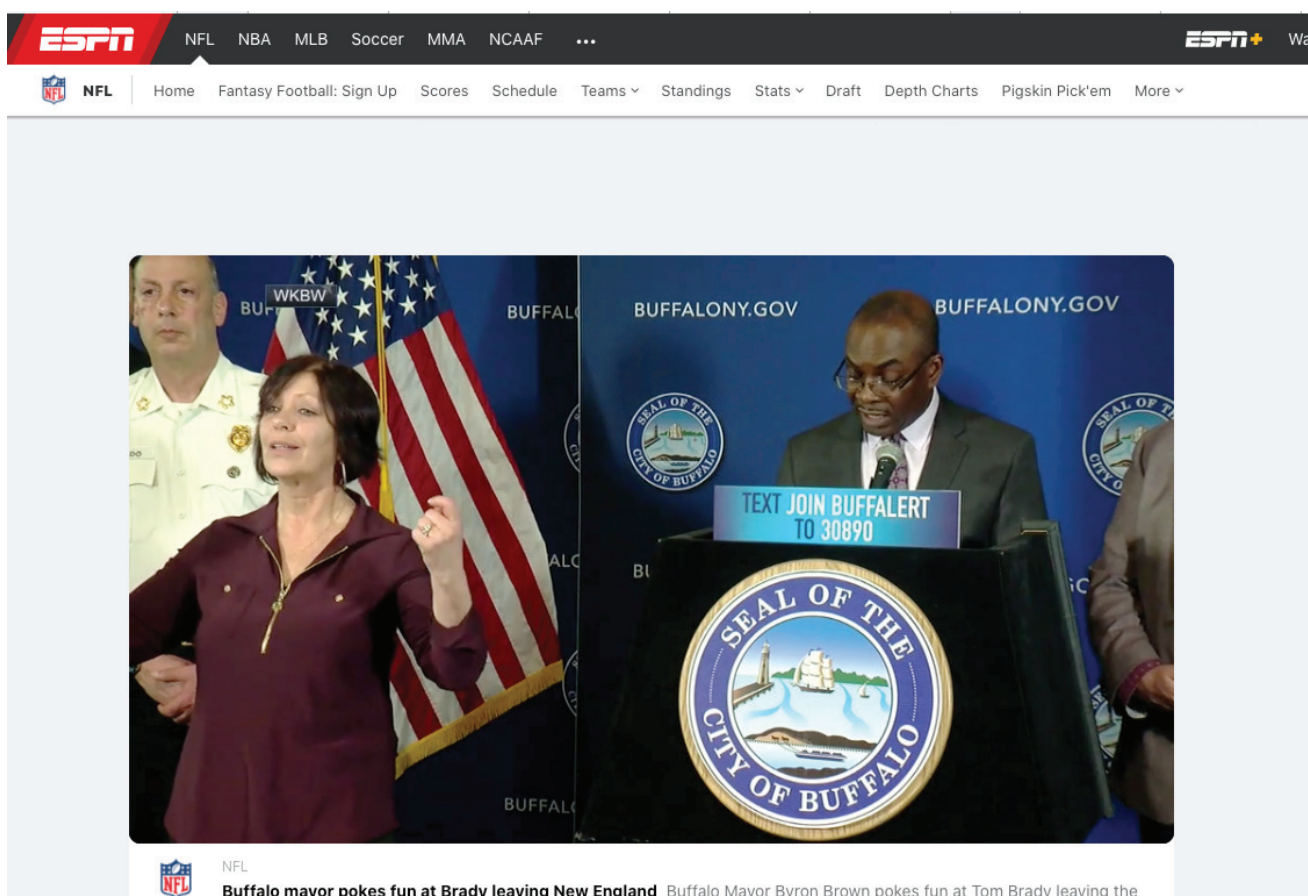




Deaf Access Services responds to the interests of Deaf and hard of hearing people by promoting communication access, awareness and opportunities in the greater community.

Deaf Access Services' Interpreter Lands on ESPN!



Our long time local interpreter, Karen Gambino, was interpreting for Mayor Brown's Press conference on March 17, 2020. Mayor Brown was

sharing the good news that Tom Brady had left the New England Patriots for Tampa Bay. This was aired on ESPN and Karen made the cut!

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Message from the Director

Dear Friends,



As we come upon our seventh month working remotely, I would like to recognize our team, our Deaf Access Services (DAS) family, for maintaining close connections with each other and the community we serve. We value and support our team, and it is with great pride that I recognize their dedication to the community and to our purpose, which has allowed us to continue to do good work.

