



[www.deafinc.org](http://www.deafinc.org)

# 2018 Annual Report



25 East Frisco Avenue, St. Louis, MO, 63119

Front Desk: (314) 714-6400 | FAX: (314) 266-7427 | Email: [info@deafinc.org](mailto:info@deafinc.org) | Web: [www.deafinc.org](http://www.deafinc.org)





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# Letter From DEAF, Inc.

On behalf of Deaf Empowerment Awareness Foundation (DEAF), Inc. Board and Staff, we are pleased to share with you this annual report of our mission centered work for the year 2018. In addition, the annual report also represents our efforts to celebrate the fact that this organization has been in existence for the past 10 years, a celebration that culminated in an outstanding gala that our community is still talking about today!

As DEAF, Inc. looks to the future, we are entering a new period in our organization’s history where it is necessary for us to commence the strategic planning process to strengthen our position for the next decade – and beyond. We will be looking for your involvement and “voice” as we prepare and imagine how best to empower, raise awareness, and continue to bridge a sustainable foundation of communication – and equal access – for the communities that we serve within the Metro St. Louis area. Stay tuned for upcoming engagement opportunities by checking our website, social media, and talking with the staff or board members.

As always, we thank you for your support of this organization and ask that you visit with us the next time you are in the Webster Groves area. We are happy to tell you about our police trainings, support groups, education and advocacy, quality team of interpreters and support services providers, youth programs, and a host of other activities that we take with and on behalf of the deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing communities to advance DEAF, Inc.’s mission. We fully expect to continue our track record of “redefining communication access” in the days ahead!

Sincerely,



## Mission

The mission of DEAF, Inc. is to empower, raise awareness, and bridge a sustainable foundation of communication and equal access to both the deaf/hard-of-hearing and hearing communities.

## Vision

Our primary vision is to provide services for deaf/hard-of-hearing, hearing individuals, and the community as a whole to ensure effective communication and awareness. This is accomplished through a unity of community outreach, training, education, advocacy, media, visual arts, and interpreting. The vision reflects a strong sense of community where the deaf/hard-of-hearing and hearing communities are empowered and aware of the importance of equal access for all.



# The Story Behind the Formation of



In 2007, four people, all leaders and advocates of the St. Louis Deaf Community, shared a common dream. Shirley and Steve Corbett, Jeffrey Willoughby, and Eric Gjerdingen were disillusioned with the continued lack of communication access for the deaf, particularly in the field of medicine.

One night in 2007, Shirley faced a situation where communication access was denied to her sick father and family. After this experience, She and Steve met with their friends to discuss how to address these barriers with the local hospitals.

The advocates decided to create a deaf-centric community-based organization that focuses on the unmet interpreting needs of the deaf. With support from the local deaf community, they formed the Deaf Empowerment Awareness Foundation, otherwise known as DEAF, Inc., on April 28, 2008. The company eventually opened its door to the public as a 501(c)(3) on August 8, 2008.

By meeting with local hospitals and educating their personnel about the deaf/hard-of-hearing community's needs and rights to effective

communication access, DEAF, Inc. began to break down any misconceptions and barriers.

The founders felt by helping to empower deaf clients, building awareness in the deaf and hearing communities, and building a sustainable foundation of communication and understanding, more businesses would be willing to hire interpreters and address those needs.

The movement towards complete communication access for the deaf/hard-of-hearing was underway. DEAF, Inc. became a very active and involved interpreting service and remains the only deaf owned and operated 501 c 3 interpreting firm in the St. Louis Metro area to this day.

We wish to thank all involved in creating DEAF, Inc. We extend thanks and gratitude to everyone who has contributed over the years. Our donors, clients, staff, vendors and board members throughout the years have worked tirelessly to advance our mission and grow our organization.

