



# ANNUAL REPORT

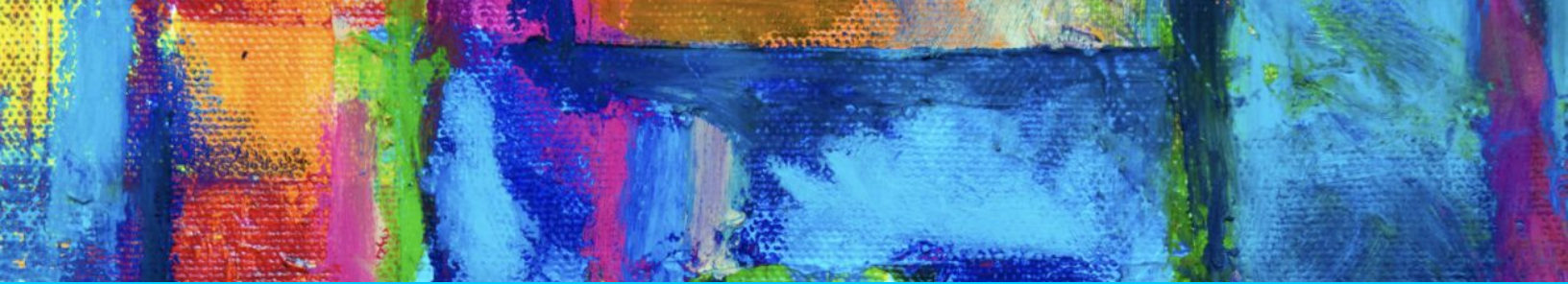
2022 - 2023



**SDHHS**

Saskatchewan Deaf and  
Hard of Hearing Services

Bridging the Gap



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# CHECK SDHHS OUT ON

Facebook



Instagram



Website



Social Media  
Handle

@sdhhsinc

## CONTACT US

### Phone

306-665-6575

### Toll Free Phone

1-800-667-6575

### Text

306-229-2010

### Fax

306-665-7746

### Skype

saskatoon@sdhhs.com

### Facetime

sdhhsapple@icloud.com

## REGINA OFFICE

#2343 Broad St. Regina, SK S4P-1Y9

## SASKATOON OFFICE

#3-511 1st Ave N. Saskatoon, SK S7K 1X5

# VISION & VALUES

**SDHHS has been Serving Saskatchewan since 1981**

## OUR MISSION

To support the independence of Deaf, Deafened and Hard of Hearing people by providing services which enhance their quality of life.

## OUR VISION

A world without barriers for people who are Deaf, Deafened, or Hard of Hearing.

## OUR VALUES

- Communication with respect, dignity, and cultural sensitivity.
- Collaboration and cooperation among individuals and communities.
- Self-determination, empowerment, and choice.
- Operational integrity and accountability that inspires trust.
- Accessibility.



# WHO WE ARE

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Paulette Smith..... President  
Michelle Grodecki..... Vice/Acting President  
Gord Hein..... Past President  
Jessica Tiefenbach..... Secretary  
Art Hillcox..... Treasurer  
Leslie Dunn..... Director  
Mustafa Alabssi..... Director  
Fatima Nafisa..... Director  
Patti Trofimenkoff..... Director  
Shelly Carver..... Director  
Allard Thomas..... Director

## REGINA OFFICE:

Karen Nurkowski..... Interpreter  
  
Patti Spicer..... Vocational Worker &  
Early Childhood and  
Family Services  
  
Rae-Mairi Richardson.... Sign Support Professional  
Deaf Interpreter

## SASKATOON OFFICE:

Nairn Gillies..... Executive Director  
Kami Harbidge..... Executive Assistant  
Human Resources  
Finance  
  
Ren Perra..... Office Coordinator  
  
Brandie Radcliffe..... Interpreter  
  
Jody Thompson..... Vocational Worker &  
Youth Worker  
  
Robyn Holmes..... Early Childhood, Youth  
and Family Services  
  
Krissy Haines..... Sign Support Professional  
Alanda McLeod..... Sign Support Professional  
  
Nicole Musey..... 4C Preschool Teacher  
SonJa VanEe..... Education Assistant  
Ashley Bucknall..... Education Assistant

## REMOTE OFFICES:

Sue Schmid..... Interpreter  
Barb Froese..... Interpreter

**A BIG Thank You to the Board and Staff of SDHHS for all  
your amazing work through this last year!**

# Freelancers & Contractors

## **FREELANCE CNS PROVIDERS**

Donna Whitelaw  
Rhonda Leier

## **FREELANCE INTERPRETERS**

Carla Klassen  
Maureen Stuart  
Rachel Janzen

## **ASL FACILITATOR**

Janet Dittrick

## **OFFICE CLEANERS**

Kainat Wahid  
Huda Kayed  
Dena Johns

## **ASL INSTRUCTORS**

Twyla Chartrand  
Caroline Bergbusch  
Nicole Musey  
Rae-Mairi Richardson  
Alanda McLeod  
Warren Trofimenkoff

## **CONTRACTORS**

Burton Bird  
Alanda McLeod  
Shelly Carver  
Sheri Chambers  
Leslie Dunn  
Isaac Marsden  
Vicki McLaughlin  
Nicole Musey  
Fatima Nafisa  
Rae-Mairi Richardson  
Adam Stratychuk



