

HKNC Giving

Fall 2006

Published by the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults

The Helen Keller National Center is the only national agency that provides vocational rehabilitation services exclusively to youths and adults who are deaf-blind.

Summer Seminar at HKNC

Eight teens who are deaf-blind spent two weeks at HKNC's annual Summer Seminar for high school students. In addition to providing an opportunity to meet others who are deaf-blind, the program assisted these students in planning for their post education years.

This year's guest speaker was awe inspiring Cody Colchado, a fifteen time power lifting champion who is also deaf-blind. Cody asked each participant to list their fears on wooden boards. Then as each student handed their board to Cody, he easily broke through it with a single karate chop. The symbolism of breaking through one's fears or barriers was not lost on the students.

The program received a generous grant from Heart and Hand for the Handicapped, a non-profit organization dedicated to funding programs for children and teens. This grant allowed HKNC to provide scholarships for attendees, special outings to New York City and more technology training—a popular area for all teens.

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More Teen Program Photos



Turn to page 7 for more photos of our Teen Program

Message from the Executive Director



While reviewing the articles in this issue, I was reminded, once again, of the many ways we approach our mission of “enabling each deaf-blind person to live and work in his/her community of choice.”

Whether it’s through a federally funded, multi-year grant to provide help to school districts throughout the country that are providing educational services to deaf-blind children; taking the lead on an international network focusing exclusively on one of the leading causes of deaf-blindness; or offering a two-week summer seminar to deaf-blind teens to help them plan for their future, the focus is on the ultimate goal – allowing the individual to function as a productive and fully participating member of his/her community.

As student Cheryl Brown says, “HKNC is where you can achieve your dream. I couldn’t have done it without the training, work experience and support of the staff. They have made it possible.” (For more on Cheryl, see article on page 8.)

– Joe McNulty

American Association of the Deaf-Blind (AADB) Conference



Employment, emergency preparedness, legislation, leadership, and technology were a few of the topics discussed at the American Association of the Deaf-Blind’s (AADB) week-long conference in Maryland this summer. Three hundred deaf-blind participants from all over the country attended, with the support of 500 volunteers and staff who made sure all activities were accessible. It’s no wonder that this biennial event is the highlight of the year for many deaf-blind consumers. As one deaf-blind man summed up the week, “It was AWWWWWesome!”

For more information on AADB, visit their website at www.AADB.org.



Deaf-Blind Awareness Week 2006 Focuses on Employment



FEEL FREE TO STARE.
HER PERFORMANCES ON STAGE & SCREEN ARE SPELLBINDING.

Kim Powers-Smith is deaf and blind. She also hosted the award-winning television show "Kim's World." Like Kim, there are many deaf-blind people who already hold jobs and are looking to advance their careers, while others are just starting out in the job market. Become one of the many nationally recognized companies who employ the vision of the deaf-blind.

Helen Keller Deaf-Blind Awareness Week: June 25 to July 1, 2006

To learn more about hiring a qualified individual, call 516-944-8900 x254, e-mail development@hknc.org, or visit www.HKNC.org

HK NC
Helen Keller National Center
For Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults

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"As Seen on CBS Evening News"

There is no question of the impact of technology in everyday life. Even more dramatic, though, is its effect on people with vision and hearing impairments. CBS Evening News highlighted this during their news clip on assistive technology featuring HKNC's own Anindya "Bapin" Battacharyya, who is profoundly deaf and totally blind. One of the amazing pieces of technology demonstrated in this piece was the global positioning system (GPS) Bapin uses when he travels. With the GPS, his laptop computer and a braille display, he is able to give detailed directions to a desired destination to his astonished sighted/hearing escorts.

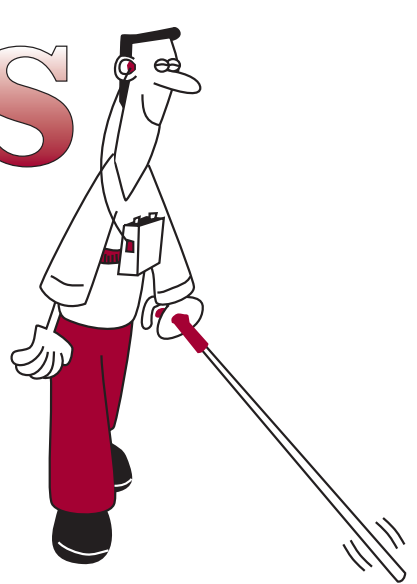
The CBS clip and accompanying video piece can be viewed on the Internet by following the link to "Blind-Deaf Tech Wiz" on HKNC's homepage www.hknc.org.