Thank you all as we celebrate Ten Years of *Redefining Communications Access!*



Women Health Summit



Sign Language Classes



Torri Ryder, DEAF, Inc.'s first Executive Director



DEAF, Inc.'s first Community Forum in 2008



Interpreter Mentoring



DEAF, Inc. Building 2009

## 2008

**January** - Eric Gjerdingen, Jeffery Willoughby, Shirley and Steve Corbett found DEAF, Inc. and became its first board members.

**April** - Incorporated on the 28th and began with three employees. First Executive Director Torri Ryder was hired.

**June** - Began providing interpreting services.

**July** - Eric Gjerdingen became second Executive Director.

**August** - Opened its doors to the public.



Deaf Advocacy

## 2009

**January** - Established support program, hiring two employees to provide advocacy, empowerment and direct service.

**July** - Moved to Webster Groves, MO.

**September** - Launches new brand along with logo and website.

**October** - Pink Wings of Hope (PWOH) provide support for Deaf/HH women fighting breast cancer.



Pink Wings of Hope



# Human Services

2018

109 Advocacy Cases

106 Consumers Served

77 New Cases

49 Communication Access Cases

10 Assistance & Referral Cases

6 Legal Cases



Tia Jenice Morris  
Director of  
Community Programs



63 first responders trained in 2018



In 2018, 28 DeafBlind individuals were served over 952 hours.



ASL/English Literacy Classes



DEAF, Inc. received Community Service Award in 2016



DEAF, Inc.'s DeafBlind SSP program served 3 regions and 85 counties in the State of Missouri.



44 New Pink Wings of Hope Clients in 2018



Annette Nitko  
Support Group Coordinator



10 Deaf/HH youth experienced personal growth during Summer Sign Day Camp



Devon Whitmore  
Community Advocate



DEAF, Inc. provided support to Deaf Teen Club which provides social and leadership development opportunities for over 45 deaf teens.



Breakfast with Signing Santa brought joy to 94 Deaf/HH children in 2018.

TIMELINE

2010

- January** - DEAF, Inc. began offering sign language classes. The sessions were available for people of all ages.
- February** - Hosted first community-based festival: DEAF, Inc. Winterfest.
- May** - Hosted Deafilicious fashion show.
- October** - First sponsorship for MCDHH's Interpreter Conference.



Deafilicious Fashion Show 2010

2011

- April** - Helped form Hands & Voices for parents of deaf/hard-of-hearing children. Produced four Emergency Disaster Preparedness ASL videos with All Ready?.
- May** - Completed ASL video for St. Louis Disaster Human Service Committee at STARRS.
- December** - Hosted Deaf Awareness Day at St. Louis Blues hockey game.