# THANK YOU!

## TO OUR VOLUNTEERS ACROSS SASKATCHEWAN!

Allard Thomas

Andrew Knorr

Art Hillcox

Ashley Bucknall

Astrid Magallanes

Bob Hutchinson

Bron Nurkowski

Clinton Miller

Darrell Horychun

Isaac Marsden

Joshua Zbitniff

Kainat Wahid

Kayleigh Manastyrski

Kerra Duchek

Kyley Cross

Leslie Dunn

Lisa Cheyne-Zanyk

Lucille Hutchinson

Michelle Grodecki

Nicole Musey

Obii Udemgba

Yamama Alrweilei

WKC D/HH Program Students

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**THANKS TO THE SDHHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
FOR VOLUNTEERING THEIR TIME AND ENERGY TO SDHHS!**

# Interim President of SDHHS Board of Directors President's Message Michelle Grodecki

First, I would like to thank fellow Board of Directors and Staff for all the support as I transitioned to interim Board President this past October. It's been wonderful having the ability to meet in person again as a board. My regrets for not attending this year's AGM, a prior family commitment has kept me away. Thank you to Vice-President, Paulette Smith for chairing this year's meeting.

In October, the SDHHS board and staff met for a weekend retreat at Manitou Springs. We worked together with a strategic planner to help create priorities for SDHHS for the next 5 years. The planner compiled our weekend's work and sent the report to Nairn to use as a stepping-stone going forward. One key priority area identified was the need to establish an office in Northern Saskatchewan to provide much needed assistance to individuals there. In my last conversation with Nairn, he is working with Northern Tribal Agencies to potentially share office space to make this dream a reality.

The Board has met a few times throughout the year to discuss key business pertaining to SDHHS. Priority for the Board continues to be the recruitment and retention of quality interpreting staff and providing appropriate, accessible, and relevant services to Saskatchewan's Deaf & Hard of Hearing community. The Board aims to increase public awareness about issues facing DHH individuals, including better access to post-secondary services and removing barriers to employment.

It is an exciting time to be in Saskatchewan, a bill for The Accessible Saskatchewan Act was introduced in the Legislature the fall of 2022 *{and received Royal Assent on May 17, 2023}*. It will be important for SDHHS to continue to be staunch advocates for appropriate access for the community even with the introduction of this bill.

This past May, the executive met with the auditors from MWC Chartered Professional Accountants LLP to discuss the 2022-23 financials. During that meeting, it was discussed the need to improve our accounting practices to ensure that "financial statements are providing clear transparency to the use of each funding agencies money". These recommendations will be put into place and follow-up will take place with the Board in the coming months to help ensure our funders are provided with an accurate picture of funds needed vs. Funds spent.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns about SDHHS, please contact Nairn. If a resolution cannot be found, please reach out to the board president for support.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Grodecki  
Interim President of SDHHS Board of Directors



# SDHHS Executive Director's Message Nairn Gillies

Many exciting things have happened in this last year, and much like the arrival of the springtime, some of them happened with lots of flash and flare and others happened quaintly and quietly. On Wednesday May 17th, Bill 103, "The Accessible Saskatchewan Act" was passed to Royal Assent and officially recognizes American Sign Language as the language of the Deaf in Saskatchewan.

The fact that Canada and Saskatchewan have moved forward to pass this kind of legislation is evidence that Canada's Deaf and Hard of Hearing community has been able to advocate for themselves and for future generations of Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens. I have been to many meetings over the years with numerous Deaf and Hard of Hearing spokespersons, and I am so thrilled that I have seen this day finally arrive.

I am also very happy to see so many happy smiling young people from preschoolers to young adults being served by our staff. We have built relationships all around the province for sign language supports, we have record-high numbers in our sign language classes, and the community is growing.

Our sign language support outreach team has made contact with eight northern communities and provides services for clients living in remote areas both in person and online. Our language and literacy objectives are being met.

We have been hard at work continuing to film children's stories in ASL for public literacy and language acquisition. These books are signed, in ASL by many Deaf and Hard of Hearing Volunteers across the province. These children's stories have many benefits, and are vital in assisting children to learn language through ASL exposure.

The Ministry of Education has met many members of the community and approved the Signing Naturally curriculum for high schools. Board and Staff are continuing to develop this into a pilot project to have DHH role models in classrooms.

# ...CONTINUED

We have discussed establishing a satellite office in La Ronge to meet the growing needs of the DHH community that is north of Prince Albert. Currently we are supporting 30 children and their families north of Prince Albert. The distance education hybrid model of accessible education and inclusion seems to be working... but we still have much work to do to meet the needs. We have also begun wellness checks and home visits for seniors and people who continue to be isolated. As always, we advocate for enhanced services for DHH people in Saskatchewan.

The interpreting team, and the video experts on staff, are in the process of making the SGI Saskatchewan Government Insurance Driver Training manual accessible in American Sign Language. We have met with the leadership at SGI and showed them this project. We are looking forward to a continued relationship with other agencies to make their work accessible as well.

DHH role-models have been very active in supporting DHH young adults to become active on boards, and in learning how to participate in our Saskatchewan community. I see leaders developing new ideas and programs that bridge gaps in services everyday. I am very proud to be part of this vibrant and growing community.

I am grateful for the privilege of serving as the Executive Director of Saskatchewan Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services. It is an honour to be part of a team that changes lives, breaks down barriers, and instills hope in the heart of individuals facing challenges.