Anindya "Bapin" Battacharyya

Helen's Walk

Sunday, June 11, 2006



Helen's Walk 2006

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Sunday, June 11th, was a perfect day for a Walk — “Helen's Walk,” that is! With the support of our co-sponsor and neighbor, the Brotherhood of the Community Synagogue in Sands Point, this year's Walk drew a record number of community members, students, staff and volunteers. Afterwards, participants enjoyed refreshments, demonstrations of technology, crafts, a raffle and giveaways.

Funds donated to the Walk were used to install Sorenson videophones throughout the HKNC campus. These videophones allow staff and consumers to use sign language to make calls anywhere in the United States via the Internet.

Next year's Walk will be on **Sunday, June 10, 2007.**





Helen's Walk 2006

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- Tilles Center for the Performing Arts



PAHO Meeting Focuses on Rubella



Last July, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) invited representatives from HKNC to present their experiences working with people with CRS at the *Ad-hoc Meeting of Experts to Establish Best Practices in CRS Surveillance*. HKNC has worked with adults who are deaf-blind from CRS for many years and today serves as an international resource for information on this syndrome. Although rubella was declared eliminated from the United States in 2004, imported cases of rubella continue to pose a public health threat. There is no cure for CRS—only effective immunization strategies can help prevent rubella infection during pregnancy and the devastating consequences of CRS.

And...

Following HKNC's International Symposium on Rubella in 2005, HKNC applied to Deafblind International (DbI), the world association promoting services for deaf-blind people, to create an international network focusing exclusively on rubella. This network will be a resource on CRS for people all over the world. Go to <http://www.deafblindinternational.org> for more information.

HKNC Receives Grant from Department of Education

The US Department of Education, Office of Special Education, has awarded HKNC, in collaboration with Teaching Research Institute, Western Oregon University and the Hilton-Perkins School for the Blind, a five year cooperative agreement to fund the National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness. This new and exciting project, funded at \$2.1 million per year, will provide technical assistance, training and information to families of children/youth who are deaf-blind, state deaf-blind projects, and other agencies and organizations that provide services for children/youth who are deaf-blind.

One of HKNC's Finest is Honored



Sr. Bernadette Wynne

Celebrating over 30 years with HKNC, 20 as coordinator of the National Training Team, Sister Bernadette "Bernie" Wynne has traveled the world, training thousands of professionals to work with adults who are deaf-blind. She truly loves what she does!

Not surprising to those who know Bernie, delegates at the recent AADB conference unanimously voted to award her the Peter J. Salmon Memorial Award. The award is given annually to an individual for "dedicated and outstanding service to deaf-blind Americans."

HKNC is grateful to Bernie for her outstanding contributions to the deaf-blind community and congratulates her on a long and remarkable career.

Summer Seminar at HKNC

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Kevlasha Humphrey and Cody Colchado show their muscle after the workshop.



Colchado is surrounded by seminar participants.

Young Adults Enjoy All That New York Has to Offer

Participants in the Summer Seminar Program enjoyed a variety of special activities unique to New York, including a visit to Jones Beach, a day in Times Square, and a tour of Madame Tussaud's Wax Museum.



Leave a Legacy for Deaf-Blind Students

Every year, many students are able to receive training at the Helen Keller National Center in part because of the generosity of special friends who desire to give back to their community. You can help us continue our mission of providing access to independence by including HKNC in your estate plans.

For more information on the many rewarding ways of leaving a legacy to HKNC, please call the Development Department at (516) 944-8900, ext. 254 or speak with your financial planner today.

A Student's Perspective



Cheryl Brown loves to work with her hands. So, when the time came for the NJ resident to explore vocational goals, she chose engineering and tech work. Not-

so-typical choices for a woman... and even more unusual choices for a woman who is blind and hearing impaired.

Soon after Cheryl arrived for training at HKNC last January, she enrolled in a small engine repair clinic at a local Sears. While learning the ins and outs of leaf blower and lawn mower engines, Cheryl continued taking classes at HKNC.

By the end of her Sears coursework, the technicians were so impressed with her diligence and skills that they offered her a full-time position as a Sears technician! Cheryl is so excited about this opportunity that she has decided to move to Long Island to take the job and begin her new career.

Support HKNC with Every Click!

There is a new and easy way to raise money for the Helen Keller National Center, and it's literally a mouse click away!

"GoodSearch" is a socially conscious search engine that donates money to a cause you designate each time you use it. When searching the Internet, first go to **www.goodsearch.com**. In the "I'm supporting" box, type "HKNC," then click "Search the Web." HKNC will receive a donation each time you use GoodSearch. The best part is — it costs you nothing!

We hope that you will not only use GoodSearch as your main search engine, but will also pass this message on to your friends and family. Thanks for your support!

Online Giving

Supporting HKNC's mission is easy with online donations!
Visit our website at www.hknc.org/GivingHome.htm



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