



AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

E-NEWSLETTER ISSUE 2 | SPRING 2016



**By Arlene Gunderson-
Garcia, President**

President attended the Council on Education of the Deaf (CED) as one of the organization affiliate representatives along with Petra Horn-Marsh; Elementary Principal at Kansas School for the Deaf represented the American Sign Language Round Table (ASLRT) core committee on behalf of partnership with ASLTA. During the all-day meeting, the main focus was the review of the five program standards that are evaluated for accreditation. Below is each of the standards and the components of each standard that will be addressed in the accreditation report of CED are as follows: 1. Curriculum of Core Programs, 2. Faculty for Core Programs, Level, 3. Candidates in Core Programs, 4. Resources and Facilities for Core Programs, and 5. Evaluation Review and Planning of Core Program.

Within each of the standard, there is a list of standards that are considered for review. In the first standard, the curriculum of core programs where there is proposed language to be added in the standard 1.2.2 that state: Standard 1.2.2: The specialized portion of curriculum should prepare candidates to meet the unique language and communication needs of deaf and hard of hearing students. The curriculum should include, as appropriate to program objectives, experiences and training in skills that enhance learning for:

1.2.2.a Students who learn primarily through American Sign Language and/or other sign systems and/or

1.2.2.b Students who learn primarily through listening and spoken language.

We had a long discussion about how the standards for 1.2.2.a and 1.2.2.b under the Standard 1: Curriculum or

Core Programs. Currently, we have send in a proposed language to revise the language for standard 1.2.2. We will discuss the proposed language in our next online meeting. Our next face to face meeting will occur next year as it is once a year that all board of the CED organization meets. **PROPOSED LANGUAGE** for Standard 1.2.2 The specialized portion of curriculum should prepare prospective teachers to meet American Sign Language and English needs of deaf and hard of hearing students. The curriculum should include, as appropriate to program objectives, experiences and training in skills that enhance deaf and hard-of-hearing students' learning.

The decision of the revised language has not come to a full agreement among the CED board members. This discussion has been tablet until the next time we meet either virtually or face to face at our next board meeting.

Joint National Committee for Languages – National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS)

ASLTA is one of the professional organization members under the JNCL-NCLIS organization where there is a place of network of language advocates. ASLTA President is proud to be part of this year's Language Advocacy Day and Delegate Assembly, which was the largest in JNCL-NCLIS history with 94 different language advocates to the nation's capital to make the case for language to the federal government. The event began with several welcoming speakers before attendees broke off into meeting groups and state delegations where there were tutorial in which we were prepared to present the JNCL-NCLIS appropriations and legislative priorities. Between the Congress and the Executive Branch, attendees, including the ASLTA President for the state of Colorado held 115 meetings with legislators and policymakers. There were a

total of 30 states delegates in which we discussed the legislative priorities and concerns of the language field as well as insights into the work being done in each state.

JNCL-NCLIS advocates for the interests of the language community through lobbying the US Congress and Executive Branch agencies, and through public awareness rising on a variety of language-related issues. JNCL-NCLIS staff regularly meet with policy-makers to advance the policy priorities of our members, and to disseminate information about the national security, economic, and social justice

imperatives of increasing language capacity in the U.S., the cognitive and educational benefits of language learning, and the developments necessary to implement language programming in the US system.



Latest with our Chapters by Brenda Schertz

I am excited to announce that four outstanding people were recruited to assist with our efforts in connecting with our local chapters. We believe that chapters will do better if they are able to connect with other chapters in neighboring states. Some states already have state wide ASLTA conferences and other states that do not can always participate in these conferences in their region, and setting up regional conferences would be one possibility. One of our major goals this year is to have regional coordinator network chapters in each region. Our regional coordinators can respond to

questions related to establishment or re-establishment of chapters, co-hosting professional development activities and provide general support. If there are no state chapter the regional coordinator can keep that state's members informed by connecting them to other chapters in the region. Some chapters may not have realized that chapter fees were not paid recently and coordinators will be assisting with gentle reminders. You will see that in our updated website launch there will be a chapter page where local chapters can post announcements of their activities keeping everyone informed of

updates related to statewide conferences that are happening across the country.

