



SDHHS

Saskatchewan Deaf and
Hard of Hearing Services

Bridging the Gap

ANNUAL REPORT

2015/2016

Mission & Vision Values

- To support the independence of Deaf, Deafened and Hard of Hearing persons by providing services which enhance their quality of life.
- A world without barriers for people who are Deaf, Deafened, or Hard of Hearing.
- 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

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Our organization

Saskatchewan Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Inc.(SDHHS) is a bi-lingual, bi-cultural, non-profit organization whose mission is: *to support the independance of Deaf, Deafened, and Hard of Hearing persons by providing services which enhance their quality of life.*

Hearing loss is considered as an “invisible disability,” as there is very little external manifestation of the disability and the individual usually appears to be able-bodied. Affecting over 100,000 people in Saskatchewan, hearing loss is the fastest growing disability in North-America.

The increase in hearing loss is primarily due to our aging population and the increase in noise pollution, particularly before the understanding of the need to use ear protection. However, hearing loss can occur at any age. There are many causes for hearing loss: congenital conditions, disease, side-effects from medication, excessive noise, accident, or genetic factors. Often it occurs over a long period of time, but it can also happen suddenly.

Though hearing protection practices occur regularly in industry, people also need to be aware that damage can be done to our hearing by recreational activities such as mowing the lawn, or listening to loud music. For instance, a car stereo can produce as much sound (140 decibels) as a jet engine on takeoff. SDHHS provides information and education to heighten awareness around hearing safety.

Hearing loss interferes with people’s most vital link to their environment, the ability to effectively communicate with others. SDHHS helps to bridge this gap by providing crucial programs and services for those with hearing loss. In addition to its information and resource centre, SDHHS provides interpreting, oral facilitation, computerized note taking, vocational rehabilitation and career counseling, community services assistance, and a discount hearing aid battery program. SDHHS also provides information and accessibility to many technical aids and assistive devices.

SDHHS works closely with other community agencies and organizations, as well as various government departments to raise awareness. As the only source of comprehensive specialized services for people living with a hearing loss in the community, SDHHS assists in breaking the sound barrier caused by the lack of awareness in the larger community regarding hearing loss issues. By providing education and awareness of the special needs of Deaf, Deafened, and Hard of Hearing persons, SDHHS supports the rights of all citizens to be full and active participants in their community. SDHHS supports all modes of communication. SDHHS advocates for full and comprehensive access to information regarding options, in order for people to choose the options best suited to their unique and individual needs.

President's report

Wow! My first year as President of SDHHS has proven to be a busy one!! I remember sitting at last year's board meeting in awe that the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community of Saskatchewan had supported my nomination to be President and being so thankful that this community has been so welcoming.

I'd like to thank Naim, Kami and the board of directors for their patience, direction and support this year as I figure out my role. As president, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Directors for their time in serving on the board this year. There are so many wonderful people with a passion for DHH issues working together. We have had to say goodbye to a few members of our board this year and I encourage nominations of new members at the upcoming election.

On behalf of the board, I'd like to thank our Executive Director Naim Gillies and the staff at SDHHS for their commitment and work to the agency and clients we served this past year.

It's been a year of many changes not only at SDHHS but also for the DHH community as a whole both provincially and internationally. My term as President began just as Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission (SHRC) begin their inquiry into the systematic oppression of DHH individuals across the province. The consultation process was long, and for many people painful but I feel like the voices of the community were acknowledged. In May, the SHRC released their report and a list of recommendations to improve the services and treatment of DHH individuals. A committee is now in the process of being formed by the SHRC to work toward resolutions for their report. As a mother of a Deaf child, I am hopeful that Saskatchewan will finally recognize American Sign Language as heritage language and an official language of instruction in the province. As a community, it's important for us to continue to put pressure on the government to improve the lives of DHH individuals; while the consultation process may be over, our work is far from done.

Regina opened its first congregated setting for DHH students in pre-school to Grade 8 at Henry Janzen School. Children's ASL classes in Regina saw record numbers of students attending, many from Henry Janzen School. Saskatoon has seen ASL story time at the library and several events for children.