With great pride and optimism for the future,

Nairn Gillies

# SDHHS: A YEAR IN REVIEW

- Zoom Staff Meetings were hosted every Wednesday morning.
- Interpreting for Saskatchewan residents was offered through Zoom, FaceTime, Skype and in-person.
- SDHHS connected with clients and community through video calls and in-person when our offices re-opened.
- ASL classes continued online through Zoom across the province, and in-person in Saskatoon 2022 - 2023, and in-person Regina in 2023.
- SDHHS provided interpreting for “Dimension in Sound” at Broadway Theatre, June 2022.
- SDHHS hosted a Kids Summer Day Camp for 4 days in August 2022!
- We offered interpreting at the one day, monthly tour and art-making activities at the Remai Modern in April, May, June and September 2022.
- SDHHS hosted a Trivia Night in Saskatoon at the Capitol Club in May 2022
- CCCC Preschool continued in-person classes at St. Augustine School.
- SDHHS hosted a Fall Fundraiser at the end of September 2022.
- Klass A Auctions hosted an online auction fundraiser for SDHHS in November 2022.
- Regina and Saskatoon offices hosted a Holiday Cheer event in each city in December 2022 to spread cheer.
- Little Buttons continued in Spring 2022 and started up again in March 2023 in Saskatoon.
- SDHHS was an exhibitor at the Saskatoon Family Expo, March, 2023
- SDHHS Staff continued ongoing training to improve their professional skills, to ensure we are providing the best services possible for the DHH Community!



# Youth Events

SDHHS recognized there was a need in Regina for youth activities so we applied for a grant from the Saskatchewan Lotteries Community Grant Program through the City of Regina, to make sure the youth had opportunity to network, socialize, and to learn from mentors and from each other.

The dollars granted from the SK Lotteries Community Grant allowed SDHHS to hire a couple part-time, DHH, contract youth workers to help plan, facilitate, and organize events. This also gave SDHHS an opportunity to help these contract workers gain work experience and earn a bit of money.

A big thank you to both Isaac Marsden and Fatima Nafisa for continuing in your roles for youth programming in Regina with Rae-Mairi! They both put in many hours planning, creating advertisements and videos in ASL, and running the events to help engage the DHH youth in Regina.

Here is a list of the events that were hosted throughout the 2022 - 2023 fiscal year in Regina:



- Regina's Battle Arena (May 20)
- Deaf Movie (May 28th)
- Social Game Night (June 11)
- Planet Laser (June 25)
- Youth In The Park (June 26)
- Swim Lessons (July 11 - 15th)
- Bike Day (July 10)
- Canoe & Kayak Lesson (July 16)
- Queen City Ex (August 6)
- Escape Room (August 14)
- Science Centre (August 22)
- Shock House (October 30)
- Climbing Centre (November 19)
- Escape Room (November 27)
- Twilight Sightseeing (December 5)
- Social Game Night (January 28)
- Frost (February 11)
- Snowshoeing Day (February 18)
- Get Air Trampoline Park (March 12)
- Escape Room (March 26)



There was an average attendance of about 8 to 12 youth at each event. In total, 171 people participated in youth programming in the 2022 - 2023 fiscal year (some of these were the same people attending different events).

# ...CONTINUED

There were over 45 hours of youth programming offered over the last 12 months in Regina.

Thank you to the volunteers that donated their time at some of the events and activities with the youth!

We have had a great time building a stronger DHH Youth Community in Regina. This opportunity would not have been possible without the grant from the SK Lotteries Community Grant. We all have different skills, expertise, language, and diversity! I believe our most memorable time was at the escape room and game night. Why? we used Claisffersers as a joke to cheer up and challenge our ASL Skills and creativity! A second memorable event was the mini golf because it was competitive.

The Regina DHH Youth Programming has increased awareness, given skill-building and life skills to the DHH youth participants, businesses are becoming more aware regarding how to book and use an interpreter, and of course it has provided opportunity that wasn't there before to the DHH youth in Saskatchewan. The DHH Youth Programming gives it's participants Confidence, friendship and a sense of belonging.

This year coming up, SDHHS is hoping to have a couple bigger youth gatherings in both Regina and Saskatoon to bring together all the DHH youth in Saskatchewan!



# Front Desk

Hi folks! Ren here.

This was my 2<sup>nd</sup> year working with SDHHS, and I still like it here.

I get to work on so many different projects and work with so many different people, it's a very special job and I am grateful to be a part of this community!

Some highlights from the year:

- I ran an SDHHS booth at the Saskatoon Fringe Festival – we gave out frisbees, freezies, and beach balls to kids and taught them to fingerspell their names. It was a good opportunity to educate people about what we do here at SDHHS.
- SDHHS had its first ever Trivia Night, and it was a huge success! I asked trivia questions and teams competed to see who would get the most points. The winning team got some cool prizes! We also had a 50/50 raffle, burgers, drinks – it was a wonderful night with wonderful people.
- I was the Emcee for our annual Fall Fundraiser Dinner and Auction – We raised over \$7000! It was a wonderful night at LB Distillery. A Special thanks to all of the staff, volunteers, and local businesses for making it happen!
- One of my responsibilities is to organize ASL classes – take registrations, payments, work on the schedule, etc. This year has seen tons of growth in interest for ASL classes. We had **153 students** from April 2022 to March 2023... and next year looks like will be even higher!
- In October, our Staff and Board got together at Manitou Beach for a Strategic Planning Meeting. It was really informative and collaborative, and was great to make sure staff and board are all on the same page. It was also a great opportunity to spend some time with my teammates outside of the office setting!
- I got to work at many other special events; The Children's festival, the online fundraiser, Coffee Visits at the office... it's awesome to see so many people after so many years without any public events.

I am really looking forward to the next year! There are many more fun projects in the works. Working at SDHHS, there will always be great learning opportunities and enriching experiences.

