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NATIONAL DISABILITY INSTITUTE

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CULTURAL COMPETENCY WITH DC MAYOR’S

OFFICE OF DEAF, DEAFBLIND & HARD OF HEARING

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>> LEXI JONES: Hello. Welcome, everyone.

(Recording in progress)

>> RUTH CHAVEZ: Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to today's Webinar on Cultural Competency with the DC Mayor’s Office of Deaf, DeafBlind & Hard of Hearing. We will ‑‑ before getting started with the Webinar for today, we will go over a little bit of housekeeping slides. The audio for today's meeting can be accessed using computer audio or by calling in by phone. If you select computer audio, please make sure your speakers are turned on on your headphones and plugged in. You can dial in to (317)158‑5292. The meeting code is 81769670578.

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If your question is not answered, you are listening by phone or are unable to use the Chat Box, please email AJones@NDI‑inc.org.

With what, I would like to introduce you to Kisha and Kari who would will be going over Cultural Competency with DC Mayor’s Office of Deaf, DeafBlind & Hard of Hearing today. Thank you so much for being with us here today.

(Silence ‑ Deaf Signing Conversation)

>> KAREN QUINONES: Hello, everyone. How did that feel just now? Opening up a Webinar with just Sign Language and no audio. Can you go back in the slide deck one slide, please? Thank you.

We typically will start our Cultural Competency trainings with only Sign Language, and no voice interpretation. Often our participants are hearing and don't know Sign Language, so, often they will interrupt our introduction in Sign Language and say hey, we don't hear anything, or looking at each other in the audience, wondering what is going on.

People often feel lost, confused, not quite sure what is happening, feel a little isolated in the Webinar, and that is intentional. We do this to show the everyday experiences of Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing people. We do not have full Communication Access in any space or environment in our daily life. This is a very impactful experience, and hopefully it gave you a sense of what we deal with every day and the importance of making sure we keep accessibility and inclusivity top‑of‑mind every day.

This is what you do with the National Disability Institute, so we want to thank you all for inviting us here today.

Even though I am not able to see the participants, because your videos are not on, this is our first virtual Webinar.

Typically, we do this Webinar in‑person, so please bear with us if there are snafus, since this is our first time virtually.

I want to introduce myself. My name is Karen. I am the Deputy Director of the Mayor's office. Kisha, over to you.

>> KISHA GORE: Thank you so much, everyone, for attending the Cultural Competency training. We are looking forward to a great training for you. I am Kisha Gore, Chief of Staff at the Office of Deaf, DeafBlind & Hard of Hearing. I am a female with brown skin, hair and braided ponytail, earrings and a green t‑shirt because on Wednesday we wear our green polos to represent the DC government, and I have a green and white t‑shirt that says "We are DC," and a black blazer with a gold pin. Thank you so much, everyone, for being here. We are really looking forward to getting started.

Back to you, Karen.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Thank you for reminding me, Kisha. My Visual Description, I am a Latina woman with brown hear hair pulled up in a bun on the top of my head. I have a green polo shirt like Kisha with a gold pin representing the DC government, and I have a tan textured blazer. My background is white. You can see walls, and there is a gray section in the middle.

A brief thing about our office. Our office was established two years ago. Our two‑year anniversary is actually this month. We are still a very new office, but Kisha says actually today. We are able to see changes happening within just this short amount of time, and we are looking forward to what is to come.

Our office is here to elevate the Civil Rights of Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened people who work, play and live in the DC area. Next slide, please.

So, here is the Agenda. We will be talking about the purpose of the Webinar. The culture, overviews, things to think about. I am looking forward to that. We will be focusing on Best Practices, and accessibility, how to do it, what is needed and what you need to think about when coordinating those services.

We want to let you know this training is typically not finished within a two‑hour period. We will try to condense the material within the time allotted, and please feel free to reach out to us. We look forward to collaborating with all of you in any way we can. Next slide, please.

Oh, yes.

So, we have a quick Pre‑Survey to engage the audience ‑‑ there you go, thank you, Lexi ‑‑ just to engage the audience's awareness and familiarity with Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened Culture and Accessibility. And after the Webinar we will have a Post‑Survey.

So, people in the audience, can you take a moment to scan this link. It will take you to a website that has a five‑question survey. Please take the time to do that now.

>> If it is easier, I just posted the link in the Chat, for anyone that may be needing it.

>> KAREN QUINONES: I will give about two minutes, until 2:12, then we have to get this show on the road!

I also just added the link to our website in Chat. You can see on this slide there is a link at the bottom. It says CommunityAffairs.DC.gov/MODDHH. I just added that link, as well, for you to go ahead and take a look at.

So, I think we will go ahead and get started. Thank you all for filling out the Pre‑Survey. Next slide, please.

So, the purpose of today's training is that you all will get exposure on Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened Communities and Cultures. You will have a better understanding of how to communicate with Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened communities. I know the slide here says DC, but this applies to any people in your state that are Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened. You will learn more about how to engage with those community members, then you will walk away from today's Webinar with knowledge on how to coordinate accessibility for your workplace, for your event, for your activities. Next slide, please.

> KISHA GORE: All right. I think that is on me. We will be talking about authority and accessibility. As you can see, providing Accessibility and Accommodations is not only a Best Practice, but it is a law. We have an entire law on the Americans with Disabilities Act around providing accommodations to the Deaf Community we wanted to share with you.

Our Mayor thought not only is it enough for the ADA, but to add a district code to make sure all DC Government Agencies are abiding by the ADA, as well as providing accommodations to those that need it.

We want to provide the Best Practice, yes, but it is also a law. Next slide, please.

So, now you will see what Cultural Awareness and Deaf Culture involves. I will give you a moment to look over this slide before I talk about it.

All right.

>> KISHA GORE: So in terms of Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened, we do have a culture, and we do have standard ‑‑

>> KAREN QUINONES: Standard beliefs, attitudes, norms, values, and things that arise really from our shared experiences growing up. Our shared language use, and that has become the culture. Cultural traditions, art, cultural tendencies, proclivities. Each group has that. Next slide, please.

So, you can see here now, we are getting a little more in‑depth in terms of what actually culture includes. Maybe I should ‑‑ actually, I am a little curious for my own self. Is there anyone here who is Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened who would like to ‑‑ or who works with Deaf people, in general? Do we have anybody here? Let's see. Sill trying to look at the Chat to see where we all are. Or is this your first time maybe learning for about Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened, our communities and our cultures? First time? I see one response. Great! First time. It is nice to hear from you, too. Because I don't want to feel like I am talking to myself, right? (Chuckles)

So, you work in healthcare and you work with patients who are Deaf. All right. Awesome! So, it is important to have accessibility in healthcare, for sure. I know that I personally have struggled on a frequent basis to get access in healthcare settings.

So, back to the point at‑hand in terms of the environment. I am kind of looking at two screens here, so please forgive me, but in terms of environment, how many of you are familiar with the Deaf space? The concept, rather, of Deaf Space? Anybody?

Most people who are not familiar with the Deaf, often have not heard of that term. Just looking at the Chat here.

So, Deaf Space is a way of emphasizing visual transmission of information. It means it is an open space. That the architecture is designed in such a way to include lighting, open floor plans, more spatial opportunities for movement. The setting must be such that it is clear and open, that people can move so they have room to sign, that there is clarity and reduced noise, so that we can see other people signing and communicate. That is what we consider to be a Deaf Space.

