

DBSC Bulletin

From the Executive Director's Desk

I am very proud to announce that DBSC has evolved to be a fundamentally sound organization after facing and conquering many challenges over the last five years. We have all learned a great deal on how to adapt to the modern trends of the Deaf-Blind (DB) community and using the resources available to us. Here are some examples of those challenges:



- All of our staff continued to work together to accomplish the vision of DBSC by providing high-quality programs to DB people. Unfortunately, we had to let go of two great staff members, Rob Roth and Theresa Smith, on December 31 because our Federal grant for the National Support Service Provider Pilot program (NSSPPP) had finally expired after it was extended three times. However, they will continue to work as contractors during the NSSPPP Phase One, which will end on June 30th.

- NSSPPP Phase One will be releasing our most exciting product, our training curriculum for those who want to become Support Service Providers (SSP) This curriculum also teaches DB how to use SSP services. Shortly after the release it will be available for viewing online. At the same time, we will be working to notify all DB leaders throughout the country about our curriculum so that they can use it in their home states to improve access for DB individuals through their own SSP programs. We are hopeful that President Obama will sign the Appropriations Bill which includes an earmark of \$200,000 to support our next phase of the NSSPPP, Phase Two. This phase will include the development of a DVD based on the curriculum and should be ready next year.

- Our determination and hard work is not limited to out-of-state endeavors. Here in our beautiful state of Washington, our SSPs at DBSC have begun using our new curriculum as well. Special kudos and thanks to those who were involved in the expansions of SSP services and Communication Facilitation programs in Yakima and Whidbey Island.

DBSC is working to replace our existing high-speed DSL services with an even better cable service with Comcast. This will allow our services to be more readily available to our clients and also provide better confidentiality and privacy when using videophones in the SSP Coordinator, Case Manager, and Bookkeeper's offices.

The Board planned an adventurous fundraiser event called The Second Jail and Bail, which was held on February 20, 2010, It turned out to be a great success! Please visit our website for more information on this event.

At the present time, we are in dire need of more board members who have diverse skills to help DBSC become more recognized on a national level. If you are interested in joining the board or you know someone who could contribute their talents to our organization, please email Angela Theriault, DBSC Board President at board@seattledbsc.org.

This year our lease at our current location, 1620 18th Avenue, will expire on September 30th. It is likely that we will not move to a new location at that time, as we were previously hoping. In the meantime, our physical address and contact information will remain the same. The next step will be to purchase a building, but first we will need to hire a bona-fide grant writer as well as a capital campaign specialist to work with us.

Special thanks go to donors, staff, board members, and the DB community for carrying the on-going torch together as one large community!

Warm regards,

Jelica Nuccio, MPH
Executive Director

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Greetings from the DBSC Board

To our great supporters, Deaf-Blind community members, family, interpreters and friends,

Jelica Nuccio resigned from her position as the Executive Director of DBSC effective March 31, 2010. She will continue to work at DBSC as the Project Director for National Support Service Project on a contractual basis. NSSPPP has been hugely successful due to the hard work of Jelica and her team.

Jelica has been a cherished and important member of our community. We value all the work she has done for our community and how she helped DBSC become strong and financially stable. Her persistence, strong work ethic, careful attention to detail and dedication to our mission will be sorely missed. Jelica could see what Deaf-Blind people needed to help them be more successful in their lives. She brought grace, humor and intelligence to her work. She has been a respectful advocate for Deaf-Blind people, showing us all with her work and life, how Deaf-Blind people can be successful.

The Board asks for your continued support of DBSC employees and the DBSC Board during this time of transition. In the interim of hiring a new Executive Director, the DBSC board will field all questions that would typically be addressed to the Executive Director. The Board is also aware that you may have questions or concerns in regards to DBSC. Please feel free to email the Board at board@seattledbcs.org. The Board is beginning the task of finding a replacement Executive Director; we understand this will be top priority in the coming months.

Our Board members work very hard to make DBSC more effective. We currently have six members on the Board and are in the process of recruiting an additional five Board members. If you are motivated to help make DBSC as successful as possible, have a strong respect for the DBSC community and are interested in joining the Board feel free to email us at board@dbscseattle.org.