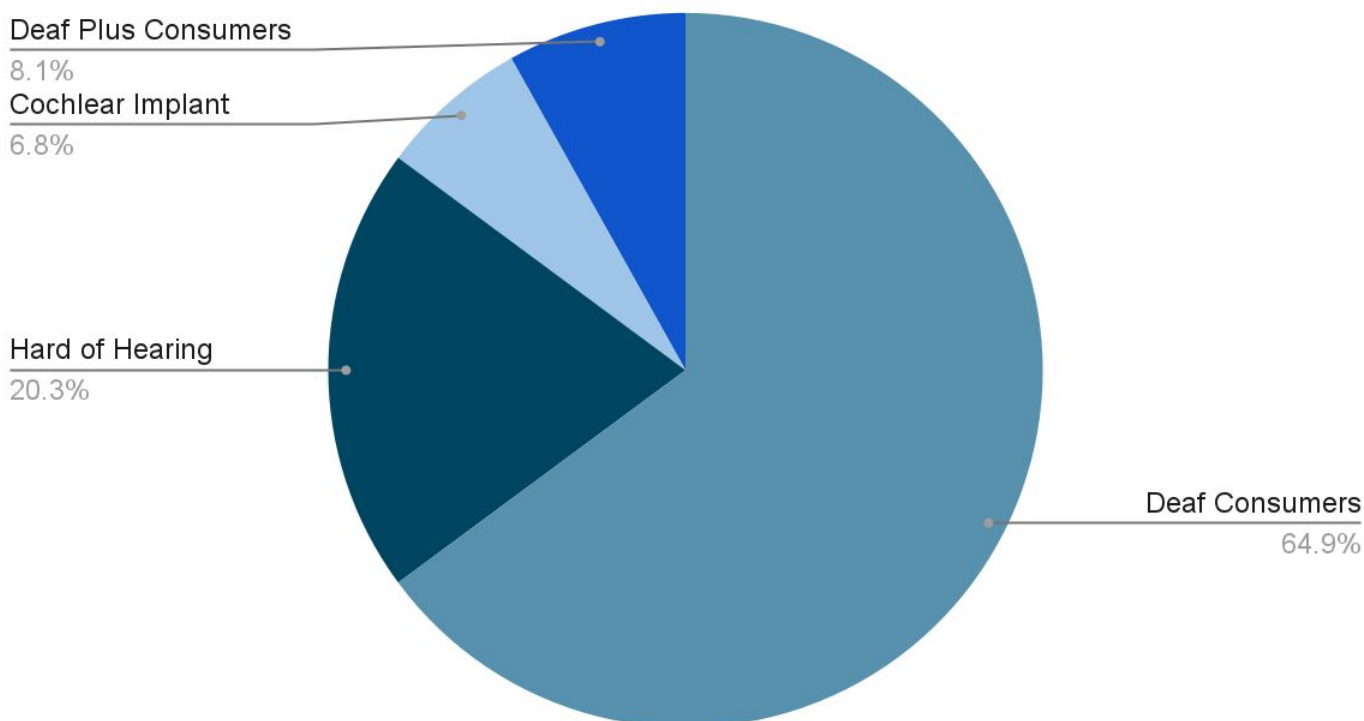


# Vocational Education & Employment

## Vocational Department Consumer Statistics

April 1st, 2022 - March 31st, 2023

### SDHHS Vocational Consumers



The Vocational Department at SDHHS has been extremely busy, however, we have had a wonderful year! From April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 through to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, we worked with more than 63 D/deaf, DeafPlus, and Hard of Hearing clients.

Our duties vary and we meet individuals where they are at. Some of our consumers are in high school and transitioning to work or to post-secondary education. Others are already employed and need supports in job maintenance. And others still, are looking for work and needing resumes updated, or job search and interview supports. We performed an on-site workplace assessment to evaluate and recommend any accommodations for d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals which increased awareness in those workplaces and formed great working relationships with the employers.

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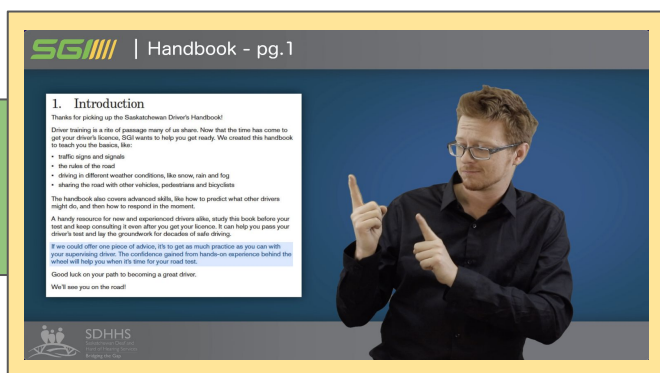
We have had challenges this year finding assistive technology that specifically matched certain hearing aids and cochlear implants. However, we have established good relationships with a few Audiologists in Saskatchewan, and they were an incredible help in matching technology for our consumers!

In April, 2022, we hosted a workshop called, “Learn how to create social media content in American Sign Language (ASL)”. We are excited that our Deaf and CODA presenters, Dawn Jani Birley, Robyn Holmes, and Krissy Haines joined us, and they taught us how to make videos with different camera angles, how to adjust lighting, what type of filming to use, how to appear professional on camera, and so much more! This workshop was hosted over 4 days and was a great success!