Then for regional language, the second box we have here on the screen, there are accents. Northern accents, southern accents. Each region has its spoken language accent, and the same with ASL. In ASL we have Regional Sign Languages. We have international. Each country has its own Sign Language, and in those countries their regions have their own dialects.

For social connections, it is same with community. Those are related. Typically speaking, people gravitate together, toward each other. People who are the same, speak the same language, have the same culture or similar cultural experiences, really for a support system ‑‑ we all need a support system. Everybody needs that sense of belonging, of connection, of collaboration, in order to advance ourselves and our quality of life.

It is the same thing with Deaf people, so, you will see them gravitating together here in DC, of course. This is one of the places you see a lot of Deaf people gravitating because we have a large group here.

And technology use. We are creative with using technology to address and resolve communication issues. In terms of communication, we do have specific norms and behaviors that might not show up with hearing culture or hearing people in general.

For example, eye contact. We tend to look at each other when we are talking. One thing that hearing people may do is look around at other things while they are talking. So, eye contact is not of utmost importance to them, but we need to make sure we get the person's attention first before we start speaking, and then we can have a conversation. I think that is unique to Deaf Culture.

We also are artistic people. We are very creative people. We like to express our experiences through art, such as poetry, painting, Storytelling, literature, and now you see more and more Deaf authors putting their work out there. One I might mention is called The Monster Hands. I am just going to put that out there. You can check that out. I may drop a link in there. It is a Deaf author who wrote that book, so we are excited to see more of that showing up in this space ‑‑ more art out in the mainstream culture.

And last, ways of getting someone's attention. Again, this is related to communication. Can you think of any different ways that we might get a Deaf person's attention? Maybe you could type it in the Chat, put a comment in the Chat? How would you get a Deaf person's attention? Someone said tap them on the shoulder. Wave. Yes, waving. Up and down. Tapping on the shoulder. Make eye contact and wave. Perfect. Tapping on the table. Yes, perfect.

I would like to comment on one that says waving up and down near their face. Not too close. (Chuckles) Just remember Deaf Space. We like to have a little space, a bubble around us, so not too close in our space, but from a reasonable distance up and down for sure. Tapping on the table, stomping on the floor. Yes. That is why Deaf people are loud! We may not be voicing as hearing people would voice, but we are allowed to get people's attention, right? Waving, stomping, pounding on a table or something. Great answers.

That is just a little bit, a few things about Deaf Culture for you. Next slide, please.

So, again, remember that we are talking about communities and social connections. Deaf people tending to gravitate together. In DC, this is the largest concentration of Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened people. Over 23,000 of us live here. And how many of you are in DC? Or maybe even Maryland, Virginia, as well? Hi! Yes! All right. Virginia, central Virginia. Okay! I am surprised!

Amanda, you are in DC? All right. We are going to connect after this. I have some new connections. Oh, Hawaii, nice! All right. Thank you. Texas. Texas has a very large Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened population. Austin. Yes. It is nice to know where you are all from.

So, here we have a huge Deaf population plus the highest number of Service Providers, as well. California. I am from California myself. Yes, there is a large Deaf Community on the east side of Oahu. All right!

I did internship at the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind, so I always have a soft place in my heart for Hawaii. All right, enough about that! Let's go to the next slide.

Someone just brought up ‑‑ someone just popped up, I thought. Did somebody want to say something? No? Okay. All right. Good. Well, if you want to say something and you turn on your camera, we can turn it over to you. All right.

I am going to move forward because we are already 30 minutes in. Time has gone fast! Okay.

So, Deaf Culture in DC. So, because of the large presence that we have here, Deaf Culture impacts the community here. For example, Gallaudet. Of course, Gallaudet is one of the reasons why many of us are here. We graduated from Gallaudet and stayed here in the community. Are you familiar with Gallaudet? It is the only University in the world designed for Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened students.

Most of the classes are direct‑instruction, which means taught in Sign Language, which is really nice. We do not have to have an Interpreter in the classes or CART. There is no concern about accessibility. We don't have to bring in those services. Direct instruction is given from the teacher.

Thank you for the link there, Lexi. Thank you. I need to catch myself, actually, and say in terms of not needing to bring in a Service Provider, that is not necessarily true. For me as a Deaf person, I don't need a Service Provider at Gallaudet, but other people that may be DeafBlind or Deaf Disabled may need additional services. ASL leaders may need a protactile Deaf Interpreter or other students may need CART, so we do have accessible services there at Gallaudet, but a lot of times they are familiar with how to meet the needs of the students.

So, there is Gallaudet. Deaf people go there, find jobs in DC, stay in the community and filter out to the feeder communities, but they stay near Gallaudet because it is very Deaf‑friendly.

We have a Signing Starbucks, the first Starbucks in the US that is fully accessible in Sign Language. There are Deaf employees. I can just go into that Starbucks and order directly with the cashier and order my coffee without having to use my phone and type it up, what I want to say, and show the cashier what I want to order.

And we also have Mozzeria here, a Deaf‑owned, Deaf‑operated pizzeria. And they have an oven that they brought from Italy, so ‑‑ and it is delicious, delicious pizza! If you are in town, I would highly recommend you stop by to a signing Starbucks or Mozzeria.

We also have Chase Bank, and there are Deaf employees who work there. So, you can get your banking needs met with a place that provides that accessibility.

We also have a strong history of movements and activism from our community, and our allies.

For example, the Louise B. Miller lawsuit. So, the Louise B. Miller ‑‑ Louise B. Miller was the parent of a Deaf child, and lived close to Gallaudet. Not far. Within walking distance from Gallaudet. You know, Gallaudet campus has an elementary school called the Kendall Demonstration Elementary School. So, at that time ‑‑ this was ‑‑ I actually don't know how many years ago it was ‑‑ but at the time where the school was, it was not integrated, so it was segregated.

White and black students were segregated.

At the time Kendall did not accept black students, but they did accept white students. So, that mother had to send her son, who was Deaf, to a school in Baltimore. That was about an hour away.

So, of course, there is the community every day, when he could have got to Kendall, a 5‑minute walk from his home.

Of course, it was very frustrating. It wasn't fair, so the mother filed a lawsuit with the Board. She won the lawsuit, and now ‑‑ then they accepted her son and other Black Deaf students into that program. So, that really set the precedent for Brown versus Board of Education. Which, of course, had a huge impact on our community.

As you can see on the list, the Deaf President Now movement. Does anybody have familiarity with the DPN movement? Deaf President Now? I see a no in the Chat. Okay. Well, I will explain it.

So, Senora has. Do you want to make a comment about DPN and what you know about it?

>> SENORA: It was probably one of the most protected demonstrations by students who really closed down the school. the Deaf students decided when they hired a new President, they were not going to accept a hearing President. So, it was really wonderful to see, because that was the beginning of ‑‑ you are talking about tents. Many of you are not old enough to really have seen tents.

Because, Gallaudet is a beautiful campus. They took it over and would not allow anything. So, they did get a Deaf President, and he was a wonderful man. The same thing with the student going to the hearing, the case that you described, the law.

It was very involved and it took a number of years.

So, it was not before the Brown case, but it was part of a whole Civil Rights Movement. So, I have lived long enough to see it when it was totally segregated, before some of the wonderful facilities were there and to watch it grow.