As always, if you have any concerns or issues about SDHHS, please contact the Executive Director or the frontline staff before contacting the Board of Directors. The directors can bring your questions and concerns to the meeting for resolution only if the Executive Director or frontline staff could not resolve it first. Thank you for taking the time to attend this year's AGM. This year marks the 35th Anniversary of Saskatchewan Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services. I hope you're able to join us for the games, food, conversation and celebration after today's AGM.

Have a safe and happy Summer!

Michelle Grodecki,
President



Management report

Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen.
- Winston Churchill

The victory for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is not that the Saskatchewan Human Rights commission (SHRC) made a public report. The victory is... that in absolute unity, an entire community stood, spoke up for the rights of all DHH people in the province. From the newborn, to the elderly; from the mild to profoundly deaf; that everyone needs to be included. Inclusion is a core value of the people of Saskatchewan; people heard the stories of DHH and their families, people who showed up in large numbers to share their stories, the SHRC sat down and listened, and made recommendations.

The SHRC made it clear this is the start of the process and we must press on to see all of the DHH realise true access and inclusion. To this great cause we are again in total unity as a community, members of the hearing, DHH are fully dedicated to seeing full ASL access to all who require it. This has been a busy and eventful year many projects some are just starting some are completed and some are nearing completion. The meetings with Ministry partners and Community organisations is so important and this last year we have had many new developments.

Partnerships and collaboration with key people in Government and organisations; particularly the First Nations Community has grown significantly. We have a more inclusive vision and partners all across the Province.

To name but a few of our myriad of things we are involved with: We had our First Annual High Steaks Dinner in May, and it was very well attended; it raised funds and awareness. The Prince Albert Grand Council invited SDHHS to speak to their Special Education staff resulting in deeper relationships and awareness. We took a tour as a community to the fire hall and police station in Saskatoon. We had classes in digital media and built bows. We attended events and had classes in First Aide and CPR, and we had speech reading classes.



Management report

New strategies and, planning is underway for project management, and capacity building has taken shape with the strategic plan implementation. Youth engagement, and arts grants are being proposed and written, for a real solution to the isolation of our DHH Youth.

The Bow Build Project for Ministry Of the Economy wrapped up for the summer. The bows were very well received by the DHH youth, and mentors in both Saskatoon and Regina. Many beautiful bows were built, but more importantly basic numeracy, literacy, and job readiness was taught weekly to a very diverse crowd. We endeavor to plan for the new era of work and vocational training for the DHH community and continue to eliminate systemic barriers.

With the meetings we had with the SHRC, I had the chance to hear how hard it can be to listen. We have also become more sensitive to the growing number of people with Cochlear implants and their unique needs. I am so thankful for the Hard of Hearing group that meets in the Saskatoon office every other Wednesday, and the Seniors coffee group every other Thursday morning. Its so nice to have those friendly faces to brighten the office. I can't thank them enough for the encouragement they give me.

New staff are settled in. Lisa Hale, Twyla Chartrand and Earl Troffimenkoff have been added to the SDHHS staff. Please make them feel welcome.