We have had a couple of successful fundraisers this year including the Walk-a-thon in September and recently the Jail N Bail. Thank you so much to everyone in the community that came out to make each event successful. If you have any fundraising ideas please be sure to email them to us! We look forward to more fundraisers this year!



Have a wonderful year!!
Very best regards,

Angela Theriault

DBSC Board of Directors

President:	Angela Theriault
Vice Pres:	Position Open
Treasurer:	Steve Hill
Secretary:	Michelle Miles
Members:	Merrilee Avila Patrick Cave Holly Delcambre

Community Events

Seabeck Deaf-Blind Retreat

The Lighthouse for the Blind's 32nd annual Deaf-Blind Retreat will be held August 29 - September 4, 2010. This week long event in Seabeck, WA, is a balance of activities, relaxation, communication and support for DB campers and qualified volunteer interpreter/guides.

For more info please visit www.deafblindlh.org/seabeck or email DBRetreat@seattlelh.org.

WSDBC Colombian Dinner

WSDBC will be hosting a Colombian Dinner on May 22nd at the St. Patrick's Church (815 East Edgar, Seattle) from 3pm to 7pm. Tickets can be purchased from the WSDBC Fundraising Committee, please email Maxine Schnebele at MaxineS58@gmail.com for more information.

Deaf-Blind Community Classes

The Lighthouse for the Blind is continuing to hold the Deaf-Blind Community classes at Seattle Central Community College in room BE1110. The doors open at 4:30pm and class is from 5:30 to 7pm. They feature a variety of topics and speakers. The class is scheduled every other Wednesday, please check www.deafblindlh.org for dates.

If you would like more information please contact Karen Park at kpark@seattlelh.org.

Deaf & Deaf-Blind Community Picnic

The Annual Deaf & Deaf-Blind Community Picnic hosted by several community agencies and organizations is set tentatively for June 12th. For more details please email AnnualCommunityPicnic@gmail.com.

DBSC Staff Updates

Support Service Provider (SSP) Program

Ray Swicker, SSP Coordinator



A New Season –
Whoa, another season has gone by so quickly and spring is here! This means there will be a significant increase in people enjoying leisure activities such as traveling out of town/state, and this impacts the schedules of SSPs and DB people. I encourage you to plan your travel and SSP dates well in advance to avoid scheduling conflicts, and to put together a back up plan if needed. I also would

like to remind you: according to DBSC's SSP guidelines and policies you must request a sub SSP 7 business days prior to the date of service needed. If you have not had the opportunity to read our most current SSP guidelines and policies or would like to review them, I will be more than happy to send you a copy in your preferred format (large print, Braille or email attachment), or meet you in person.

SSP Recruitment –

We have been experiencing a slight shortage of SSPs in the past few months; we are working immensely hard to recruit more SSPs to accommodate the needs and growth of our DB community here in Seattle. There will be SSP training on March 25, 26 & 27th in the hopes of recruiting more SSPs to be available to DB participants. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming an SSP, volunteer or paid, please contact me at ssp@seattledbsc.org.

SSP Training Curriculum –

I am pleased to announce that we are currently adopting the brand new SSP training curriculum developed by DBSC's NSSPPP (National Support Service Provider Pilot Program) team. This intensive program consists of three levels of training (introduction, intermediate and advanced) for SSPs to provide services. It also has information which educates DB participants on how to use SSP services more efficiently. I would like to take a moment to say thanks to Jelica Nuccio for making this possible as well as the NSSPPP team: aj granda, Theresa Smith, Rob Roth & Jackie Matthews. THANK YOU!

(Photo above: Ray Swicker in the rain at DBSC's Annual Walk-a-thon, busy coordinating SSPs.)

Communication Facilitator (CF) Program

Jackie Engler-Morris, Project Coordinator



It has been another successful year for our CF program. You might recall seeing in our recent Annual Report that DB consumers are continuing to use our skilled CFs who provide access to information during their videophone (VP) calls.

We took on our very first CF staff, Ray Swicker, in July 2009 and he has been able to meet DB consumers when they need to make VP calls! If Ray is not available, we turn to our current CFs who may be available. We work hard to ensure that we do

not let DB consumers miss their important VP calls. Thanks to our wonderful CFs!