And I wanted to add, as you can tell, I am a very young lady. I am 88, and I now know what it is like to suddenly have been a hearing person and suddenly now ‑‑ and many things that we do, I have to do this to let people know that I don't hear it well, and you are not articulating well.

But it is not just me. It is others, too. So, when we are talking about this group, I want us not to talk about persons as if they were not in the field, but those of us who are providers, as we get older, we simply become a patient, too.

>> KAREN QUINONES: This is Deputy Director Karen. Very good point. Thank you for sharing and thank you for sharing about the Deaf President Now Movement. You did it much better than I could have! (Chuckles)

So, yes, that set the precedence for the Americans with Disabilities Act. It was a wonderful movement we made happen together. Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened, hearing, all of us work together to make sure basic Civil Rights are continued.

Next slide, please.

Okay, so we will be talking about Deaf Culture today, Deaf Communities, and the fun things involved with that. Now I want to switch and talk about some heavy, emotional realities that are a part of the experiences and situations that Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened people experience.

So, I am going to start with just asking the audience, how many of you are familiar with the term audism, A‑U‑D‑I‑S‑M, audism? Has anybody heard that before? I see someone saying yes in the Chat. Good. Great. I am excited there is this response. This term is the same concept of racism, ageism, gender ‑‑ genderism isn't a word, is it? Any sort of disparity you see out there, this also plays into that. Audism is part of that. Sexism, yes, you are right, Kisha. I could not think of the word. So, all the different “isms" that people hear every day, it is an attitude and discrimination, a negative view of those who don't act in ‑‑ sorry, I was distracted by the Chat, for those people that don't act like hearing people.

So, a negative attitude toward people who can't hear, who can't talk, they are often treated less than their hearing counterparts or those that can speak clearly like normal hearing people, if you will, people that can function like hearing people. Those individuals are looked at as normal.

Those who can't hear or speak at all are typically marginalized, discriminated against or looked down upon. So that is the concept of audism.

Lexi, could you click on the language deprivation link you see. I want to show the audience a short video about language deprivation. I see Sanora says in the Chat, older people, ageism. For sure. We can relate on different identities we have.

For example, I myself am a woman. I experience sexism. I am not white, so I experience racism. I am Deaf, so I experience audism, so I am sure you all can relate to that intersectionality of identity. We will show the video. Thank you.

(Video playing)

>> KAREN QUINONES: Any thoughts from anyone on the video? Very enlightening. Yes. Very powerful way to describe this.

So, the term language deprivation then is not only ‑‑ it doesn't just apply to Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened. It can apply to anyone who does not have full access to language, who doesn't have full access to language from birth‑to‑5. This is really the age range we are talking about. That is a critical period of language acquisition, where the brain, as you saw in the video, the brain forms neuro‑connections in order to learn language. That time period, if there is not full access, it will impact the rest of a person's life.

So, for Deaf babies, often, they do experience language deprivation due to misinformation from various people in the beginning of their life.

For example, perhaps doctors. Maybe audiologists. Maybe different Service Providers. Maybe giving the parents misinformation that will then impact the baby's language acquisition.

So, often Deaf babies ‑‑ I am looking at the statistics here ‑‑ 96% of Deaf babies are born to parents who don't know Sign Language. And often that misinformation may sound like, oh, don't use Sign Language at home, because that will impact their speech development, their speech and listening skills.

So, their parents are advised to only focus on spoken language, listening and spoken language, which goes back to the concept of audism, because listening and spoken language is a prioritized as being better than Sign Language, when really there are both languages that should be seen equally.

That is one example of misinformation that might be provided to parents, and the parents don't sign at home then, which leads to language deprivation.

There are many, many different examples of why language deprivation happens. We don't really have time to go down that rabbit hole, but suffice it to say it is a reality of many Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened people in the world today. They experience language deprivation, and because of that, they struggle for the rest of their lives. Next slide, please.

Gwen is talking about information including the push for kids to get cochlear implants as a mode of learning Sign Language, rather. To me, that is audism, what you said there. It is misinformation if you push a cochlear implant without Sign Language. For me, I have information about cochlear implants. That is my opinion, and I am not going to go there, but the point is, that it is not about one or the other. It is both.

Give the child, the baby, full access to everything. And then that way they will be developing a strong language foundation, and then as they grow up, they make shows decisions about preferences for communication. That will be on them. But often doctors or medical personnel will push for cochlear implant without Sign Language, and that is autism. Yes, both should be done together. Did you want to add anything, Kisha?

>> KISHA GORE: I wholeheartedly agree with you, Karen. Both should be offered. Sometimes a cochlear implant won't work at the beginning and that can be frustrating for the child. But if they had Sign Language, they can communicate that way until the technicalities of the cochlear implants are worked out.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Yes. That is very true. Good question and good comment. So, Deaf babies ‑‑ well, let me back up a little bit in terms of this flowchart. This is what typically happens.

So, a Deaf baby doesn't have full access ‑‑ let me back up one more time. Doesn't have full hearing access. It doesn't mean parents or guardians are speaking and interacting with the baby, the Deaf child may be missing critical information, important words. They are missing that because they are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. Because of that they don't have full access to language, and they are not able to acquire language as a foundation, so they struggle.

With that, then that leads to language deprivation, or delayed access to language. From there, that leads to gaps, those deficits in cognitive development, social/emotional development, and school readiness.

And then that leads to eventual reading and academic and social struggles. So, there are a lot of consequences. Unemployment. Not being able to enter college, not being involved with civic participation, not becoming an active member of society because of the struggles that they have. Due to language deprivation. And on the side here, you can see there are some statistics that say the average reading level among Deaf adults is 3rd to 4th grade. Then the National Deaf Center has statistics from 51% of Deaf DC residents were employed as compared to 75% of hearing people. So, it is also there to encourage, and improve a better quality of life for the Deaf Community members. Next slide, please.

>> KISHA GORE: Thank you, Karen. That is a great overview. Let's move into how to dispel those attitudes and disparities and one would be recognizing the varying degrees of communication needs that the Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened experiences.

We want to make sure when we are engaging with the community, that we make sure that we understand that everywhere has their own communication need, and that there are varying degrees to that. You can imagine a Hard of Hearing may prefer CART, where a DeafBlind person may use Protactile Interpreting, which is still ASL, but a different method used there. So, we always want to make sure the Deaf Community is not a monolith. Everyone has their own communication need.

So, the best way to ensure we are inclusive is ask the individual, what do they need, how do they communicate, what do they prefer, instead of us assuming, oh, we will just get an ASL Interpreter and that will cover everyone. No, they have to realize asking the individual is the Best Practice. Next slide, please.

As you can see on this slide you can see the various kinds of Sign Languages. If you go to London or Africa, they use different Sign Languages than we use here, so that is when we would use a certified Deaf Interpreter or DI that will come in and do the code switching and gestures to someone that lives here.

Like Karen said, we have Gallaudet University. They have Deaf people that come from all over the world. Their first language may be Spanish or another language. So, we have bi and tri‑language Interpreters.

Again, Sign Language is not universal. We get is same question all the time. Can I use the same Sign Language in Asia or somewhere else? The answer is no. So, we go back to asking the communication needs of our Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals. You can move to the next slide. Thank you.

>> KAREN QUINONES: You can see here on this slide, different types of Auxiliary Aids and Assistive Technology Devices used in our communities.

Like Kisha mentioned, everyone has their own preferences and everyone knows what works best for their own needs. It is important to be aware of the different Sign Languages and Assistive Technologies out there so you can meet a variety of needs within the community.