Our regions (pictured below) are based on NAD's four regions. Because Region IV has several active chapters there will have two regional coordinators, one for the Northwestern region (Washington, Northern California, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Hawaii and Alaska) and another for the Southwestern region (Southern California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Arizona and New Mexico).

continue on the next page



REGION I

Brenda Schertz recently relocated to Rochester, NY from Portland, ME. She attended NTID, earned a BFA degree from the Art Institute of Boston and received her Master's in Sign Language Teaching from Gallaudet. She's currently a full time lecturer at the ASL and Interpreting Education at NTID. Previously she was a lecturer and coordinator of the ASL Program at the University of Southern Maine (USM). Brenda Schertz is now the chapter coordinator for ASLTA and will be the contact person for the Northeastern region (Region I). She's excited to be working with our new regional coordinators who will be providing both support and networking opportunities for chapters and newly established groups in each region. Brenda's email address is **ASLTAnortheast@gmail.com**.



REGION II

Maura Hencker started working as the ASL Lab Manager at an interpreting training program in 1998. During this time, she was also enrolled as a student in the ITP program. After graduation, she attained a full time job teaching ASL for the University of Louisville. She has been both a member of and on the board of Bluegrass ASLTA since 1998. She feels fortunate to be part of such an active chapter of ASLTA that offers both fall and spring workshops that greatly benefit its members and helps them improve their teaching skills. She looks forward to working as a team with our region to bring awareness to the Deaf community and empower them to take ownership of their culture and language. In the future, she hopes to start up a conference for all of region II that can happen biannually. She has many visions for region II, and is excited to bring those involved with other ASLTA chapters together to make things happen! Her email address is **ASLTAmidwest@gmail.com**



REGION III

Hello! I want to introduce myself - Bo Clements from Tampa Bay, Florida. I am your new regional coordinator of the southeast ASLTA chapters. I hold a certification of ASLTA Professional. I am the president of FASLTA. We are looking forward to have our FASLTA conference in Tampa this Fall 2016. I am a full time instructor at the University of South Florida for 19th year. I graduated from Gallaudet University with B.A. degree and the Florida State University with M.S. degree. I am looking forward to see more new chapters and new members to join ASLTA. My email address is **ASLTAsoutheast@gmail.com**.



REGION IV

Barbara Hayes has taught ASL since 2000, in both K-12 and college settings in Seattle areas. She is the Professional Development Chair for Washington State American Sign Language Chapter (WA ASLTA). She is also a Coordinator for Seattle Central College's ASL Consortium program, since 2007, for Washington State High Schools. She has attended ASLTA conferences since 2003; and was a Chair for 6th National Professional Development Conference in Seattle, WA. WA ASLTA was the first Chapter to host the National Professional Development Conference. She strongly believes in having ASL teachers supporting, sharing, and networking with each other, since each one of us has the wealth of skills, resources, and experiences, big or small. With us all together, we all are a strong ASL community! I am looking forward to work with you all the ASL teachers located in the Regional IV States! My email address is **ASLTAnorthwest@gmail.com**.

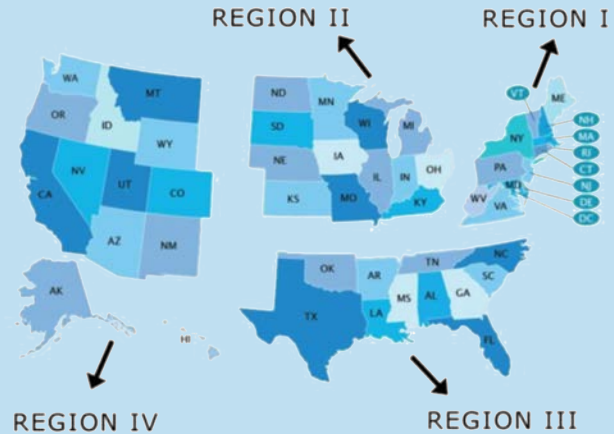
REGION IV

Henri Grau joined ASLTA less than a year ago when a group of ASL instructors decided to form a chapter in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Henri has been teaching American Sign Language for ASLNM, a non-profit organization he co-founded with five others Deaf instructors devoted to providing community ASL classes, private tutoring and workshops primarily in Albuquerque, NM as well as in Las Cruces and Santa Fe. Currently, he is a part-time faculty at the University of New Mexico. He's also a Professional Development Specialist with Sorenson Communications in Albuquerque, NM. Previously, Henri taught community classes at the New Mexico School for the Deaf in Santa Fe, NM, at Boulder Community Center in Boulder, CO and at Richmond Community Center in Richmond, VA. Henri, who holds a BA degree in Television, Film and Photography from Gallaudet University and with minor in Photojournalism from American University, is also a freelance photographer. His email address is at ASLTAsouthwest@gmail.com.



continued from previous page

We have four phenomenal individuals Bo Clements, Barbara Hayes, Maura Hencker and Henri Grau who are committed to working with you and our chapters. Our regional coordinators' biographies and contact information is listed below so that members like you can get started with networking, educating, supporting and reaching out!