Staff has been busy providing services to clients, advocating for the rights of Deaf and hard of hearing people to access critical news updates, supporting our wonderful interpreters, educating law enforcement and developing critical partnerships, which have enabled us to expand our services. Pam, our executive director, continues to be a support to DAS and is a liaison to People Inc. as an associate vice president.

With the health of our community a priority, we will be unable to host our annual fundraiser dinner. Our hope is that in 2021, we will be able to resume in-person

gatherings, raise money for DAS and celebrate seeing each other again. In the meantime, we will be fundraising virtually for 2020. I encourage you to consider the important and necessary services our DAS team provides for and on behalf of the Deaf and hard of hearing community, donate to support these, and ask your friends to join you. We need you more than ever!

Coronavirus has taken the world by surprise, but we have not let it slow us down. We continue to make great strides throughout Western New York, the state and the country to support and serve the Deaf and hard of hearing community.

On behalf of our staff, our Deaf Advisory Council, and the staff at People Inc., I thank you and wish you continued health.



Jodie Chibi,
Director, Deaf Access Services

Community Partnerships:

Deaf Access Services Partners with Amherst Police Department and Central Police Services

Erie County Central Police Services, together with Amherst Police Department, Deaf Access Services and the Niagara University First Responder Disability Awareness Program (NUFRDAT), are piloting the deployment of Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) services on mobile devices.

As part of this project, DAS and NUFRDAT provided training for 154 officers. The training, completed in February, familiarized officers with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community, the challenges faced when communicating with law enforcement, and the use of and best practices for VRI.

This project is the first of its kind in Western New York, and we are excited to see this roll out to other agencies in order to improve communication between law enforcement and the Deaf and hard of hearing community.



Photo Credit: Amherst Police

Pictured Left to Right: Chief John Askey, Amherst Police; David Wantuck, Deaf Access Services, Community Engagement Specialist; Pamela Kefi, Deaf Access Services, Executive Director; Mark Polencarz, Erie County Executive; Jim Jancewitz, Central Police Services, Commissioner; Frank Cammaratta, Erie County Office for the Disabled, Director; Dave Whalen, Niagara University First Responder Training

Convo Relay Services Extends a Hand to the Deaf Community in Buffalo

During the beginning stages of the “stay at home” orders, we saw the establishment of facilities and designated hospital quarantine areas for patients who have tested positive for the Coronavirus. In addition, hospitals and other care facilities prohibited family and friends from visiting their loved ones.

For the Deaf community, this had the potential to be very challenging. Without access to accommodations and communication tools such as video phones, readily available to a person at home, Deaf people in these facilities have no way to communicate with staff, family or friends.

In response to this, Deaf Access Services reached out to VRS providers; and CONVO extended a hand to support the Buffalo area. CONVO provided five tablets, each enabled with a VRS number. These tablets are being loaned out to medical facilities, Erie County, and Deaf and hard of hearing people who are isolated due

to Coronavirus.

Deaf Access Services added apps on these devices to provide access to transcription and to Video Remote Interpreting services, to help improve access to these services and thus improve communication with medical personnel.

Deaf Access Services would like to thank CONVO for their ongoing support.

If you know someone who could benefit from access to these devices, please have them contact our offices for more information.

Clear Mask and Communication Access

Access to communication is a common issue being faced by people who experience hearing loss, rely on visual cues and need access to viewing the mouth area.

Deaf Access Services has been working on this issue prior to COVID, and seeking the best solution. We are excited to be working closely with the Erie County Department of Health, Erie County Office for the Disabled and People Inc. to address the shortage of clear front masks since early March. Though we have been able to secure some masks, there are not enough to cover the need due to production shortages and back-ordered product.

Together, we have worked with various companies and interpreters to create and test prototype masks, with the goal of producing masks for distribution to the service providers that need them.

Through People Inc.'s efforts, we received notice in late August that a grant was provided for the production of 5,000 clear front masks, bringing the costs down considerably for any professional or organization seeking masks. More information will be available as it is received.



In the meantime, we continue to work with Erie County to increase the inventory of clear front masks so that these can be provided to those who need them most.

DAS thanks Erie County Department of Health and Erie County Office for the Disabled for their ongoing support and recognition of the importance of the masks for communication. In addition, we thank People Inc. for their support and making this project come to fruition.

Local Interpreters in the Spotlight

With the ever-changing situation we face during this global pandemic, access to information and updates are more critical than ever. Unfortunately, communication access for the Deaf and hard of hearing has not historically been given much consideration, especially when preparing for announcements and press briefings.