The first row on the slide are technologies that we see used quite frequently. We have CART, Closed Captioning services, Video Phone, or VP. Video Relay Service, or Video Relay Interpreter. We have Ubi‑Duos, that is probably not something as familiar to people. Is anyone here familiar with the technology of Ubi‑Duos? Someone put in the Chat they know of it but they don't use it. Okay.

So, it is basically like two machines that you put next to each other. Really, it is two keyboards that you put next to each other, and they have a screen that is very, very small connected to both of them.

So, I am then able to type and my words that I type out will show up on the other person's screen. They are able to read what I am typing, and then they can type a response to me, and I can read what they type back to me. It is kind of like a TTY sort of, if you are familiar with the TTY technology of the past, but Ubi‑Duos is more ‑‑ there is no telephone involved in that equation.

It is something that happens in‑person, in physical proximity, where you are able to type to each other. So, let me give you an example. Let's say I am sitting at the front desk with my Ubi‑Duos technology and the hearing person comes in and we are obviously not able to use the same communication method, we can use the Ubi‑Duo. I can type out "hi, how are you" and they can type their response. Or a person that is Hard of Hearing but doesn't know ASL, they can use this technology to communicate.

The second row on this slide, this is something that I see less often, but it is still important to know and be aware of, because they are used in the community. I have seen the Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened community using the Induction Loops pretty often. It is pretty popular. That is relevant. The TTY, it may be an outdated technology at this point. It really just depends on who is using it. Do we have time for this? I am not going to do it.

So, this is a brief summary of Auxiliary Aids and Assistive Technologies. I suggest you get familiar with these and figure out what works best for your agency or you personally, because there are a lot of resources out there you can take advantage of to have effective communication. Next slide, please.

All right. So, I want to dive a little deeper into an explanation of what each identity means and entails within this community. Like Kisha mentioned, Deafness is not just one type of identity that means the same thing for everybody. It is very unique and individualistic.

So, within the Deaf Community we have different uses of the word Deaf, D‑E‑A‑F. I don't know if you have seen this yourself in your own experience, but sometimes you will see a lower-case d, deaf, and a capital D Deaf. The difference is denoted in a capital D. versus a lower d Deaf.

Well, the answer is on the slide, like I said, anyway.

Someone asked a good question in the Chat. Lexi said she is not quite sure if it is capital D Deaf, lower case deaf, or capital B Blind or lower-case b blind.

So, where do I begin with this. Because this can with controversial as a topic within our community, so let me try to summarize point of this.

So, lower-case d deaf will refer to anyone with any degree of hearing loss. That is used in the medical people. People will be diagnosed with lower-case d deaf. When you have the capital D Deaf, it is more of a cultural connotation, cultural relevance. That means pride in the identity of being Deaf, being part of the Deaf Community, having Deaf Culture and using American Sign Language, being proud of your identity, your community, that big capital D Deaf denotes, so that is the summary of the differences between the two.

On the slide you also see certified Deaf Interpreters being mentioned. CDI or DI. DI means not certified Deaf Interpreter. We often will use an ASL Interpreter that is hearing and a Deaf Interpreter at the same job assignment. That is done because ‑‑ Kisha, do you want to give a brief explanation about the use of a hearing Interpreter and a CDI or DI? I think you are muted.

>> KISHA GORE: Sorry about that. Typically, we use a CDI when we want to make sure that the message is clear and in as much accessible language as possible. So, we will put a hearing Interpreter with the Deaf Interpreter. The hearing Interpreter will hear the information, interpret that information to the DI, and the DI may what we call code switch, and switch that information into a more accessible Sign Language for everyone, so that it covers a broader range of those that may experience language deprivation, or either use a lower register of Sign Language so the message becomes accessible for all.

It may not cover everyone, but it definitely does provide a huge range for those individuals that are watching the message.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Thank you, Kisha. Beautiful explanation!

So, it is really important for you all, if you are a Service Provider, for example, or you work with the Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened individuals in your state, don't assume that an ASL Interpreter ‑‑ hearing ASL Interpreter is enough. It might not be. Maybe the Deaf client doesn't understand that particular ASL Interpreter, and needs to have, like Kisha mentioned, an Interpreter that is able to code switch more effectively, and able to translate that message that is happening, the intent of what is happening into ASL, to a Deaf person that is able to fully access that message.

Deaf Interpreters are typically native to their language, so they are able to communicate more clearly. Kisha?

>> KISHA GORE: Dr. Meyer in the Chat asking if the Deaf Interpreter using ASL or ‑‑ would you like me to answer?

A Deaf Interpreter is using ASL, a stronger ASL. A hearing Interpreter may be using pigeon Sign Language, straight English, word order, Sign Language that may not be accessible for all Deaf people.

Black ASL is a whole other Sign Language, as we are learning now. We have people that are out there doing research on black Sign Language and where that stems from, and why it was created, but, no, the Deaf Interpreter is not using Black ASL, unless they are in a situation where someone requests that, and they have that expertise in Black ASL.

Did that cover it, Dr. Maya? Perfect. Thank you.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Thank you. Thank you, Kisha. Next slide. Oh, I see a message in the Chat from Senora. Give a history of ASL required in colleges? Yes, I think ASL now is offered in K‑12 schools and colleges, and I think it is becoming much more common. The last time I checked, I believe it was the third most popular foreign language in the country. Third most popular, so, yes! Senora, do you want to add anything to that message? You are muted.

>> SENORA: It is interesting to me, because I remember when persons that were Deaf or Hard of Hearing, et cetera, still had to complete the Foreign Language requirement. So, again, this is another example of the population fighting to make sure that they are well respected. So, to substitute the Foreign Language requirements with ASL took a lot of fighting.

So, it wasn't just easy to do. Many universities did not want to do it. And, so, of course, this population has had really good lawyers. I want you to know the history of this population of lawyers is really great! (Chuckles)

>> KISHA GORE: If I can add, Karen, also the fight was to even recognize that ASL was a full‑fledged language. There were so many misconceptions and myths that Sign Language was not a language. It was just people moving their hands, and we know that is just not the case.

It has its own grammar, its own Syntax, its own lexicon, everything that every other spoken language has that deems it a language. So that fight was first before we could even talk about it being offered as a foreign language in schools and even on the college level.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Yes. Absolutely. Very true! We have come a long way, but we still have a long way to go. Yes!

All right, so I want to talk about some considerations for DeafBlind individuals. These are people who have any degree of hearing loss, plus vision loss. And that can be a range of abilities, and that changes from person‑to‑person.

Some people have Usher Syndrome. Some people have different medical terms for their particular vision loss or hearing loss.

So, the needs for DeafBlind individuals and their communication needs are often different than just a Deaf person. A DeafBlind person may prefer using protactile Sign Language, which is more of a tactile ‑‑ so, on the body, a touching type of ASL. I could show you but I am not able to because I am by myself here, but basically a hand is put on another person's hand and you can give feedback on the shoulder, the back, social cues. Let's say if the person is walking by that person, you can denote people moving in a room on the DeafBlind person's back to give environment information.

If the audience is laughing, for example, you can give a cue on the back with your hands going like this to show the audience is laughing. So, Protactile is a different mode of communication than ASL and a different kind of visual cues from the environment that they would not be able to get otherwise.

Let me look at my notes really quick here. DeafBlind individuals have more accessibility considerations. They are listed here, but I am trying to find, particularly the salient ones. For example, font size is an important consideration.