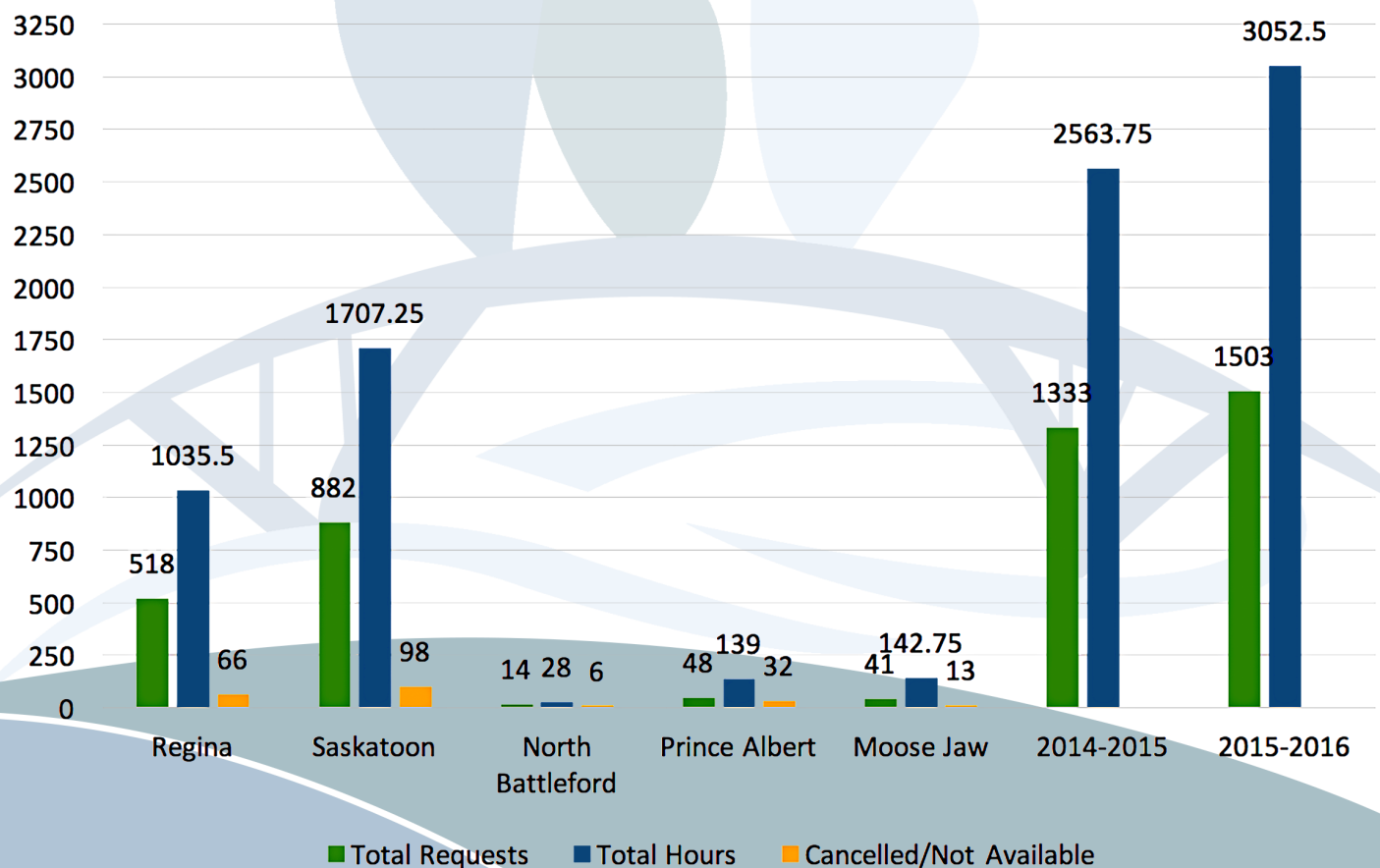
In the Year ahead I would ask everyone to continue in steadfast courage. Courage to stand up and speak out for your rights, but also to sit down and listen to those who's voice is silent.

Naim
Executive Director

Communications report

We are pleased to provide the membership with the following statistics for the Communications Department for 2015-2016.

You will notice that this year we have broken up the stats to indicate each city and area that interpreters are asked to travel to instead of merely North SK and South SK. Some funders and members indicated they would like to see the break up of where interpreters are travelling and how often.





Communications report

You will notice that we have a slight increase in the number of requests and hours performed in Saskatchewan this past year.

We would like to mention that cancellations and not available requests include:

Cancellations by the DHH consumer or business

Multiple requests booked for the same time slot

Not enough Interpreters to cover the length of the appointment

Arranging assignments by priority, such as a medical emergency

In January we fully implemented our new emergency on-call Interpreter service. This was due to consumers having a medical or legal emergency and interpreters not being called by the hearing consumer for various reasons. The new program allows the deaf consumer to contact an interpreter when they are in an emergency situation instead of relying on the hearing consumer. This system is to be used ONLY in an emergency situation.