At the beginning of September in 2022, with help from our SSPs Krissy Haines and Leslie Dunn, we hosted a sewing workshop in Regina and Saskatoon at the same time on the same days. These workshops are valuable because they teach participants new vocabulary, how to read patterns and follow instructions, take measurements and utilize math skills; we also discussed different types of fabrics and their costs, and what it would be like to set up a home-based business sewing. This was a huge learning experience for many of our clients (especially with new vocabulary and measurements). We were able to connect all the participants on Zoom so they could see the progress each other was making and show-off their creations to each other in Regina and in Saskatoon. It was a fun time!

At the beginning of 2023, we started planning for future workshops and courses. We are establishing relationships with training companies and have plans to offer courses such as First Aid/CPR/AED, Forklift, Skid Steer, and Safety courses.

We also had a new contract worker start on a project for us in March, translating the SGI Driver’s manual into ASL so that it is fully accessible to the D/deaf and Hard of Hearing community in Saskatchewan! This project should be completed in 2023 and be ready for consumers to have full access very soon!



Adam Stratyckuk working on the SGI Driver’s manual.



# Interpreting

During the 2022 – 2023 fiscal year, we have maintained a solid consistent team of Interpreters across the province. Karen Nurkowski is in Regina, Sue Schmid is in Prince Albert, Brandie Radcliffe is in Saskatoon, and Barb Froese is in Swift Current. While all four interpreters are based out of their location, they are itinerant in nature as well. Throughout the year, there are many travel days to various locations around the province. It is always great to get out and be in people's home communities, and to see each other in person. Along with staff interpreters we have a few freelance interpreters: Carla Klassen, Rachel Janzen, and Maureen Stewart.

## SDHHS Interpreting assignments

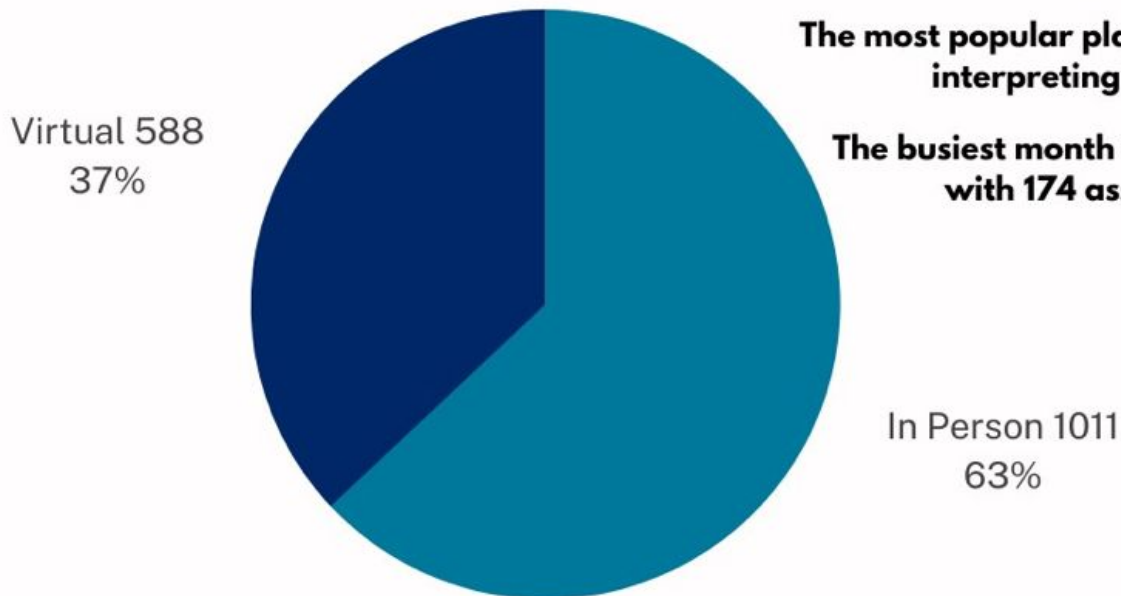
**APRIL 2022 – MARCH 2023**

**Total number of assignments is 1606**

### FUN FACTS

**The most popular platform for virtual interpreting is Zoom**

**The busiest month was March 2023 with 174 assignments**



Several translation projects have taken place this year. These translation numbers have not been factored into the statistics for this report.

Thanks to Ren, the SDHHS Office Coordinator, the efficiency of processing requests has greatly improved this year. He has guided us away from the arduous paper trail of request forms to a simpler system, and has streamlined the scheduling process for interpreters. This new process allows the team to have clear, effective, and efficient communication.

In 2022, the interpreting team had the opportunity to mentor three interpreting students during their practicum placements. Each of the students came from a different interpreting training program in Western Canada: Rachel from Red River College; Rebecca from Douglas College; and Lindsay from Lakeland College. We would like to thank these students for choosing to do their practicum in Saskatchewan. We would also thank the community for welcoming these students into your personal lives and community events. This experience allowed the students to hone their ASL skills, to practice their interpreting skills, and increase the breadth and depth of their cultural awareness.

When Covid 19 shut down access to services in 2020, SDHHS provided Saskatchewan's major hospitals with iPads that could easily connect to interpreting services. Those iPads are still available at the hospitals, and we are continuing to work on how to offer flawless access given the limitations of hospital wifi.