Color choices for contrasts in your PowerPoint presentation is important for your advertising, in your flyers for your events, color contrast is really important.

I am still learning this myself. We just had a DeafBlind intern in our office that worked with us. They were a student from Gallaudet University, and she taught us so much about accessibility when it comes to DeafBlind needs. We miss her. She is gone. We wish we were still learning from her, but this is something we have to practice every day.

Even though I have been part of the Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened community, I am still learning about a variety of different needs and specific accommodations of this community.

Someone in the Chat said a TPGI is a free color contrast analyzer that can be used offline. Interesting. I will keep in mind that resource. Thank you, Gwen.

Dr. Drummond says she has seen Protactile ASL done by someone ‑‑ on someone's back for a soccer game to show where the person was on the field with the ball. Yes, it is pretty fascinating to see that! Next slide, please.

As you know, today technology has exploded, and it is always changing, so it is important to ensure that technology use is accessible to everyone. When it comes to DeafBlind users, you need to have large print. And when you post something on Social Media, it is important to add an image description.

For example, like in the beginning, Kisha and I did a Visual Description today during the beginning of the Webinar. That is an example of accessibility. That can be done on your posts on Social Media, as well. Give an image description of what you are posting to provide that information if the DeafBlind person is not able to visually access it.

Alt‑Text is another way to provide access. It gives extra description of what is happening. So, an image description is basically describing what a flyer looks like. Alt‑Text will also include the verbiage, the text that is on that flyer to be able to give access to all the information. Next slide, please.

I am going to skip this slide. Mobility Canes denote the level of vision that the person is using ‑‑ excuse me, the level of vision loss the person has. So, the color cane they use denotes their level of vision. Next slide, please.

So, the next two slides are similar, so I am going to just show the first one. This says one of two slides, but the two slides are actually the same. It is a typo on our part. My apologies. Let me talk about what is on this slide.

When it comes to Deaf Disabled community members, a person who is Deaf, who has hearing loss, and has one or multiple disabilities that are separate from being Deaf, or having a hearing loss ‑‑ so, they could be, for example, someone that is Deaf and a person with autism. Or it could be a person that is Deaf, and has an Intellectual Disability, or a person who is Deaf and has anxious, for example.

You know, there are multiple disabilities happening at once, typically.

I noticed that people who are familiar with ‑‑ let me say this again. So, I see this often in school settings, like K‑12 environments. Let's say a Service Provider or a teacher, or an adult, will see a person that is Deaf. And maybe they have other disabilities, like autism. The teacher or Service Provider will think that that experience of that person with Deafness and other disabilities is just the experience of a Deaf person. They are not able to recognize there are other disabilities happening, as well.

Deafness is often in the forefront, and the other disabilities are not. Deaf Disabled individuals are often overlooked and marginalized within our own Deaf Community. We have one organization here in DC called Deaf‑REACH. They work closely with the Deaf Disabled population to provide a lot of support, resources, and so forth, to really elevate the Deaf Disabled community, and that includes ‑‑ we have two housing facilities where Deaf Disabled people are able to stay at and meet in. Next slide, please.

It is the same one. You can skip that one. Thank you.

Now, some considerations for Hard of Hearing individuals. This could be someone who has some or a lot of hearing, but they are not able to hear as well as a hearing person. We refer to them as Hard of Hearing.

This one also refers to a person who has hearing loss, but has no connection to the Deaf Community. Maybe they say, I am Hard of Hearing, and I just function in the hearing world, and I have no ties or investment in the Deaf Community. Hard of Hearing can mean both of those things.

We also have a population called Oral Deaf. Oral Deaf individuals basically are people ‑‑ we see this a lot less now, but historically Deaf students in a K‑12 environment were not allowed to sign, use Sign Language to communicate with each other. If they were, they would be slapped with a ruler, so they were forced to use an oral method of communication. They are Deaf, but they are learning how to speak and lip read, because they are not really able to understand their hearing.

So, for the Hard of Hearing population, they typically use CART, or captions, transcripts, for full inclusion. I do see a question here. Does Auditory Processing Disorder fall under Hard of Hearing traditionally? My answer to that would be I am not an expert, but my assumption is no.

The reason I say that is because they may not have a hearing loss.

They just have a different way of processing auditory information.

So, their hearing may be intact. For instance, if a child goes to an audiologist, they may show that they have hearing within the normal range. But, you know, now that I think about that, they may be missing out on some of that information, so their hearing results may show that they are Hard of Hearing, but it is not necessarily what is broken. It is just a different way of processing information.

I hate to use that word broken, by the way. Don't repeat what I just said! But that is a hot topic in K‑12, actually. K‑12 settings and Early Intervention, as well. Because we have programs for Deaf babies, and I remember several babies ‑‑ or toddlers, you know, young kids, who had Auditory Processing Disorders and they wanted to be part of our programs because they benefit from Sign Language. They could communicate just fine with Sign Language, but they had difficulty with hearing and spoken language, or listening and spoken language.

So, our schools were often in a bind, because we weren't able to accept them because they didn't officially have a diagnosis of being Deaf. Some programs are okay and will admit them, but some will not. So, it can be a tossup. It is a good question, actually. I do not have a definitive answer for that.

Kisha, did you want to add anything to that, or ‑‑ you are muted.

>> KISHA GORE: That is why I wish we were in‑person. I am so sorry I didn't have my audio on. But, no, I think you answered it beautifully. I don't have a lot of information on that, as well, but I think what you provided was sufficient, and then we can do further research to see if there is more information out there.

We will provide that to NDI so we can pass that information along.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Yes, yes. And I think that the concept of disorder is a fairly new one. So, I am hoping that ‑‑ I think it has been a few years since I have been in Early Intervention.

So, hopefully now the research has caught up to it, that there is more information available, that there are more recommendations for that population, because I think we are seeing that show up more often. It is more common. Next slide, please.

So, Late Deafened. I looked at the Chat there. So, in terms of Late Deafened, typically these people are born hearing with normal hearing, and they hear and fully function as hearing people, then they lose their hearing with age. Right? This talks about different situations where a person might lose their hearing if, for example, they are involved in the military, in war, or in an accident that impacted their hearing, loud music that caused the hearing loss.

So, for that population, they typically don't know Sign Language because they have grown up as a hearing person. They heard within normal limits. They often then rely on CART, captioning, transcripts, for full inclusion.

Now, keep in mind that they may be able to speak fine, because they grew up hearing and have had full access to speech and hearing, so they just might not be able to hear anymore. That, of course, often confuses many people. Because many people are saying, well, you speak just fine. Why can't you hear me in or why do you need an Interpreter? Or why do you need CART? So, they are challenged in that regard.

So, I can speak but I can't hear you is really the answer. You have to believe what the person is saying when they say they need the accommodation.

So, Senora said an example of treatment division because of insurance and payment issues. Yes, definitely.

Insurance is often the barrier to receiving services, for sure. Next slide, please.

Okay. So, this slide addresses harmful terminology. Terminology that we prefer that you do not call us. A common one that we see very often is hearing impaired. Please don't use that term. It is outdated. It doesn't feel like it is a fit for our community. Our community prefers Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened.