This past year we had Krissy come back full-time and Tyler has left his temporary position as the Community Services Worker and has come back to interpreting. It is wonderful to have them both back.

SDHHS is proud to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of our staff Interpreters and Freelancers. We would like to thank them for their continued support. We also work with such a wonderful and supportive DHH Community. Thank you for your feedback and advice. We look forward to our continued partnership in the coming year.

Respectfully Submitted,
Anne Websdale
Lead Interpreter

Vocational Counselling program

April 1st, 2015 to March 31st, 2016

Total Registered Consumers with
Vocational Counselling
Deaf
Hard of Hearing
Cochlear Implant

64
44
13
7

Male
Female

33
31

First Nations/Metis
Immigrant/Refugee

17
8

Placements
Employment
High School
College
University

21
17
3
1

Other short training courses

14

Service provisions:

Interpreting Services, Computerized Note-taking Services, Consultations with schools and students, Work experience placements, Technology/Device purchases and consultations, Environmental/Workplace assessments and recommendations, Resume supports, Confirmation of Needs letters for post-secondary education accommodations, Workforce Development Program wage subsidies, Referrals, Supports in the community.

Short training courses included:

Food Safe, WHMIS, Woodworking, First Aid/CPR/AED, Introduction to Digital Media, Bow Building, Forklift Certification, Construction Safety Training

Cooperating Agencies:

Partners In Employment, Saskatoon Open Door Society, Prairie Employment Partnership, Prince Albert Supported Employment, Saskatchewan Abilities Council, Saskatoon Trades & Skills Centre, Partners for Workplace Inclusion Program, Canada-Saskatchewan Employment Services, Core Neighbourhood Youth Coop, Victory Safety & Training, Canadian Deaf Blind Association, Deaf Cultural Centre, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.

Vocational Counselling program

Special Projects:

SDHHS Bow Build at CNYC

SDHHS Bow Build at Thom Collegiate

SDHHS Introduction to Digital Media at RJD

During this budget year, SDHHS continued with the Bow Build project. There were 8 people who regularly attended the Bow Build at the CNYC in Saskatoon throughout the year to learn workshop safety, build their vocabulary, workplace skills, and of course to complete a traditional bow. The mentors, instructors, and volunteers involved created an amazing team of support for the participants. Workplace/workshop safety was an integral part of the training, as it is conducted in a woodshop with power tools. The Bow Build project team also travelled to Regina this year to be facilitated for the DHH program at Thom Collegiate. There were 10 students that participated at Thom Collegiate and it was facilitated over the course of 3 days in their school.

There was an invitation from the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission (SHRC) for members of the DHH community to attend Community Consultation Meetings. The goal of these meetings was to explore the adequacy of services provided within the community. To this, one of the Vocational Counsellors from SDHHS attended, to ensure we were advocating for our consumers regarding education and employment.

SDHHS also hosted an Introduction to Digital Media class beginning in February of 2016. There were 6 consumers that participated in the Introduction to Digital Media classes for 8 weeks. With the enhanced support of our amazing volunteers and instructor, they learned about online safety, social media tools and apps, general photography skills, and networking.

SDHHS Vocational Counsellors and Interpreters attended a few Job Fairs throughout the year to support consumers looking for work. We also had an enormous amount of media coverage this year upon our funding renewal from the Ministry Of the Economy. CTV, Global, and the Star Phoenix all came out to take part in the announcement of the renewal of funding.

A major change to our Vocational Counselling department happened in October, 2015. Debby Paquin, long-time, treasured employee of SDHHS, retired at the end of October. Debby was an integral part of the Vocational team and will be missed!

Respectfully submitted on behalf of myself,
Jody Thompson, and Debby Paquin.

• Youth program

Youth Programming was all year long in various capacities this year. Many youths registered with SDHHS and participated in the Bow Build project and the Introduction to Digital Media classes. The Bow Build continued from last year and then had a new orientation night on February 2. There was also a team which included our Executive Director and Deaf Mentors, that travelled to Regina to host the Bow Build Project with the DHH class at Thom Collegiate. It was an exciting adventure for all involved!