**Ipads are located at major hospitals across the province should you require ASL interpreting services while in hospital:**

- Prince Albert at Victoria Hospital
- Regina at both Pasqua Hospital and Regina General Hospital
- Saskatoon at City Hospital, Royal University Hospital and St. Paul's Hospital
- Moose Jaw at F.H. Wigmore Hospital

In the event of an emergency before or after office hours, SDHHS continues to have an emergency interpreter available. To access an \*emergency interpreter after hours:

Call, text or Facetime: 1-306-514-7644  
Skype: sdhhs911

An \*EMERGENCY is defined as:

- Arrested or charged by the police
- Emergency health issue at the hospital
- 911

# Sign Support Professionals

Alanda McLeod, Krissy Haines, and Rae-Mairi Richardson

Sign support varies for the individuals in our Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. The very unique and diverse skills and abilities of the SSP team bring a collective of opportunities to advocate, educate and support while maintaining the individual identity of each member we provide services to. When people feel they are treated fairly and have an equal chance to thrive, it can foster a sense of unity, cooperation, and collective well-being.

With two Deaf and one CODA SSP team members, we have complete cultural competence to respect the communities with their varying degrees of cultural, social, and linguistic backgrounds. This ensures inclusivity when advocating and educating for social change.

Alanda joined SDHHS in Nov 2022 as a contract worker and then accepted a full time SSP position in March 2023. It is crazy to think about working with a variety of duties for almost a year, it went by so fast! While it is busy work, she is happy to do this as her job. Alanda has a great interest in helping the Deaf Community navigate their way through school, work and events. She likes to push herself outside of her comfort zone and build confidence as a person in leadership, and see what she can do as a role model.

We have presented to Medical students and Elders about Deaf Awareness and about the DHH community needs and their educational journeys.

Each client has unique strengths, weaknesses and learning styles. Alanda is glad for the SSP team when looking for guidance and seeking feedback, brainstorming how to overcome challenges, adapting to new situations and witnessing positive outcomes.

There is a big learning curve to navigating the many roles under the SSP umbrella: Job coach, ASL instructor, Presenter, community support, Preschool Assistant, Life Skills Coach, Researcher... Alanda can't wait to see what else can be learned!

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Rae-Mairi has been continuing work with many different schools; mostly Northern communities, but some in Southern SK as well. She believes in encouragement and empowerment of DHH from both sides with their learning. She has been traveling all throughout the province every month as well as doing lots of virtual sessions per week with many students, their families and EAs. She has been seeing those people improve greatly in their sign language and have better access to learning of culture. There is lots of positive energy and motivation gained in the communities Rae-Mairi is working with.

# ... CONTINUED

Rae-Mairi is continuing work with Youth Programming for Regina as well. The youth have had tons of fun! She just recently worked with YMCA and hopes that both SDHHS and YMCA will work with DHH Youth for future workshops and activities. She has noticed that some of the youth have improved their social skills with the common denominator being ASL. This has increased their self-esteem and given them pride in their identity as a DHH person.

She has provided lots of moral support and shared knowledge regarding lifestyles with many of her clients. Rae-Mairi had taken classes and workshops from banking to medical topics to ensure she is knowledgeable for the clients she is working with. And, she has been providing ASL support to accommodate families with busy schedules. She enjoys teaching ASL in communities, schools and in the formal ASL classes.

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Krissy has been working hard at researching policy and collecting resources to present clear solutions with positive impact, specific to our Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities. This includes participating in the CRA accessibility consultation run by the Delaney group, attending the CCDI (Canadian Congress on Disability Inclusion) online event, and collecting content specific to Saskatchewan's Deaf community to provide representation for our province to SLIC (like the Royal Assent of Bill 103!)

This is a challenging process, and while she finds information to support the case for change, she has the ability to translate it and share it with her fellow SSPs in ASL to ensure full understanding and give our collaboration of advocacy an effective outcome.

In addition to this, Krissy is a voice for her clients within the support systems outside of SDHHS to ensure they have no barriers in their access to other organizations. This helps to maintain equity in the community.

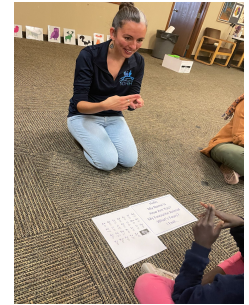
While we all have different roles within our same job title, we all love what we do and bring out the best in each other's strengths to help put Saskatchewan's Deaf and Hard of Hearing persons first.



# Early Childhood and Family Services

The Early Childhood & Family Services staff have had an action-packed and positive year! It has been wonderful to meet new and former clients in person again, and host events for children, parents and the community. This has kept us VERY BUSY all year!

Little Buttons is up and running again. In April, 2022 it was housed in Channel Performance, in Sutherland. The program relocated to the Saskatoon Early Years Family Resource Centre in Spring of 2023. The new space is fantastic and is a perfect fit to house the program. Robyn has worked with many families with young children and babies to converse in Sign Language. The kids were always excited to see what was inside Robyn's blue tote - a definite favorite part of the program!



Throughout the summer, we hosted the SDHHS Summer Day Camp. It was wonderful time to have Warren Trofimenkoff and Nicole Musey with us to teach and play with the children. From what Robyn heard, the kids are anxiously looking forward to the next one!

The team felt that we needed to expand our resources for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children. With that request, we took additional training from Northern Signs Research, webinars from different organizations, and continued connecting with other organizations across Canada. We continued to film ASL stories to share online with children, their families and friends.

The Holiday Cheer party was truly a success. It was heartwarming to see kids playing together in person after being isolated for so long with the Covid restrictions. Adults also took advantage of the time to re-connect with other adults. It was such a wonderful experience. Many thanks for allowing us to host it, it is a favorite time of the year for many!