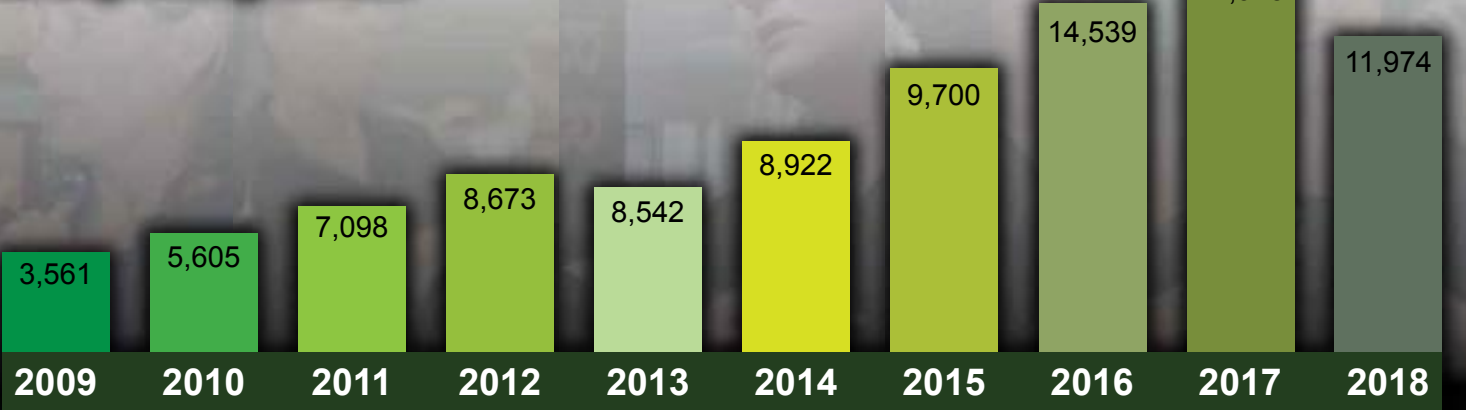


Deaf Awareness Dayy at the St. Louis Blues Game.



# Communication Access

## Interpreting Hours



Emily Adcock  
Staff Interpreter



Leslie Brown  
Interpreter Coordinator



Guinevere McCausland  
Interpreter Coordinator



Katie Roberts  
Staff Interpreter



Rebecca Seidl  
Interpreter Coordinator

2016 123



2017 170



2018 194



The number of sign language classes participants has increased by 58% since 2016.

DEAF, Inc. hosted 5 interpreting enhancement workshops in 2018.

DEAF, Inc. continues to be the premier interpreter provider at St. Louis Fair for the 4th year in a row.

DEAF, Inc. provided over 214 hours of CART Services in 2018.

## 2012

- April** - Provided interpreting services for Moolah Shrine Clowns' annual circus.
- April** - Sponsored The Vagina Monologues in ASL and Spoken English to support victims of domestic violence.
- June** - Hired first college intern from National Technical Institute for the Deaf.
- June** - Released sensitivity training video for St. Louis Police Academy, gaining 375,000 views and distributing 100 DVDs.



Moolah Shrine Clowns

## 2013

- February** - Created literacy program to help the Deaf/HH understand English and American sign language.
- March** - Rustic Lantern Films, a division of DEAF, Inc., released its first movie, Lake Windfall, showing it in 110 theatres.
- July** - Provided communication access at 4th of July festivals for Fair St. Louis.
- August** - Hosted a charity golf tournament along with commemorating DEAF, Inc.'s 5th anniversary celebration.



DEAF, Inc. Charity Golf Tournament



# Outreach

deaf|that

Deaf|That videos has received over 11 million views since 2016.

DEAF, Inc. produced two featured films - Lake Windfall & The Deaf Club - to raise funds.

Tony Nitko  
Marketing Director

DEAF, Inc. has hosted festivals every year since 2009. Most recently in 2018, Deaf Visual Arts Festival brought in 896 attendees.

DEAF, Inc. held two Deaf Awareness Days at the Blues games.

DEAF, Inc. participated in local community functions.

DEAF, Inc. receives numerous of out-of-state and international visitors.

Over 160 people attended & celebrated at DEAF, Inc. 10th Anniversary Gala.

DEAF, Inc. has participated in NDEC and NAD conferences as Media Sponsors.

DEAF, Inc.'s video training for police officers has received great demand nation-wide.

DEAF, Inc. received Best Website Award in 2017.

DEAF, Inc. has participated in every MCDHH & MOAD conference since 2008.

DEAF, Inc. has effectively used social media as a platform to promote itself and educate the community.

DEAF, Inc. continues to be the leading deaf-run non-profit organization on Facebook with over 87,000 Page Likes.

In 2018, DEAF, Inc. posts have reached over 135 countries.

Jason Roberts  
Video Producer

DEAF, Inc. has sponsored Deaf Film Camp in the past two years.

## 2014

**February** - Provided sensitivity training for police officers at Chesterfield Police Department.

**April** - Dr. Thomas Horejes named 3rd Executive Director.

**August** - Established a monthly get-together with members of the deaf community to discuss the issues they encountered.

**October** - Pink Wings of Hope hosted its 5th Anniversary Gala.

Deaf Sensitivity Training  
Video Production

## 2015

**March** - Rustic Lantern released its second film, The Deaf Club, which was shown at over 90 locations across the United States.