There were also monthly gatherings of DHH youth at the Broadway Roastery in Saskatoon, and different fun activities throughout the year at Diefenbaker Park such as Frisbee golf.

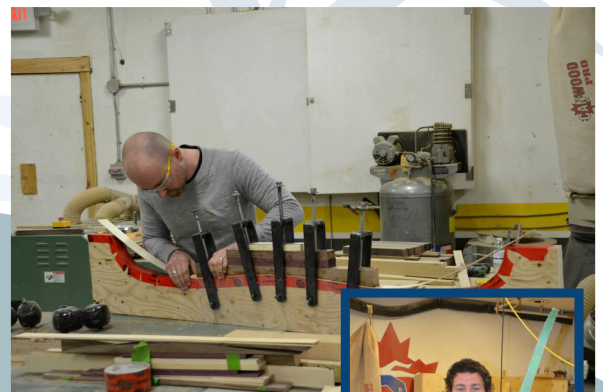
An additional exciting note: One of our past youth, who now lives in Alberta, had an article feature him in Tow Canada. That article can be found online at this link:

<http://www.automotiveretailer.ca/profile-of-a-professional-adam-stratychuck-the-silent-tower/>

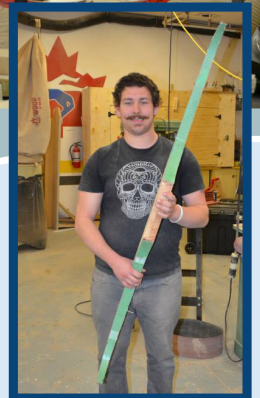
Congratulations and Way to Go Adam!

We look forward to another exciting and successful year of Youth Programming at SDHHS!

Jody Thompson



Saskatoon Bow
Build Project



• Youth program

Digital Media
Class of 2016



Regina
Bow
Build
Project





ECFS report

I was recently hired for the Early Childhood Family Services (ECFS) position in Saskatoon. This program is still in development. However, we see a huge need, and an equally huge desire, from the community and we are ready to meet that need. We expect this program to continue to evolve as we attempt to set up the most effective service delivery possible.

The ECFS program is encouraged by the new additions of Deaf staff. We see enthusiasm in the community as all families that come through our door are excited to hear that SDHHS has deaf staff working in ECFS to help DHH children access both language and literacy. The need for lifelong communication and learning is extremely critical, and we are proud to be supporting this goal with full time programming. We are providing home visits, family literacy, “Baby Sign” Instruction, ASL for parents, referrals, family support materials and so much more.

SDHHS continues to offer resources through our lending library. We are happy to welcome everyone to visit one of our libraries located in the Saskatoon and Regina Offices.

In Saskatoon, we have monthly activities for fun play and children’s ASL literacy and language, plus summer programs and camps.

I would like to thank the staff of SDHHS in Saskatoon for supporting me as we are still in early days here with ECFS at SDHHS. I am happy and honored to work with everyone to improve the lives of so many DHH children and their families in our communities.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hale
Saskatoon



Community Services report

The Community Service Worker Program (CSW) has just experienced a dramatic expansion of service scope delivery, due to the SDHHS's renewed focus on policy change, cooperation of partner organizations, government engagement and CSW skill set. This year April 1st 2015 to March 1st 2016 was unprecedented in SDHHS history in the breadth of the CSW community involvement. To have a trained and experienced case worker navigating the system, advocating, and educating on behalf of SDHHS clients without the need for an interpreter created better outcomes and equality in integrated service delivery across Justice, Social Services, Education, Mental Health, Victims Services, Community Living, Police, health care, taxation, Immigration and Refugee, Employment Insurance, housing, addiction services, Workplace Health and Safety, palliative care, emergency services, media relations, aboriginal awareness, human rights, employer relations and suicide prevention. The ability to communicate in American Sign Language, (ASL) and have Deaf culture understood and respected by a service provider has empowered and protected hundreds of the most vulnerable children and adults in our Deaf community in Saskatoon and beyond this past year.