We have updated our CF curriculum for both DB consumers and CFs this past fall. You may be aware that there is new technology and updates such as the new

mobile videophone (MVP) and Sorenson VP-200. Both have been integrated into the new curriculum.

Lastly, we are also providing CF services to homebound clients. We have always provided CF services at DBSC, the Lighthouse (LH) and the Deaf Center in Yakima WA, but when a DB consumer is unable to go to work at the LH and has no VP at their home, we are now able to send our CF to the client's home. Our CF staff will carry a device, a notebook similar to laptop with built-in webcam, and the DB consumer will be able to access the information through the CF and the notebook! If a DB consumer is homebound for a medical reason such as a broken leg and cannot travel to DBSC or the LH, he/she is first required to send medical documents from his/her doctor to the CF program coordinator before he/she can receive the homebound CF services.

For more information, contact Jackie at jengler@seattledbsc.org.

(Photo above: Jackie Engler-Morris stand outside DBSC.)

DBSC Staff Updates Continued

Senior Housing Options for Deaf-Blind Seniors

Allie Joiner, Advocacy Specialist



As seniors gradually grow older and eventually face various challenges, questions arise:

- Do I call for remodeling in my own place making it more accessible?
- Do I need to move?
- Do I move south where it is warmer?
- Do I move to a retirement center

where the apartment would be more accessible – bathroom equipped with a shower, rails etc ?

- Do I move to an assisted living place where I no longer need to fix my own meals?
- Do I move to a nursing home because I am no longer able to dress or bathe myself?

These questions are tough. Growing old and approaching the end of life is inevitable, like Benjamin Franklin said *“But in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.”* It is a slow process for most of us. It creeps up on us and then wham!

The challenge is WHEN to make a decision.

Naturally we want to have control in our lives. We want to make our own decisions because we know our own needs the best. However, our minds do deteriorate, so are we making good decisions? This is where a doctor comes in and does an assessment and helps determine where one stands in terms of well-being and safety. We need to be proactive in order to maintain the quality of life we wish to have. This is done by talking with other seniors and asking them about their experiences. Talking with loved ones, and asking good questions of different agency providers are also helpful.

It is definitely helpful when a will is written, along with health directives, durable power of attorney and full power of attorney. Many doctors may discuss the Physician's Order of Living Sustaining Treatment (POLST). This is an important document which reflects a patient's wishes close to the end her/his life, such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or do not resuscitate (DNR).

In the case of a DB person all information is critical to helping to make a good decision. Communication must be conducted in the DB's preferred modality, tracking or tactile style. Some contract terms at senior housing places may call for specific requirements regarding rent

and other fees that may cause concerns. It is important this information is conveyed accurately to the DB senior.

It gets more complicated when it comes to finances. The DB senior has the right to know what to expect of the financial picture. For example, on a private basis the senior may spend as much as she/he pleases, but on Medical Assistance (Medicaid as it is called in some states) she/he may be limited to an allowance of 60+ dollars per month. Having supplemental insurance and/or long term care insurance may help to give more options.

As for accommodations (fire/smoke detectors) one should check with the state regulations, but the DB seniors must have a doorbell ringer connected to whatever meets their needs (fan, vibrating pager, etc).

If a DB senior were to decide to move to a certain place, it is imperative that s/he visit the place, not once, but several times to feel and size up the whole place, including personnel who will be working closely with her/him. For example, one should walk along the wall of her/his own room to get a feeling as to the size of the room that may become her/his permanent residence. The DB senior certainly will benefit from mobility training so that the person can visualize the whole place including the exterior parts. DB training should be implemented in order to help the provider and staff understand the 'Do's and Don'ts' with DB people. Another example: one must never move furniture around without letting the DB person know. Other tips: Never grab the hand/arm of a DB person to lead him/her across the room. The caregiver should arrange for interpreting services if there is no one who signs in that facility. Medication is likely to be monitored by the provider/caregiver so records will be kept; however the DB senior should be informed what the pills are for.

This means communication, communication, communication.

Adjustment to new surroundings will be either easy or hard. It depends on the attributes/personality of the DB senior as to how she/he will respond to the new home. What matters the most is the DB senior's ownership in making her/his own well-informed choices, rather than giving in to the suggestions of loved ones or other well-meaning friends.