Other examples of words we prefer that you don't use. For example, deaf and dumb. And, you know, I see ‑‑ well, actually I think today we see more ‑‑ what would I say ‑‑ political correctness today, for lack of a better term. But I was watching an old show. In those shows you often see, oh, you think I am deaf and dumb? That will be a line in the script. A hearing person on the show will say oh, you think I am deaf and dumb? It is kind of like, you know ‑‑ the message that that sends in mainstream media is a reflection of the attitude that people have about Deaf people.

I am looking at the Chat here. Going back to this comment. Dr. Drummond is asking ‑‑ Kisha, would you like to answer that, or are you typing to her?

>> KISHA GORE: I was going to say, Dr. Drummond, it still applies to what Karen said that they are Deaf and they use ASL. It doesn't have to be an ASL speaker or ASL user. They are Deaf and their communication mode is ASL. So, as hearing people, we don't say he is an English speaker, unless we are in a room with people that speak all different languages, then we will identify that person uses English, but we don't identify ourselves as English speakers. So, we would refer to ourselves as the Deaf Community that they are Deaf and use ASL.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Right. Right. Beautiful. Thank you, Kisha.

And then Joanne said, it is difficult to know if you are using the right terminology. What is a good way to keep up‑to‑date. It seems to keep changing? Yes. This is true, and I understand where you are coming from. I don't necessarily have an answer.

Kisha, maybe you have the answer. Kisha has the answer.

>> KISHA GORE: Well, I don't know if I have the answer, but we are always a resource to you. Our office, any time you feel like, what is the right terminology, or am I using this incorrectly, let's they can in with MODDHH to see what they have to say, because we do have our hand on the pulse of the people, if you will let me say that.

We have Deaf people that work right here in the office. All of my colleagues are Deaf. I am the only hearing person. I am always checking in with them, did I say that right? I am a 24-year veteran Interpreter and I am still making sure I am using the right terminology, so I can imagine someone that doesn't have a connection to the community on a constant or consistent basis may feel, oh, my gosh, I am going to say something wrong.

Deaf people are so gracious and so loving, they will correct you and move on. They won't be mad at you. They won't feel offended. But they will feel offended if you tell them they should be using something else. So, let's let them do the leading and we can follow.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Right. Yes! Perfect.

So, if those of you in the audience who are not from DC ‑‑ I mean, or who are in DC, you can always reach out to ‑‑ if you are not in DC, you can reach out to your local community. You can maybe Google Deaf agencies in your community. Maybe you know Deaf people. Maybe. Reach out to them, right? And they will be happy to interact with you and give you advice on whatever the question is.

Then Gwen says, I follow a lot of Deaf influencers on LinkedIn, and that is where I get a lot of updates.

You know what, again, I mean, Social Media is powerful. You can see Deaf people on Social Media. You can reach out to them for update information. Now, I will say, not everything that is shared on Social Media is correct, just a caveat. It is the same with everything. Social Media, you can't believe everything you see there.

So, take it with a grain of salt. And then verify with your trusted sources, like our office! (Chuckles)

All right. Next slide, please.

Kisha, this is you.

>> KISHA GORE: Is this me? Great! This is one of my favorite things to talk about, is effective communication and working with Effective Communication Professionals that engage with this community.

Obviously, you are going to make eye contact. Karen mentioned that in the beginning. That is the difference between hearing ‑‑ we can look all around and I am still listening to my mother argue with me. Or in any setting, I don't have to be completely focused on the speaker, so we will always make sure we make eye contact with the individual.

We also want to make sure we are patient with the Effective Communication Professionals as you would with the Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened individual. When we talk about Effective Communication Professionals, we are talking about the Interpreters and CART. We have beautiful Interpreters on this call with us today who have been doing a fabulous job.

Our CART Captioner, Leora, who is doing a wonderful job. We also want to be patient, because a lot of times technical things happen. We are trying to make sure the person is pinned properly, that the Deaf people are able to access the information.

So, we always want to put patience first. And be as detailed as possible when setting up our events. We want to make sure we have all the information so that we are able to identify the appropriate amount of Effective Communication Professionals that will effectively and smoothly help facilitate the communication for your event, meeting, workshop or convention. Next slide, please.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Oh, this is me. I want to add for the ECP, the Effective Communication Professional, that program used to be housed under another agency called the Sign Language Interpreting Program, SLIP, S‑L‑I‑P, if you will. So, that was moved under our office and we recognized we provide ASL Interpreters, provide CART, provide Protactile. So, it is not necessarily just Sign Language Interpreting. We changed the name to Effective Communication Program. That is where that came from. the same as Effective Communication Professional. To me it is more inclusive for our office. More accessible and we take into consideration different communication needs.

So, putting that out there. If in your area you have a Sign Language Program, you may consider expanding that to include more services and better services for the variety of needs that are represented by these communities, these different populations, Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened.

Did you want to add more?

>> KISHA GORE: I just wanted to say thank you for sharing that. I missed that. Thank you so much for sharing that.

>> KAREN QUINONES: No, no. It is fine.

This one ‑‑ I have the answer there.

I don't know why I have the answer on the sheet. You can see here. I wanted to see your feedback first, right? But the answers are already there on the slide.

So, if you were to have a stage from one of these communities, Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened show up at one of your events or your agency? There you go.

So, you can see the answers there on the slide. Would you greet the person? I can't tell you how many times, let’s say I walk into a place and a person will come over and ask me for something, and I am, like, hey, I am Deaf. I kind of signal I am Deaf and I can't hear them. And the other person will jump away and leave. Obviously, they can help me, and I can help them if maybe they would ping their mode of communication, text on their phone, write it out on a piece of paper, gesture. Don't be afraid.

My point is, in saying this, don't be scared in a Deaf person shows up in your office. Don't freak out. Be cool! Say hey! Maybe in your head you will be thinking, oh, God, I don't know what to do. That is fine. Just follow that Deaf person's lead. They may already have a note written out already on their phone that they are ready to show you to tell you what they need exactly.

If not, you can be assertive and think of different ways of communicating with them. For example, writing out communication on a paper, with a pen, using your phone to communicate. Gesturing. Those are different strategies that you can use to figure out a way to communicate in that initial contact with the Deaf person.

And then if that initial contact leads you to realize that you need perhaps an Interpreter to facility more communication or CART services or other types of accommodations, other types of Effective Communication Professionals, then you can go ahead and tell that Deaf person, hey, can we schedule a meeting? I will figure out some logistics for accommodations. I can be present at that meeting, and more often than not, Deaf people are really understanding of that request.

Let me give you another situation. Let me give you an example. Oh, we only have a little bit more time left. Thank you for the time check. Kisha is saying I think we are good. Okay!

Let's say I show up at your event with an Interpreter, please engage with me and not my Interpreter. Okay? The Interpreter is there. I know that you can look at both of us. That is fine. But let me give you an example. This happens quite often.

The hearing person will look solely at the Interpreter and talk directly to them and say, oh tell her, referring to me, this, this and that. Or they will ask the Interpreter information when those questions really should be directed toward me as the professional.

Often the hearing person will disregard me as the Deaf person and engage with the person that is speaking to them. I don't know why it is. Maybe it is comfort level. I don't know, but, please, try to avoid engaging with the Interpreter and disregarding the Deaf individual. Talk directly to the Deaf person. The Interpreter will be there to help facilitate that communication. They are the expert!

I see a question in the Chat that says, are there any good apps or Assistive Technology to facilitate communication, as well? Does Google Translate work for ASL? For Google Translate, no. It really depends on the auditory input to the device.

