

# Giving

Summer 2007

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

*HKNC is the only agency that provides vocational and rehabilitation services on a national basis exclusively to youths and adults who are deaf-blind.*

## Message from the Executive Director

# Changing the Way We Look at Life



In 1967, the first agency to exclusively serve people who are deaf-blind was created. In June of that year, HKNC was established by Congress with the goal of enabling each deaf-blind person to live and work in the community of their choice.

Today, exactly 40 years later, HKNC continues to lead the field in vocational and rehabilitation for people who are deaf-blind. In fact, many of the nationally recognized training techniques that exist today were initiated by the innovative work of the HKNC staff.

In my 30 years with the Center, 17 of them as executive director, I have had the honor of seeing many of these life changing programs implemented. I join you in celebrating the accomplishments of HKNC and the deaf-blind community, and I look forward to the exciting developments to come in our second 40 years.

— Joe McNulty

## HKNC in Full Bloom: Goldman Sachs Community TeamWorks at HKNC

Visitors to HKNC headquarters in NY often admire the hundreds of flowers on our spacious grounds. For more than ten years, this transformation has been made possible by the Goldman Sachs Community TeamsWorks project. Each spring, Goldman Sachs staff members are invited to leave their work behind and head out to HKNC to help spruce up its grounds.

Under the supervision of HKNC's supervisor of plant operations, Chris Mastrangelo, and Goldman Sachs' "Team Captain," Joseph Impostato, the staff and volunteers planted hundreds of annuals and even started work on a grove of fruit trees. They were treated to breakfast and lunch, and given the opportunity to learn about the work we do here at HKNC.



Everyone involved looks forward to welcoming the team back for HKNC in Full Bloom 2008. ■



One of the most valuable experiences that students can have while enrolled at HKNC is the opportunity to participate in a work experience or internship. Yet, finding suitable internships can be challenging. Often, when HKNC staff approach local business or corporate representatives, they are met with skepticism. Employers may question whether a person who is profoundly deaf and totally blind can become a productive and successful employee. How will they

do the job? How will they communicate with their boss? Will the company's employees waste valuable time training the student?

1-800-flowers.com and HKNC recently collaborated to produce a short film addressing these issues, showing how a successful partnership between the corporate world, HKNC, and the student who is deaf-blind, can lead to positive outcomes for everyone. If you are interested in offering a work experience or internship to a person who is deaf-blind, or would like a copy of this DVD, please contact the HKNC Development Department at [development@hknc.org](mailto:development@hknc.org) ■

## Heart in Hand Gift

On Wednesday, April 18, HKNC received a check for \$8,000 from Heart and Hand for the Handicapped (HHH). This is the second year that HHH has helped to make it possible for students who are deaf-blind, between the ages of 16 and 21, to participate in HKNC's exciting and educational two-week program designed especially for them. The HKNC Summer Seminar gives students the skills, information and the resources they need to live as independently as possible.



The mission of Heart and Hand for the Handicapped is to raise funds to support institutions that are involved with "differently-abled" children in India and the United States. ■

## Deaf-Blind Poster

As the result of a Presidential Proclamation in 1984, the last week in June has been designated Helen Keller Deaf-Blind Awareness Week (Helen Keller's birthday is June 27th). Every year, HKNC celebrates this anniversary with a campaign by highlighting a particular aspect of deaf-blindness.

The poster below illustrates this year's theme:

**DEAF-BLIND WORKERS—SEE WHAT THEIR EXPERIENCE CAN DO FOR YOU.**

**“Don't be blind to his abilities, deaf to his ideas—see what his experience can do for you.”**

Today, enlightened employers have found that hiring a person who is deaf-blind makes sense! Many deaf-blind people are highly skilled, highly motivated, and highly productive. Individuals who are deaf-blind pursue a variety of vocational paths, including administration, education, social work, retail businesses, clerical work, computers/technology, food service and more.

To receive the 2007 poster, contact the Development Department at [development@hknc.org](mailto:development@hknc.org). ■



## Open House

On April 18th, the Helen Keller National Center opened its doors to the community, and welcomed over 100 of our neighbors who were eager to learn more about the Center and its unique training program.



Throughout the afternoon, the HKNC Conference Center featured booths demonstrating special techniques and equipment used when teaching people who are deaf-blind. Neighbors of all ages from the local community enjoyed many hands-on, educational activities. They had their names brailled; tried out low vision and audiology devices; wore blindfolds and walked with a white cane; read books in both print and braille; communicated directly to one of the deaf-blind students using a device called the Screen Braille Communicator; and a lot more. Tours of the Training Building were conducted.

Several parents commented that although they had a hard time getting their kids to come, they couldn't get them to leave! With that encouraging response, we look forward to HKNC's Open House next spring. ■

**“When one door of happiness closes, another one opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened to us.”**

**HELEN KELLER (1880-1968)**

# Helen's Walk 2007

Community supporters, HKNC staff and students alike came out to support the Helen Keller National Center at its annual 5K fundraiser, "Helen's Walk." The Walk took place on a sunny and cool Sunday in June, starting at the Sands Point Park & Preserve and continuing through the picturesque streets of Sands Point. This event was co-sponsored by the Brotherhood of the Community Synagogue.

Proceeds from the Walk will be used for crucial capital needs and priority technology improvements, which have been identified by HKNC.

"We're very happy with all of the community support shown at this year's Walk," said Joe McNulty, executive director, HKNC. "Everyone had an amazing time and we know with the money raised, we'll be able to continue to help make a positive difference for people who are deaf-blind."



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