# ...CONTINUED

In addition to doing ECFS work, we also provide informational sessions to a variety of audiences. We are invited to meetings and make presentations to museums, day camps, audiologists, university classes, and festivals. The goal is to provide Deaf Awareness in a positive light and to share what SDHHS is able to provide. Some highlights were the Saskatoon Family Expo where we met 4 Deaf people (including kids) and chatted with more than 150 people. Another positive event was Robyn attending the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly Chamber for the Budget Address on March 22nd. After the session, she had the opportunity to meet with several Ministers and MLAs in an informal setting. She shared awareness of the community and realities that Deaf community face as well as educated and offered feedback to them for the benefit of the entire Saskatchewan deaf community.



The SDHHS team collaborates so well together in supporting events and projects. We are really proud and honoured to work with all the staff and volunteers throughout the year. The collective work we do, truly helps make exciting things happen to benefit young children and their families. We are seeing the numbers of clients grow. We look forward to seeing them excel and thrive with their learning.

Sincerely,

Robyn Holmes (Saskatoon) and Patricia Spicer (Regina)





# CCCC Preschool

It has been an interesting and wonderful year for the 4C Preschool! The preschool is designed for students who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Child of Deaf Adults (CODA), siblings of a deaf child as well as non-deaf children who are connected with the Deaf community. Our classroom is located at St. Augustine School on Boychuk Drive and the preschool runs from Monday to Thursday, from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. On Fridays, we have Family Days, where we plan family events and outings. Some of the excursions include the Wonderhub, the Western Development Museum, the Wildlife Festival at Prairieland, a Farm Corn Maze, DJ's Adventureland, and The Park YXE, Pike Lake, Clip and Climb, Champetre County, Kidz Castle, Sunshine Playhouse, Swimming, etc. When we have planned in class events, we have carved pumpkins, decorated gingerbread houses and so much more!

With the Family Days, we create opportunities for children to socialize together, develop their identity, and develop language. Each student's parents, siblings, and family members are encouraged to attend the events and activities. We also have other students who attend. Robyn Holmes, in the SDHHS Early Childhood Family Services (ECFS) program, works closely with these families and also attends the Family Days.

I continue to teach and develop the program by expanding resources, such as using the Language First and Visual Language Visual Learning assessment checklist. This checklist is beneficial and highly recommended for new parents and professionals to use. We also continue to assess the language development and general skills development in the students. Orlene, our Speech-Language Pathologist, and Miss Nicole work closely together supporting the development of both languages. Both Ashley Bucknall, the Teacher Assistant and Alanda McLeod, a Sign Support Professional from SDHHS, help in the classroom as well. It is fascinating to see how young DHH children acquire language. It brings us to our steadfast core belief that every DHH child has a right to have full access to Bilingual-Bicultural education. Having access to ASL, provides a child with excellent linguistic foundation which in turn helps with cognitive development.

It can't be emphasized enough that every DHH child is different. Our program gives every opportunity for students to have full access to both languages. Having a culturally Deaf teacher is also crucial as the teacher can model how to advocate for themselves by having a strong identity. By seeing various Deaf role models, it shows them that they can do anything but hear.



# ... CONTINUED

We have many different ways for the children to learn; they range from “formal teaching” to “play-based teaching”. The program follows concepts found in the Montessori philosophy. This allows me to capitalize on the exposure of ASL and visual English to children in a natural way. Language learning and development happens when communication and understanding occur on a daily basis. As required by the Saskatchewan’s curriculum, formal teaching favours scientific evidence-based for young 3 to 4 years old children in the education field. Play-based teaching allows the development of many skills such as fine motor, reading, social and emotional intelligence, creativity, building skills and many more! Activities are set up in different locations in the classroom, allowing the students to choose the activities that piques their curiosity.

The morning typically starts with free play for an hour at the various activity stations set up. From there, we move on to snack time, this is where we chat about what they eat, what they did, etc to expand their vocabulary and language skills. We go to the washroom before going to the gym. Plenty of physical activities including the Duck Duck Goose, games, Ring A Round the Rosey, and Go Go Stop. The students really enjoy the car-wheeler-thingys before returning to the classroom. We typically do stories and crafts at the end of the class prior to the students being picked up by their caregivers.

During the school year, we have roughly 9 themes, not including the regular holiday themes: Food, Fall, Halloween Dinosaurs, Christmas, Winter, Ocean, Spring, and Fairy Tales!



Another very exciting thing that happened during the year is that CBC came into the CCCC Preschool and interviewed us! The focus of the story was to share the unique components of our program as we provide full access to both languages. In addition to that interview, we are thrilled with the Royal Assent of Bill 103 - The Accessible Saskatchewan Act, officially recognizing ASL as a primary language for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in Saskatchewan!

We wish the best to all the students and their families!

Miss Nicole  
4C Preschool Teacher



# ASL Classes Virtual & In Person

## **Caroline (Regina)**

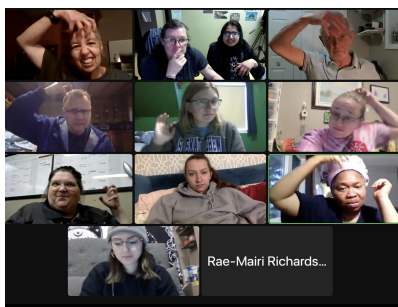
During the Spring and Fall of 2022, Caroline taught ASL 101 classes online via Zoom. It was a very pleasant teaching experience for her and in the wake of Covid. It was nice to feel safe at home teaching the classes behind the screen. In Winter 2023, From January to March, she held her first in person ASL night class downtown, at the Regina Public Library. She had 12 students in the ASL 101 class. She had some challenging situations in the library, but the ASL students were able to get through each and every class. It was a bittersweet farewell at the last in-person ASL class because the students and Caroline grew very close during their time together. She had a wonderful teaching experience with this group of students.