Let me say this again. If a person is speaking, there are voice recognition apps out there that can translate it in English into text. But there is no translation into a signed form of Google Translate. Those voice recognition apps are not always accurate.

For example, CART services are incredibly accurate, because it is a live person listening to the interaction, transcribing it. But if you have auto captions or AI doing it, typically it is not very accurate. It is better than nothing, but it is not preferred as a mode of communication.

Gwen's comment is making me laugh. It says, I think it is because we are raised to look at who is speaking, because it denotes manners. Okay, but I am the one who is speaking, but in Sign Language. I am the one. It is me. My words. The other person, the Interpreter, is just interpreting what I am expressing, so I am the one speaking.

But I think that then goes back to, unfortunately, audism and relying on sound, and that takes precedence in the environment.

The person talking should get the attention, but, no, that is not true in this situation. I am the one expressing myself, but it is in Sign Language. Thank you for that comment though, Gwen. Right. Exactly. Thank you for that follow‑up comment, Gwen. Gwen says, right, that is the problem with not recognizing ASL is a viable language. Absolutely!

It changes by you all helping us change the attitudes and perspectives on our community members and our language that we use. Next slide, please.

How many slides do we have left? Let me do a quick check on my end. Okay, I think I will go through this very quickly. Kisha is saying about 7 or 8.

I really want to get to the checklist, so let me talk about this slide very quickly. There are tips for common courtesy. Please don't ask if we can read your lips because that places the burden on me as the Deaf population. And reading lips is only giving you 30% of what is being said. It is not a reliable or effective way of communicating. For a person to say, hey, can you read my lips, it puts the burden on the Deaf population.

>> KISHA GORE: I am sorry, I am not going to sign. I am sorry. This is one example I use with adults when I am talking about this, as far as lip reading. The way six and sex looks on my lips looks the exact same. If someone came up to Karen and said I want six, they may think she said I want sex. So, we want to be careful of lip reading, the impact on how it can be miscommunicated and how it can quickly go wrong.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Right, right. Good point, Kisha. We don't want to create any misunderstandings like that.

Facial expressions. Deaf people are very expressive. It is part of our language. It is part of expressing ourselves. Often hearing people may misunderstand our facial expressions and think we are mad or emotional, or maybe have a negative interpretation of our facial expressions. That is just the way we are, expressing ourselves.

I have talked about the attention‑getting techniques. Next one, Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened want to connect with you. That goes back to, don't be afraid to engage with us. Be creative in the ways that you can communicate with us. Be open to different ways of connecting. Say, hi. Say, how are you. Simple things go a very long way.

The second row talk the about Video Phones and Video Relay Services. I hope you are hiring Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened people. To give you a tip on that, we can't hear as employees. We don't use the phone the same way that you do. Hearing people have a text number and a phone number that is the same number. That makes sense in hearing culture. You use the name number for calling and texting someone.

In Deaf Culture we have two different numbers. One is text, which will go directly to our cell phone. Then we have a second phone number that goes through a Video Relay Service. They give us a unique phone number or our device that hearing people can use to call us. This reason I will say this is people in government, hearing people in DC government, will call me using my hearing phone number. Unfortunately, I cannot use that phone call.

They have to use the Video Phone number that connects to the Video Relay Service Interpreter. I say to counterparts, hey, you have to use a different phone number if you want to connect to me directly.

I see a question in the Chat about virtual meetings, if we have time to talk about that. And another question about accessibility requests. Put in your accessibility requests. It is important to make sure that you have accessible events, meetings, activities, anything that you put on should be accessible, so put those requests in for Effective Communication Professionals to be present at your event, so your event can be accessible to the wider community.

All right, Gwen. Let me answer your question. Let me read through it. It says, I have a question. I train a lot of working professionals on general Disability Etiquette. I usually do not require cameras to be on, but I invite people to turn on their cameras when they are speaking to help those who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, so they can read facial expressions, et cetera.

I won't use the term read lips anymore. Thank you. (Chuckles) Good question, Gwen. And good comment.

For Deaf people, during the time of COVID, there is were a lot of virtual meetings that happened, and still to this day they persist. So, yes, I agree. We like for the person who is speaking or signing to have their camera on. Yes! It gives access to more information. The visual and facial expressions. If the camera is off often people have a hard time connecting, they have a hard time following the conversation, so when the cameras are on, it feels like more of a connection to the speaker and signer.

Another funny thing about Deaf and hearing people, on virtual platforms I notice that Deaf people will typically make sure they are in their frame, right? Fully. There is nothing cut off. They can see their hands, they can see their upper torso, the lighting is good, there is no visual distractions, visual noise. Hearing people understand, they will be sitting like this. Look at this ‑‑ you can't even see their whole face! (Chuckles)

I just can't believe it when I see that! When you look at Deaf people in meetings versus the hearing participants in meetings, it is quite different. You look the next time you are in a meeting. Anyway, I think that is funny. Next slide, please.

>> KISHA GORE: All right. Let's talk about the accessibility checklist for Meetings and Events. Obviously, when we receive requests here, we need as much information as possible. We need the Agency; we need the Point of Contact. We also need to make sure that with that Point of Contact, that they are the person that will actually be at the event and they have a working phone number or email so that we can contact them in case anything goes wrong.

The next thing we have there is making sure a lot of times what we see happen, even in DC government, is that we are not included in the planning stages. We are an afterthought rather than a forethought. So, asking people with the training, when you've your date and location, we can provide the best feedback on where the Deaf Interpreter should stand or where the Deaf participant should be.

So, keep in mind it would be nice to be at the table at the beginning of the planning stages.

Also, making sure the space when you are planning a workshop, conference, virtually ‑‑ not virtual as it relates to this, but identify designated space for those that are Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened. Have reserved signage, making sure they are close to the Interpreter, that they have a great line of sight to the Interpreter.

A lot of times we have seen some pretty creative scenarios where the Interpreter is on stage and the Deaf people are all the way to the back. It wasn't well thought through all the way, so that is why we are asking to be at the table at the beginning of your planning.

Also, identifying staff or volunteers who are trained to interact. So, those of you on this call and Karen just talked about how you would interact with a Deaf person if they show up to your event, and putting those people on the forefront there when they are engaging with the constituents or residents or participants, and then they are able to guide them to their designated space.

The next thing is coordinating a run‑through. We just recently started attending some walk‑throughs and run‑throughs with agencies that have been extremely helpful with preparing where the Deaf person is going to sit and where the Interpreters are going to be, what kind of lighting is there, is that background going to be distracting?

So, we are able to gather all that information from the walk‑through of the actual location or event venue so that we are able to better assist and provide the best experience for those that are participating in the event.

Did I miss anything, Karen? Anything else to add there? Just to reiterate, making sure that when you are requesting for accommodations, that you include as much information as possible. There is never such a thing as too much information. Your Run of Show, your Agenda, your meeting materials, your Meeting Minutes.

And that goes for all Effective Communication Professionals. Leora, our Captioner, asked earlier, is there a script, or do you have the names of the people, or, there are two Karens on the call. She is very aware that those names are going to come up consistently, so having that knowledge already before it starts helps her provide a better experience for those who are accessing CART, and the same with the Interpreter. Knowing who Karen Quinones is; knowing who Kisha is.

We had one of our Interpreters do the walk‑through with us yesterday, to go through the slides, so that they can prep. That just aids and elevates the experience for the Deaf participants. I cannot stress that enough. If you are planning something, please bring your professionals in at the beginning. Bring your vendors in at the beginning of the planning stage.