**April** - Hosted Deaf Awareness Day at St. Louis Blues game for the second time.

**December** - Added real-time captioning (CART) to its list of communication solutions.

**December** - Hosted Breakfast with Signing Santa for deaf/hard of hearing children.

Breakfast With Signing Santa



# Board of Directors & Staff

## Staff Leadership

Ernest E. Garrett, III - Executive Director  
Tia Jenice Morris - Community Programs Director  
Tony Nitko - Marketing Director  
James Shearburn - Community Development Director  
Michele Steele - Finance Director

## Dedicated Staff

Emily Adcock - Staff Interpreter  
Leslie Brown - Interpreter Coordinator  
Guinevere McCausland - Interpreter Coordinator  
Annette Nitko - Support Group Coordinator  
Jason Roberts - Video Producer  
Katie Roberts - Interpreter  
Rebecca Seidl - Interpreter Coordinator  
Devon Whitmore - Community Advocate



**Board of Directors**

Dan Schreiner  
President; 2015



Anand Raj  
Vice President; 2014



Amy Reusch  
Secretary; 2014




Sarah Prechtel; 2014



Nate Dissi; 2015



Dr. Jessica Nieva; 2015



Eric Driskill; 2016



DEAF, Inc. Retreat 2018

# Our Friends Through the Years



## 2016

**January** - One of DeafThat's videos, Baby Signs, received over 3 million views on Facebook.

**June** - Launched second ASL translation service, Visdio, for the Route 66 Exhibit at Missouri History Museum with QR format.

**July** - Began annual Summer Sign Day Camp for Deaf/HH children.

**August** - Partnered with DeafLead to install a satellite office at DEAF, Inc. so deaf people could have access to domestic violence support.



Launch of ASL Translation Project at Missouri History Museum

## 2017

**April** - DEAF, Inc. held its first annual community-based festival, the Deaf Visual Arts Festival.

**October** - Ernest E. Garrett, III is named the 4th Executive Director of DEAF, Inc.

**November** - Awarded funds to provide DeafBlind Support Services Providers for St. Louis. DEAF, Inc. expanded its services for 80% of Missouri.



Wine, Sign & Print Fundraiser at Deaf Visual Arts Festival 2018



2018 Donors

\$1000+

Ante & Marla Colic  
Anonymous  
Debbie Crowell  
GSLAD  
MCDHH  
Missouri Arts Council  
NTID/RIT  
Pujlos Family Foundation  
Regional Arts Comission  
Dr. & Mrs. James Seeser  
Sorenson VRS  
Starkloff Disability Institute  
Walmart

\$500+

Anonymous  
Convo Relay  
MoAD  
St. Louis Bell Club  
Everett Shearburn  
William B. Sheldon

\$100+

Anonymous  
Craig Aslin  
Judith Beckerle  
Tracy Biggs  
Tim Brandau  
Sarah Chinnock  
Joseph Dalton  
Natonya Demulling  
Vom Fass

Loretto Freeman  
David Hartwig  
Nancy Herzog  
Emily Hillquist  
Sandra Hornsby  
James E. Hunter  
Donald Jones  
Charlie LeCrone  
Joan Mestres  
Tia Morris  
Gerald & Elizabeth Nicolaus  
Anthony & Veronica Nitko  
DeJuan Ridley  
Fred Saigh Leadership  
St. Thomas Episcopal  
Church for the Deaf  
Davin Searls  
James Shearburn  
Martha Shearburn  
Mary Shearburn  
Jessica Whitehead

\$50+

Debra Alexander  
Anonymous  
Kathy Baum  
Sebastian Bellomo  
Jennifer Bevell  
Laura Boling  
Samuel Culbertson  
Nate Dissi  
Eric Driskill  
Susan Eshbaugh  
Richard & Toni Jodlowski  
Larry King