## **Twyla Chartrand (Regina)**

In Spring 2022, Twyla taught ASL 202 to 9 students. In Fall 2022, Twyla taught ASL 102 to 11 students. In Winter 2023, Twyla taught two ASL 101 classes with 9 students in one class and 11 students in the other. The past year was enjoyable. Many of the students worked hard learning new signs, and have kept up with their weekly ASL homework. They had a Canada VRS representative provide an ASL 1 hour workshop through Zoom, and the students found it very worthwhile. They learned how to communicate on the phone using the VRS service to place a call to DHH people. Her favourite memory was playing ASL games, as this helped the students become more engaged in learning ASL. Another exciting thing was that the ASL students set up their own group to meet every once awhile. Twyla wishes them the all the best!

## **Rae-Mairi Richardson (Regina)**

In Spring 2022, Rae-Mairi had 14 students in her ASL 102 class. In Fall 2022, she had 11 students in ASL 201 online. In Winter 2023, Rae-Mairi taught 10 students in ASL 201 and 8 students in ASL 202. Students were from all over Saskatchewan on Zoom. She held classes from 7pm to 9pm on different days during the week. Each of the students were eager to learn and were motivated to participate in dialogues and discussions about ASL culture and the Deaf community. She enjoyed this past season and looks forward to teaching ASL again. We learned that the students want to have some in-person social time. Most of the ASL participants were EAs, and they want to develop more confidence and skills to communicate with the students they work with. Another observation was that there were seniors who joined the classes this fiscal year. A local Deaf student who immigrated to Canada joined the class to observe the teaching process and help out when appropriate. It empowered her to gain confidence and experience in this role.



**ASL Students (Virtual and In Person)**

## **Alanda McLeod**

In Winter 2023, ASL 101 was held in person and there were 14 students registered. This was her first time teaching ASL 101, and her ASL students said that she did an awesome job. They have improved their signing skills and enjoyed doing their homework. Most of them enjoyed the games and actions with ASL. The group became friends, and one of the students set up a group called 'ASL Practice'. They meet every Sunday!

## **Warren Trofimenkoff**

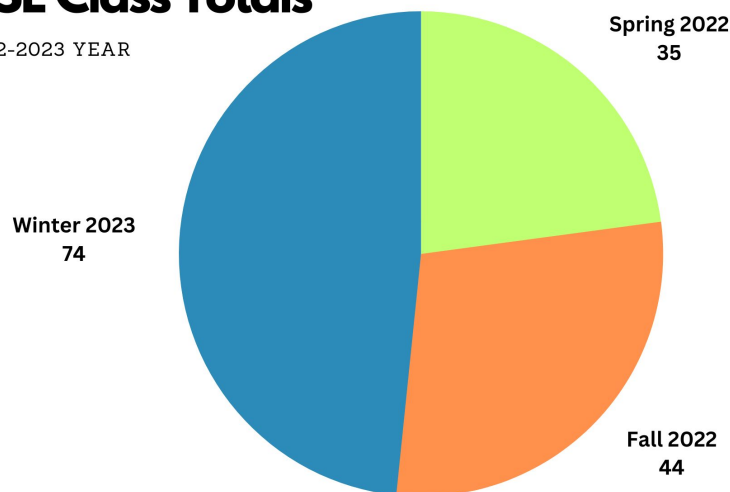
In Fall 2022, Warren taught ASL 101 online. He enjoyed teaching those ASL classes, and he saw that the students really enjoyed it as well! There were a lot of ASL activities, games and conversations. The conversations gave the students an opportunity to get to know more about each other in ASL. It allowed the students an opportunity to learn ASL quickly and naturally. The students continued to want to learn more, not just from the textbook. Warren was also glad that he had a chance to substitute for other ASL instructors. It was nice to sub for other instructors and gave him an opportunity to meet other students. He was thankful to have an opportunity to teach ASL. Upon reflection of his teaching time and interaction with students, he now has a better understanding of what else he can add in for students in the future. Please remember that taking ASL Classes is a huge benefit for everyone, students and instructors alike.

## **Nicole Musey**

Nicole taught ASL 101 in the Fall, 2022 and ASL 102 in-person in Winter, 2023. In Saskatoon, all the classes were in-person for the 2022 - 2023 fiscal year. It was the first time since the pandemic that SDHHS offered in-person classes. The location of the classes switched from the Williams Building to SDHHS's meeting room. The pandemic impacted so much and has led to offering ASL classes remotely and in-person now. Nicole and her students are thankful for the space at SDHHS but are hoping to host them at a Deaf Center building someday. Last September, ASL 101 had nine students and the Winter ASL 102 class had eight students. In the Spring ASL Class, she had eight students as well. Classes were held every Tuesday/Thursday from 7:00 - 9:00 pm. All of the students were always eager to learn ASL. They all had various backgrounds, such as government workers, teaching assistants, IT engineering, parents, a worker with autistic children, hard-of-hearing students, and more!

## **ASL Class Totals**

2022-2023 YEAR



**Total: 153 Students**

SDHHS  
**TREASURER'S REPORT**

SDHHS contracted the services of MWC Chartered Professional Accountants to complete the 2022 - 2023 Financial Audit.



The Auditors Financial Statement is included in the Annual General Meeting package for you review.

Currently, SDHHS is in a surplus position. Funds from the surplus will be used to help offset the costs not funded for through core funding.

I would like to thank MCW Chartered Accountants for their thorough work.

Respectfully Submitted,

Art Hillcox  
Treasurer

**THANK YOU!**  
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City of Regina