WITH GRATEFUL APPRECIATION

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JNCL-NCLIS Important Links:

Advocacy Guide can be found here: <http://www.languagepolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Advocacy-Guide-Contents.pdf>

Appropriation Priorities can be found here: <http://www.languagepolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/NCLIS-Appropriations-Priorities-Feb.-2016.pdf>

Title IV, Part A, ESSA Overview can be found here: <http://www.languagepolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/NCLIS-ACTFL-Title-IV-One-Pager.pdf>

Coalition Response to Title IV, Part A Budget can be found here: <http://www.languagepolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Title-IV-Coalition-POTUS-FY17-Budget-Response.pdf>

World Language Advancement Act (WLLA) Overview can be found here: <http://www.languagepolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/World-Language-Advancement-Act-One-Pager.pdf>



DID YOU KNOW?

In New Zealand, they are celebrating their ten anniversary of the regionalization the NZSL (New Zealand Sign Language) as official language following with Maori and English languages since 2006. NZSL community will have their annual NZSL Week that will spread the awareness to the NZ people about sign language.



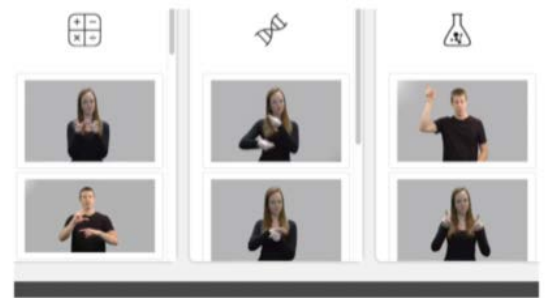
NZSLWEEK.ORG.NZ

9 to 15 MAY 2016



The ASL-STEM Project:

*Documenting, Creating, and Sharing
Academic Content in ASL*



Exploring questions as we document, create and deliver academic content in ASL:

The American Sign Language Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Project at Boston University

by Jeanne Reis, M.Ed., Barbara Spiecker, M.S., and Kayla Canne, B.A. | www.asleducation.org

What are the features of Academic ASL? How should ASL and signed languages in general be documented, organized and labeled? What are best practices when developing ASL materials for academic settings? What affordances do current technologies offer for delivering ASL content online to various audiences?



Pinker very aptly captures the amazing phenomenon of language in his quote above. Every day, the ASL Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) team at Boston University explores the vast expressive power of language as we study how ASL-speaking experts in academic areas like Science and Math discuss and share their knowledge with others. We are building this content into an online resource showcasing model instructional materials for students, teachers, interpreters, and other audiences. This article discusses just a few of the many insights from the project that we hope you, as members of the ASLTA, will find useful in your professional work. For eight years, the BU ASL STEM team has worked to appropriately and effectively respond to a challenge faced by Deaf and hard-of-hearing students as they learn about STEM content: the lack of shared ASL vocabulary and ASL discourse models for STEM content. There is no national repository of expertly vetted ASL STEM instructional and curricula materials. Many education professionals (many of whom are your current and former students) struggle to express complex content in an ASL text, often unable to do so without reference to English via either fingerspelling or initialized signs. ASL terms for STEM concepts are often invented 'on the fly' or repeatedly fingerspelled by teachers and interpreters, in an effort to fill perceived gaps in the lexicon. Educators and others also struggle with establishing the appropriate framework. Language instructors are probably quite familiar with questions like: What's the sign for (fill in any English word here)? In the STEM domain, we're often asked: What's the sign for cell / function / atom / perimeter? What is the best response to such questions? Our team's content experts have seen the many ways that this 'word level' view is inadequate and has led to the lack of quality educational materials. Associating a single ASL term with a single English term does not address ASL connotation or model correct usage of the ASL sign, both of which are critical for instructional contexts. The struggles we observe in the field have led us to adjust our framework and explore a series of research questions. As we design and compose STEM materials in ASL, we've moved from a vocabulary-centered view to a concept-centered and language-centered view. There are many elements to analyze, and

many steps in the process of composing ASL content from this framework. Let's take a look at just one linguistic element: discourse analysis. To better understand academic discourse, we examined current research related to how language is used in academic environments to stimulate language and vocabulary learning. Studies find that language learning is most effective when the teacher or more fluent communication partner maintains target language