Carol Morris  
Timothy Morris  
Annette & Anthony Nitko  
Erik Nordlof  
Amy Reusch  
Richard W. Schoeffler  
Alyssa Schreiner  
Lisa Shelley  
Patricia Spier  
Jessica Wade  
Linda Weiner  
Jennifer Weiser  
Margaret Welch  
Mary Beth Wideman

Under \$50

Anonymous  
Ralph Cassell  
Eleanor Wharton  
Jeffrey Peters  
Kylette Bashaw  
Michaela Carter  
Nicole Vyff  
James Eck  
Jonathan Perkins  
Lisa Huber  
Raoul Robichaux  
Ruth Adams  
Abraham Gomez  
Doreen Hunter  
Hallie Jones  
Nicole Smith  
Rachel Hayes  
Amy Conway  
Lori Curtis



In 2018, \$5,012 was donated to DEAF, Inc. through Facebook.



DEAF, Inc. came in first place in mid-size non-profit group with a \$14,628 in 2018 Give STL Day campaign.



DEAF, Inc.'s 2018 Community Collaboration Award went to Missouri History Museum.



Fred Saigh Leadership Donation



James Shearburn  
Community Development Director

Statement of Activities  
For the year ended on December 31, 2018

Public Support and Revenue	
Contributions and Grants	\$699,615
Special Events (Gross)	\$50,065
Investment Income	\$2,137
Service Fees/Misc. Revenue	\$813,379
Total	\$1,565,196

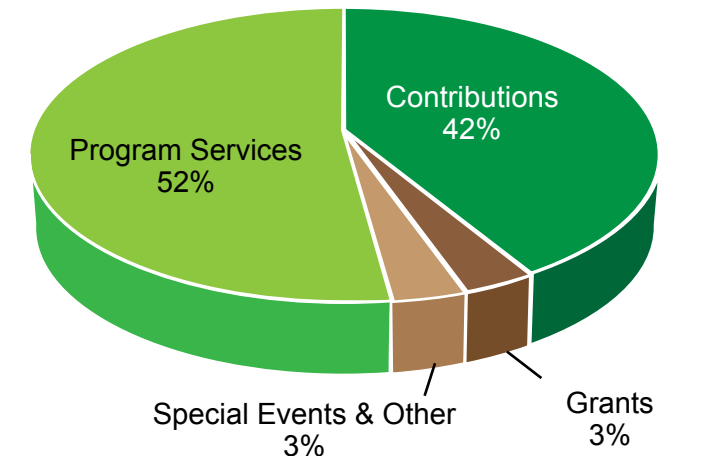
Expenses	
Fundraising	\$141,924
Program Services	\$1,168,463
Administration	\$218,142
Total	\$1,528,529

Net Assets	
Change in Net Assets	\$36,667
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$520,062
Net Assets, End of Year	\$556,729

Statement of Financial Position  
For the year ended on December 31, 2018

Assets	
Current Assets	\$641,711
Property and Equipment	\$17,112
Artwork and Memorabilia	\$21,700
Organizational Costs	\$1,636
Total	\$682,159

Liabilities and Net Assets	
Current Liabilities	\$125,430
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$553,229
Temp. Restricted Net Assets	\$3,500
Total	\$682,159



How Can You Help Us?

**Donate Today!**

Donate today by using our Donate Now feature on our website - [donate.deafinc.org](https://donate.deafinc.org). One time and recurring gifts are much needed to support our mission.

An illustration of two hands, one pointing towards the other, with the text 'Sign for "donate"' below them.

An illustration of a hand with the index finger pointing, with the text 'Sign for "volunteer"' below it.

**Volunteer!**

Volunteer! Sign up to ensure our workshops, fundraisers, outreach events and classes are successful!

**Spread the Word!**

Spread the Word! If you know someone who will benefit from our mission, tell them to contact us. If you know someone who would like to help us with our mission, encourage them too!

An illustration of two hands clapping, with the text 'Sign for "networking"' below them.



Pink Wings of Hope Members

Michele Steele  
Finance Director

Deaf Visual Arts Festival 2018  
Deaf Artists Conclave