As this program has been terminated due to loss of funding we have been saddened to see so many gaps in service delivery and needs going unmet. At the time of closing we had 72 active files of different families in Saskatoon and Northern Saskatchewan currently working with the office of the CSW. It is in this current difficulty we realize how truly, life altering, the past funding by the United Way of Saskatoon has been. It is with heart felt appreciation we thank them for the years of funding that changed and saved so many lives. Doubtlessly thousands of individuals benefited from this program and its many workers over the years. To all involved we express our gratitude and wish the best of luck.

SDHHS will continue to make a counsellor available in Saskatoon once a week on a prioritized basis as long as we are able.

Thank you,

Tyler Burgess
Community Service Worker



Treasurer's report

SDHHS contracted services of Mintz and Wallace Chartered Accountants to complete the 2015-2016 Financial Audit.

The Auditors Financial Statement is included in the Annual General Meeting Package for your review.

Currently, SDHHS is in a surplus position. Funds from the surplus will be used to increase our reserve.

I would like to thank Mintz and Wallace chartered Accountants for their thorough work and expertise. I look forward to having them back as our auditors next year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elmer Olson,
Treasurer

M³
W⁶
C⁵

Chartered Professional
Accountants

Youth Program sponsors



The Access Children's Fund assists children and their families in need in the many communities we serve. It's just another way that Access shows we care

DAKOTA DUNES

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

Making the Most of Our Community Investment



HyGrade
MILLWORK



Saskatchewan
LOTTERIES



• Board, Staff & Contractors

Michelle Grodecki	President	Naim Gillies	Executive Director SK
Dale Birley	Past President	Kami Harbidge	Exec Asst/Finance/ HR SK
Allard Thomas	Vice President	Anne Websdale	Lead Interpreter SK
Elmer Olson	Treasurer	Krissy Haines	Interpreter SK
Chad Turner	Director	Tyler Burgess	Interpreter/CSW SK
Art Hillcox	Director	Sue Schmid	Interpreter SK
Paulette Smith	Director	Karen Nurkowski	Interpreter RG
Christian Arellanos	Director	Erika Ball	Interpreter RG
Mary Sapchuck	Director	Jody Thompson	Vocational Employment/ Youth Worker SK
Caroline Bergbusch	Instructor RG	Debby Paquin	Vocational Counsellor SK
Twyla Chartrand	Instructor RG	Leona Ames	ECFS/CSW RG
Janet Dittrick	Instructor SK	Lisa Hale	ECFS SK
		Earl Trofimenkoff	CSW SK
		Rosalie Wishlow	Community Development SK
Dianne St. Pierre	Janitorial SK	Meagan Hein	Office Coordinator SK
Hari Prasad Koivala	Janitorial RG	Sara Carpenado	Office Coordinator RG
James Olson	Janitorial RG		

Thank you

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SCHOOLS**



**Saskatoon/Regina
Hard of Hearing
Association**



**Human Resources and
Social Development Canada**



**City of
Saskatoon**



REGINA
Infinite Horizons



CHS | SCO
CANADIAN HEARING SOCIETY
SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DE L'OUÏE

**SASKATOON
Trades
& Skills
CENTRE**



SaskTel
United Way
Saskatoon & Regina



**Deaf Cultural Centre
of
Saskatoon**

**Partners in
Employment**



Canadian
Association of the Deaf

Association
des Sourds du Canada



**SASKATCHEWAN
POLYTECHNIC**

SASKATCHEWAN

Abilities
COUNCIL

Maria Montessori
PRESCHOOL & ELEMENTARY



avlic



**Saskatchewan
Deaf Children's
Society**



CCRW | **CCRT**
Canadian Council on
Rehabilitation and Work | Le Conseil Canadien de la
Réadaptation et du Travail



SDHHS

Saskatchewan Deaf and
Hard of Hearing Services

Bridging the Gap