(ASL) vocabulary, syntax and grammar. However, instructors must also simplify and constrain sentence structure and vocabulary choices to align with what their students know. In other words, teachers do not sign full speed and use all the vocabulary at their disposal, because that would overwhelm students. Rather, effective teachers slow down, shorten their sentences, and use basic vocabulary and conversational language to facilitate student learning of more complicated concepts and vocabulary. Teachers can also "accelerate learning at all levels of language" by repeating, expanding, reformulating, paraphrasing, referring to shared knowledge, and using repeated activity routines (Ervin-Tripp, 2014). We employ these approaches in the composition and revision of STEM video materials in ASL, and likely, you also employ them in ASL instruction. As you work with new learners developing skills with more complex grammatical elements, such as classifiers, affect, and non-manual markers, what are your strategies for instruction? Do you discuss and share effective instructional methods with your colleagues in the field? When you see students putting forth effort to achieve mastery, do you slow down, simplify, repeat, expand, reformulate, and refer to prior knowledge? Do your students compose, revise and film themselves presenting content in ASL in order to practice new vocabulary and grammatical structures? We invite you to consider how and whether these approaches may serve your students in their learning. The BU ASL STEM team's ASL-first approach is what makes our resources unique. We look forward to delivering the richness and complexity of academic ASL to Deaf and hard-of-hearing students and educators across the country, when we release a new educational application, the ASL Concept Learning Resource, online in December 2016. About the authors: Jeanne Reis is the Director of the Center for Research and Training at The Learning Center in Framingham, MA, and the ASL STEM project manager. Barbara Spiecker is a PhD student at Oregon State University and a member of the ASL STEM content team. Kayla Canne is a recent graduate of Boston University and a member of the ASL STEM video team. Please direct any comments or questions about this article to Jeanne at jeanne_reis@tlcdeaf.org.

L1 Initiatives Fund of Timo Owens' \$5,000 Donation:

This restricted donation account is established to accept donations that will be directed towards L1 projects. The ASLTA board is authorized to expend funds on approved projects that support deaf children's acquisition of American Sign Language as a first language. The account is established in memory of Timothy Owens President of ASLTA and was



initially funded by the generous donation of \$5000.00 dollars from the estate of Timothy Owens. The Board may only authorize projects after this fund reaches \$10,000 and may never expend funds that will bring the balance in the account below \$5000.00. More information will be shared shortly by the entire ASLTA Board.



ASLTA Board members had their face-to-face meeting in Salt Lake City in February to discuss many important things and getting ready for our ASLTA conference in 2017.

Certification Updates

MEMBERSHIP	CERTIFICATION
Renew annually	<p>Lasts 4 years <i>(depending on type of certification)</i></p>
Renew annually	
Renew annually	
Renew annually	

There are payments to ASLTA for a variety of reasons. Two of these are for membership and certification. The membership is handled by the treasurer's office and ensures that you are a current member of ASLTA. If you are a certified member of ASLTA (Provisional, Qualified or Professional) you must maintain your

membership every year to keep your certification current. If your membership lapses, so does your certification. Most certifications are good for 4 years unless you have an extension. If your membership is current and renewed every year then your certificate expires on the date listed on your certification. All current members will be getting new certificates in the fall when we transition to the new evaluation system. Current provisional members will be receiving certificates with no stickers on them. Current qualified members will be receiving certificates that show they are certified and professional level members will receive certificates that show they have attained master level status.

Connecting, Educating and Empowering the World's Deaf Community

In 30 days over 600 teachers, tutors and interpreters for the Deaf from top universities and K-12 systems across the USA and Canada, plus Deaf students, hearing students learning ASL, and parents of Deaf children have joined Veditz.org to make education in sign language available for the world's Deaf population, online, anytime, anywhere and in their native sign language.

All that's missing is you. It's free to sign up at Veditz.org