DB Seniors Gatherings

Jackie Engler-Morris, Project Coordinator

Thanks to Jenné Chalfant who worked hard coordinating monthly gatherings. Jackie Engler-Morris is now back to coordinating the gatherings since last fall. DB seniors have taken several “educational” classes: Prevent Falling, Stroke Prevention, and Nutrition. They have learned so much and are able to take better care of themselves! Also, there were field trips: walking at Alki Beach, a ferry ride to Bremerton, lunch at Marie Callender’s restaurant and another lunch at a local Mexican restaurant for Margarita’s birthday. Finally, we had a wonderful holiday potluck and fun trivia game last December!



Seniors Mike King, Margarita Eng and Robert Blumenau enjoy a meal with SSPs at Marie Callender’s restaurant.



Robert J. Stepler chats with Polly Mansfield during the Seniors’ Holiday Party at DBSC.

Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II

Korian Thomas, Case Manager



During the past year our DB clients have faced several challenges regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II This contains regulations that cover public accommodations provided by hotels, restaurants, non- profit agencies, private organizations, and other public services.

This law includes the requirement to provide specific accommodations for DB persons for the purpose of

accessing information during meetings. The most common scenario occurs when a DB individual visits a public sector (e.g. dentist, veterinary office, wellness center) and is often faced with the following statement, “It is not the company’s responsibility to provide you a specific accommodation, such as an interpreter or SSP, so you will need to bring your own interpreter or SSP.”

This example may be a violation of your rights which are protected by ADA. Here is some advice to help you stay calm and educate the public about ADA Title II:

When you schedule an appointment with a receptionist, and the receptionist refuses your request for an interpreter, politely ask to speak with his/her supervisor about your request. If the supervisor refuses, politely ask that he/she provide you the contact information for the Human Resources Department at their office. Human Resources should review your request for a specific accommodation, and should also educate the receptionist about the company’s responsibility to provide specific accommodations for your appointment. Take this process step by step until you get someone who will listen and understand your rights.

If you need more information about ADA, please contact me via email at kthomas@seattledbsc.org.

(Photo above: Korian Thomas at the DBSC table during the 2009 Seattle PrideFest at the Seattle Center.)

Thank you to all of our Donors

July 1, 2009 - December 31, 2009

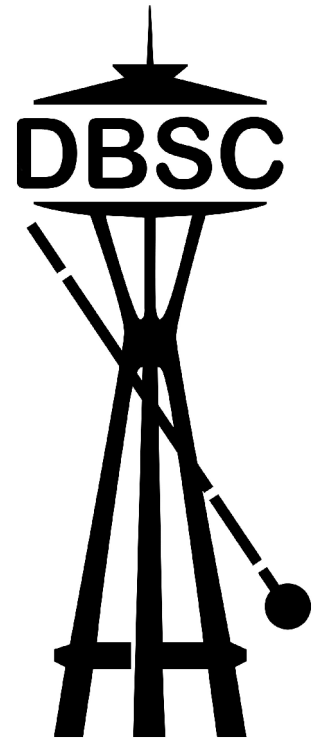
Ahness, David	Healy, Jean	Riley, N.A.
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Thank to all of our Volunteers

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Cardorette, Acacia	Johnson, Michael		

DBSC Donation Form

The Deaf-Blind Service Center is a non-profit organization. We are funded through government contracts and individual donations. All contributions are tax deductible within the rules and regulations set by the IRS.



Your support means so much to us!

Yes! I would like to make a donation. Enclosed is a contribution of:

- \$25
- \$50
- \$100
- \$250
- \$500
- \$1000
- Other amount: \$ _____

This donation in in honor of: _____

I want this donation to be anonymous

Name

Address

Phone

Email

Donations can also be made via credit card online at www.seattledbsc.org

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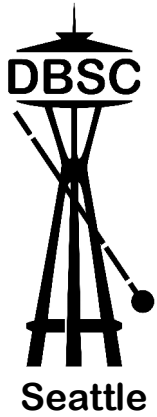
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Name as appears on card

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Deaf-Blind Service Center

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DBSC Staff Holiday 2009! Top row: Korian Thomas, Waylon Mathern, Ray Swicker & Kelly Ballard. Bottom row: Jelica Nuccio (with her service dog, Cliff), Jackie Engler-Morris & Allie Joiner.

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