

Community Spotlight Meegan Wolfe



Introduction

Hello! My name is Meegan Wolfe I am the new Teacher of the Deaf representative on the West Virginia Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. I reside in Putnam County with my husband Parker, and our two daughters, Mia and Danica. My greatest joy stems from my involvement in my church's children's ministry.

Academic, and/or Professional Background

I earned my bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, K-6, from West Virginia State University and began my career as a third-grade teacher and math interventionist within Kanawha County Schools. Shortly after completing my master's degree in Deaf Education at Marshall University, I took on the role of Teacher of the Deaf at Shoals Elementary, Kanawha County's specialized magnet school for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students. I currently serve as the Lead Teacher of the Deaf for Kanawha County Schools.

What motivated you to become involved with the WVCDHH, and how have your experiences on the board impacted your views on advocacy for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Community?

Passionate about advocacy, I believe it is essential to represent my students' needs. I am committed to educating others about hearing loss and finding better ways to serve students affected by it.

My vision includes creating statewide changes to enhance support for families.

What initiatives or projects are you most proud of contributing to during your time on the board, or in your professional capacity, and how have they made a difference for individuals in West Virginia's Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community?

To promote awareness, I hosted a family night at Shoals Elementary, where families learned how to read audiograms, understood what hearing loss sounds like, and discovered insights about their children's hearing loss. Various organizations participated to share their roles and encourage family and student involvement. Additionally, the commission invited Shoals Elementary to perform the national anthem at the Deaf Awareness Dirty Birds game, providing tickets and meal vouchers to the community. This event drew a significant crowd, showcasing support for the Deaf community.

I aspire to see increased awareness, understanding, and support for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing children in West Virginia and feel strongly that early intervention is key to success.

Do you have a favorite inspirational quote you would like to share?

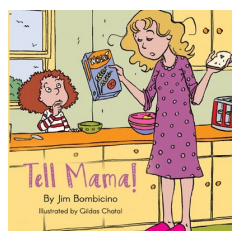
"You can always, always give something, even if it is only kindness!" – Anne Frank.



Tell Mama!

Jim Bombicino (Author)
Gildas Chatal (Illustrator)

Tell Mama! was written to encourage our youngest language learners to be spontaneous and express themselves. This is particularly important for a child with hearing loss who is adjusting to new hearing aids. So have fun communicating, and feel free to say, sign, or sing the refrain: "Tell your mama!"



Media



The Butterfly Cage

Rachel Zemach (Author)

This mesmerizing, funny, and disruptive narrative invites you to be a fly on the wall in a Deaf classroom at a hearing school, experiencing the immense frustration, unbridled joy, and indelible humor that arise for Deaf adults and children in a hearing environment.





Post-secondary Transition Planning



Post-secondary transition refers to the journey that all students experience as they move from high school to the next phase of their lives. Effective and timely transition planning is vital for deaf students who often encounter unique educational and life challenges resulting from their hearing loss, such as communication barriers, inadequate accommodations, and both intentional and unintentional discrimination, all of which can hinder their success.

A strong transition plan should:

- ✓ Start no later than 14 years of age,
- ✓ Be articulated in an Individual Transition Plan (ITP),
- ✓ Work in tandem with the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP),
- ✓ Be based on assessments that identify the student's strengths, abilities, and desires,
- ✓ Be developed using a team process; engaging teachers, parents/guardians, and other service providers,
- ✓ Detail the "who" and the "how" for all transition activities, and;
- ✓ Include measurable goals and timelines for monitoring progress.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) require the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and local education agencies (LEA) to work in partnership and collaboration to plan and facilitate the following transition activities:

Job Exploration Counseling



- Explore career options and identify career pathways of interest.
- Uncover vocational interests using inventories.
- Learn about skills needed in the workplace and for specific jobs.
- Understand the labor market, including in-demand industries and occupations.
- Learn about non-traditional employment options.

Workplace Readiness Training



- Financial literacy
- Orientation and mobility skills
- Job-seeking skills
- Understanding employer expectations for punctuality and performance

Work Based Learning



- Develop work skills through participation in paid and nonpaid work experiences in community-integrated employment.
- Apply classroom knowledge to the workplace.
- Gain a greater understanding of the soft skills important to success in the workplace.
- Learn from people currently practicing in the occupations and careers of interest to the student.

Instruction on Self Advocacy



- Knowledge of self
- Knowledge of rights and responsibilities
- Communication skills
- Leadership skills

"A truly successful transition process is the result of comprehensive team planning that is driven by the dreams, desires and abilities of youth. A transition plan provides the basic structure for preparing an individual to live, work and play in the community, as fully and independently as possible."

Parent Tips for Transition Planning, PACER Center

Counseling on Post-secondary Opportunities



- Community Colleges (AA/AS degrees, certificate programs and classes)
- Universities (Public and Private)
- Career pathways related to workshops and training programs
- Trade/Technical Schools
- Military
- Post-secondary programs at community colleges and Universities for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Please scan the QR code to access the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) Transition Guide.



To access additional transition resources on the WVDE website, please scan the QR code and scroll down to the Secondary Transition section of the page.

Please scan the QR Code to access the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services website.



>>> Things to Do <<<



WEST VIRGINIA HANDS & VOICES

Family Fun Virtual Events

January 14th, 6:00 PM

Make your own snowman

February 4th, 6:00 PM

Make your own Valentine

To reserve your spot, please scan the QR Code

OR



register online at: <https://forms.gle/yxEzzGCGH7p8GFCp8>



WEST VIRGINIA DEAF SERVICE CENTER (WVDC)

Deaf Coffee Chat

ASL activities, games, Deaf culture, and More!
All ages welcome

Charleston 912 Young Street, Charleston, WV 25301

Friday, December 20, 2024, 5:30-8:30 PM

www.wvdeafservicecenter.org



>>> Training and Information Presentations <<<

BOSTON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Otolaryngology and Communication Enhancement
Family Education and Advocacy Team



Transitioning to High School: Support and Tips for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students and Their Families
Tuesday, January 14, 2025, 6:30-8:00 PM via Zoom

Presenters Charlotte Mullen, AuD, and Susan Gibbons, AuD, will talk about academic, social, and extracurricular differences between middle school and high school, helpful strategies for acclimation, and preparations before and during the transition process for the student.

E-mail Susan at susan.gibbons@childrens.harvard.edu or Charlotte at charlotte.mullen@childrens.harvard.edu for the Zoom link. You may join with video or audio. ASL interpretation has been requested.

FRESNO STATE

College of Health and Human Services
13th Annual Lecture in The Silent Garden
Virtual Presentations on:



58-IN-MIND: Multilingual Teaching Strategies for Diverse Deaf Students

Saturday, February 22, 2025, 8:00 AM-4:00 PM (PST)

Featuring keynote presentations by a team of selected researchers and P-12 Teachers.

Registration is free, however, 0.5 CEUs will be offered for \$35 through RID, BEI, or Fresno State (Generic).

To learn more or register for this presentation, please scan the QR Code



Do you know of a deaf-friendly or deaf-owned shop, restaurant, business, agency, etc. you would like highlighted in our newsletter?

OR

Have you experienced a situation where you were not provided access to activities, services, or programs as defined by the ADA?



if so, we want to hear from you!



Please scan the QR code and let us know!

Please email newsletter questions, concerns, and suggestions to Gwen.L.Bryant@wv.gov



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