We want to thank each and every representative of government, local and state, who have provided access to interpreters at the time of their press events for the community. The recognition of the need for interpreters, and the provision of them during these important updates, has helped the Deaf and hard of hearing community tremendously by keeping them informed and up-to-date.

Deaf Access Services is proud to be supporting several counties to ensure qualified interpreters are provided during daily and weekly press conferences.

Our interpreters have made regular appearances on these televised press conferences.

In addition to the very public press conferences, our interpreters have continued to provide services across Western New York for all interpreting needs during this crisis. We thank them for their dedication and support of the community.



DAS Recognized for Providing Services Around the Country

Deaf Access Services has been very involved in advocacy and supporting the community for many years. This year we have been recognized outside of the Buffalo, and New York state regions for the work that we do.

News agencies and representatives from as far as California have contacted us recently about our advocacy for the community and access to communication – addressing the barrier that cloth front masks present.

In July, California-based news blogger Gregg Parker recognized Deaf Access Services as one of five organizations providing helpful services to people with disabilities.

“From developmental disabilities to lost limbs to Deafness, there are a number of disabilities that affect people around the world.

With the right tools and a society that is willing to accommodate them and accept them as they are, people with disabilities can reach their full potential

and lead fulfilling lives. The organizations listed here work to offer helpful services like interpreters, prosthetics, and educational opportunities.”

Other recognized agencies were Horizons, Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence, Range of Motion Project and Visions Global Empowerment.

It is an honor to be among those recognized for doing great work!



Events and Support!

Buffalo Themed T-Shirt Sales

In collaboration with 26 Shirts, a local t-shirt business, Deaf Access Services designed some Buffalo-inspired screen printed shirts that feature “BFLO” finger-spelled across the front. These were sold September 18 through October 4.

Thank you to 26 Shirts for this opportunity and to everyone that purchased a shirt. Through your support, we were able to raise \$3,900!



Open Caption Events at Transit Drive-In

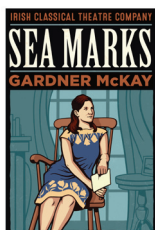


Transit Drive-In theatre hosted its first open captioning event on September 27. It was a success and they are offering additional monthly dates for the community.

Please check our Facebook page for additional information as it becomes available. We hope to see you there!

Irish Classical Theatre Presents — Sea Marks (Interpreted and Captioned)

In partnership with Irish Classical Theatre, Deaf Access Services was excited to provide interpreting services for the performance of their production of “Sea Marks.” We’re so proud to have worked together on this project.



The effectiveness of using soap to wash our hands:

Soap is made up of two-sided molecules. One side is attracted to water; the other side is attracted to fat. Viruses are made up of material surrounded by a coating of proteins and fat. When viruses interact with soap, that fat coating gets ripped out by the soap molecules. Soap literally demolishes viruses.

Source: Vox.com



Staff Recognition

DAS Welcomes AmeriCorps Members

Deaf Access Services, an affiliate of People Inc., is proud to have the opportunity to welcome AmeriCorps members to its team through the People Inc. ETHOS Program. ETHOS is Empowerment Through Helping Others Succeed and the program is accepting applications through AmeriCorps, a national program connecting people and organizations committed to using national service to address community needs.

We presently have five AmeriCorps members and we continue to grow. Each member position at DAS is contributing to the work we do to make Western New York a more accessible and welcoming community for the Deaf and hard of hearing.



Yann Spindler, Deaf Community Services Assistant (DCSA) – 2nd Year

As a Deaf team member, Yann provides direct support with the Deaf Refugee Program and with Grassroots Gardens as a liaison. In addition, Yann spends his time assisting our Community Engagement Specialist with event planning and content for social media.



Ben Wenzel, Program Outreach and Support Assistant (1st Year).

As a Deaf team member, Ben provides outreach for the Career Pathways Program and supports the active clients. Additionally, he supports our marketing efforts for our programs and services through collaboration with various departments.



Brynn Brewington, Deaf Employment Services Assistant (DESA) – 1st Year

Brynn provides administrative support on the implementation of our new Career Pathways Program (ACCES-VR). She has played a key role in developing a program manual and staff guide for service implementation, developing job club curriculum, and representing DAS at partner meetings.



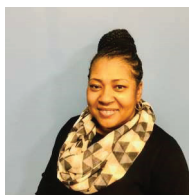
Teresa Baumgartner, Client Support and Advocacy Assistant (1st Year).

As a Deaf team member, Teresa provides direct services on behalf of the Career Pathways Program for active clients. In addition, Teresa is involved with advocacy for the community and is participating in various special projects at DAS.