Next slide, please.

>> KAREN QUINONES: I am looking at the time. I see there are a couple of questions. So, let's see. I think maybe we will skip this one. I am sorry. Maybe we will skip this and go onto the next one. Next slide, please.

We will skip that one.

However, I encourage you to contact us. Feel free to contact us after this if you have more questions. Next slide. And next slide, please. Hmm. Let me see. Where is the one I wanted to show? Do you want that one or the next one, Kisha? I wanted to show the Evaluation Form.

>> KISHA GORE: I think it is next. After.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Okay, next? Let's try one more slide, Lexi. Hold on there. You know what, I think this is different. I think you have a different PowerPoint. Maybe go back a little bit to the arrow. The slide with the arrow graphic.

This is ‑‑ just really quick, this is a procedure, a flowchart, rather, that all of you can copy, or you can create something on your own for your offices. Other offices that you work with. It is nice to have a clear visual sort of structure of how the process goes so that everyone is on the same page with putting in a request, etc.

Can we add that, or ‑‑ Kisha, do you want to add the one I am talking about?

>> KISHA GORE: I think we are okay. It is just the flowchart on how you request the accommodations for your events. It is pretty self‑explanatory, just filling out that request form, and then making sure you include all the information there.

So, we can go to the next slide.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Yes. And also, we had another slide ‑‑ we do have a slide, but it is not in this PowerPoint. I think we might have two different versions of the PowerPoint, but the point being, we do have Effective Communication Professional Evaluation Forms. And the reason we have that is because it is important that we emphasize quality services.

So, we developed an Evaluation Form for either the service ‑‑ let me restate that ‑‑ the agency requesting, or the Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened individual, or individuals, to participate in that request, the people who experience the services. Both groups can fill out this form to provide their feedback.

It is just one way that we can use to help improve the services we provide on the daily.

Kisha, did you want to add to that?

>> KISHA GORE: I think that is very important to emphasize that everyone should ‑‑ that is one of our Best Practices, making sure we send out the survey so we collect the feedback. That is the only way we can make DC as accessible as possible -- by providing or getting or collecting that feedback from the community so we can elevate the experience for them. So, I would definitely emphasize you have an Evaluation Form for your participants.

I think the next slide we have on this screen is just a solution. Let's go back one more. I want to add one more thing. Sorry about that.

We know we want to close the gap. We know there are gaps all over the place. Racial gaps, gender gaps. We want to work together to close the accessibility gap. We do that with your help. Thank you so much for taking this course, and under cost savings, I always say providing access is more cost effective than a lawsuit.

I think paying for it up‑front rather than having to pay millions at the end, you will see a cost savings there. So, we always want to make sure we are making sure that we keep in mind that it is mandated, it is legally mandated, to provide accommodations when requested.

So, we just thank you so much for being inclusive, and providing accessibility, and we want to make sure we close that gap for diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Yes.

>> KISHA GORE: If I can, before we turn it over, if I can say thank you to the Interpreters, Lisa and Genina, as well as our CART Captioner, you guys were awesome! Thank you so much!

>> KAREN QUINONES: So, I think we can use the last 7 minutes, by my clock ‑‑ I think there were a couple of questions that came up that we didn't answer. Let me go back up. Maybe we should do a Post‑Survey, as well. Yes, we can fit both of those in there.

Let's go to the Post‑Survey and I can talk about the questions, too.

So, I do have a question on here ‑‑ let's see if we can read it. Dr. Drummond typed this question. With a presenter, plus a Deaf and hearing Interpreter at an event, how should they all be positioned toward each other and the audience? Is there a diagram of this for later use? Also, if you are comfortable disclosing, how much should each Communication Professional be paid? Are there equitable standards for this? Are they typically paid hour or event. What needs to be communicated to Communication Professionals to set up environmentally in advance to ensure their success?

So, that is a loaded question, but a good one! Kisha, I am thinking that you may want to take that.

>> KISHA GORE: I can tackle the Deaf and Hearing Team, the Deaf and Hearing Interpreter Team. If we are going ‑‑ and it is always going to depend on the venue. It is always going to depend on what kind of event it is.

If it is in an auditorium and you have an audience, you are going to position the Deaf person on stage, as close to the speaker as possible, and then you are going to have your hearing Interpreter either on the floor with a complete open line of sight for the Deaf Interpreter to access the information.

We have been in theaters where it doesn't work as well, because obviously house lights go down and you can't see. So, you always want to have a Spotlight or ring light that will light up the hearing Interpreter so the Deaf person can access the hearing Interpreter, but, again, it will depend on the venue, the space or what type of event it will be.

If you have something coming up very soon, we are happy to join you and give you feedback on that team and where they should be positioned.

There were so many questions. I can't remember them all. Was there another question?

>> KAREN QUINONES: Yes, there is another question in here about ‑‑ this is going back to Dr. Drummond's question. And I want to add, this is where ‑‑ to Kisha's comments ‑‑ this is where the ADA Coordinators for the event, or a person in a similar kind of role comes in handy.

Because hopefully that person is knowledgeable and has some expertise regarding what works best in different situations, different setups. And they can be of some help.

Maybe the office or agency can make sure the event goes smoothly. So an ADA Coordinator can help in that.

There is another question from Joanne that says my whole office, plus most of the work ecosystem does not, is not, accessible. And they are not sure even where to begin, so they don't even try. Is there some sort of playbook or guide to help us do that?

So, both of those questions give me and my office ideas that we can develop some sort of resources for you. I do appreciate the questions from both of you, because it helps me to recognize there are some more gaps in terms of a playbook or a guide. Off the top of my head, I am thinking that maybe the National Association of the Deaf, the NAD, sometimes they have kind of outlines, guiding principles, different scenarios, you know, that you can use. That some different companies have that place.

I am trying to think of anything else, like a playbook or a guide. I will work on that.

>> KISHA GORE: I was going to say, that may be something that our office works on next. One of our projects would be developing a playbook that we can get published and put out there so people have something to go by. That is a very great question.

One of the other ones I saw was related to how much should each Communication Professional be paid. That is always going to vary. I have seen as low as 35, and I have seen as much as 200. It is just going to depend on their certification, level of education, and level of experience. So, for me I think the median is usually 60'ish that I have seen in the DC area.

DIs and CDIs tend to charge a little bit more. So, you will see that, and that is industry‑standard.

>> KAREN QUINONES: I also want to add, the National Deaf Center in DC, post‑secondary outcomes, that is really a good resource for post‑secondary settings, like colleges.

If any of you are part of a college program that serves the Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened, NDC is terrific with their resources. If you find out they are not available, you can reach out to their organization and they will work with you to pro resources. They are very good.

But for companies, for sorry, now that I think of it, that might be something we need to develop.

So, that is it. 4:00! I have to stop talking! (Chuckles)

I want to thank NDI. I want to thank the Interpreters. I want to thank all of the audience for your engagement with us. It has been fantastic today.

Even though this is a virtual Webinar, I still felt a connection with the audience because you participated, added your comments and your time, so please reach out if there is anything else we can do for you. We look forward to connecting.

>> Thank you so much. This is wonderful.

>> KAREN QUINONES: Thank you. Thank you. It was our pleasure. We will be in touch. Thank you, all! Bye. Take care, everyone.

(Session was concluded at 4:01 PM ET)

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