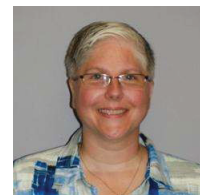


Katelyn Koester, Education Services Assistant (ESA) – 1st Year

As a Deaf team member, Katelyn provides support for the ASL program coordinator and the DAS education-related initiatives. She is involved with curriculum development, supporting the students and teachers during community education sessions, and the expansion of our educational programs and training.



Stacey Allen



Andrea Russel

Team Anniversaries

Stacey Allen and Andrea Russell have both celebrated their seventh year on the Deaf Access Services team in 2020! We couldn't be happier to have you both with us. We are grateful for all you do, thank you for being a part of the DAS family!

Welcome & Congratulations

Want to learn ASL?

You can contact us: Mary.Mullen@wnydas.org, our ASL coordinator, and we can help you get set up for ASL Classes or a private one-on-one session! You can also call Mary at: [716.833.1637](tel:716.833.1637), ext. 101

Deaf Access Services provides access to:

- Employment/Career Pathways
- Student Transition
- Interpreting and CART Services Interpreter
- Community Support Services
- Deaf Refugees Services

- ASL Class and Outreach
- Captioning Services and More!

For more information or support, contact our offices by emailing sallen@wnydas.org or call [716.833.1637](tel:716.833.1637).

David Wantuck Honored as one of Buffalo Business First 30 Under 30



The Business First 30 Under 30 honorees include both entrepreneurs and employees at some of Western New York's largest institutions. Among the factors considered for the ninth annual award program – career achievements, leadership and initiative, community engagement and each nominee's potential to become a community leader on a grand scale.

Deaf Access Services is proud to announce that David Wantuck has won the 30 Under 30 Award from Buffalo Business First.

David, your work to advocate and bring awareness to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community is just one way that you are leading and will continue to make a positive impact on the community at large. On behalf of the staff at DAS and People Inc. congratulations! Keep up the excellent work you do every day!

People Inc. News Affordable Apartments Now Accepting Applications



People Inc. Senior Living is for independent, older adults age 62 and up who are income-eligible. Applications are being accepted for its 19 locations throughout Western New York, including Amherst, Angola, Blasdell, Clarence, Grand Island, Lackawanna, Lockport (border of Amherst), South Buffalo, Springville and Wheatfield

(border of North Tonawanda).

Academy Place Senior Apartments in Gowanda, managed by People Inc., is accepting applications for one and two-bedroom apartments, ideal for older adults. Located at 1 School Street in Gowanda, Academy Place Senior Apartments is a HUD Section 202 Affordable Housing and NYS Tax Credit complex. For more information about People Inc. Senior Living and Academy Place Apartments, call 716.817.9090.

Applications are also being accepted for the new People Inc. Grant Street Apartments, offering one

and two-bedroom units. Located at 25 Grant Street in North Tonawanda, the apartments are for people who are head of household and 18 years or older, who meet income eligibility.

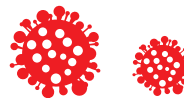
Amenities include: Kitchen with refrigerator, stove and dishwasher; water and garbage removal included; on-site laundry facilities; safety features; air conditioning and on-site management. Tenants may have one small pet. Rent subsidies and/or rental vouchers accepted. Some apartments are designed for people who have mobility and vision challenges or who are Deaf/hard of hearing. Tours available by appointment.

For more information or to schedule a tour, contact housing@people-inc.org or call 716.693.4249.



TRI-MAIN CENTER
2495 Main St., Ste. 446
Buffalo, NY 14214

Tips to keep you and your family safe and healthy



Important facts to help prevent the spread of illness, including COVID-19:

- Cleaning visibly dirty surfaces, followed by disinfection, is a best practice for prevention of COVID-19 and other viral respiratory illnesses in households and community settings. For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
- In addition to taking everyday steps to prevent COVID-19, keeping space between you and others is one of the best ways we have to avoid being exposed to this virus AND slowing its spread – we must stay attentive, especially since our local regions, and areas across the country, are continuing the reopening process.
- Wear your face covering correctly: Wash your hands before putting on your face covering; put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin; try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face and make sure you can breathe easily.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others. You could spread COVID-19 to others, even if you do not feel sick. Everyone should wear a cloth face cover when they have to go out in public, for example to the grocery store or to pick up other necessities. The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people, in case you are infected. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

DEAF ACCESS SERVICES

Video Phone: 716.335.9192 • Phone: 716.833.1637 • wnydas.org
TO REQUEST INTERPRETING SERVICES • 716.535.1603