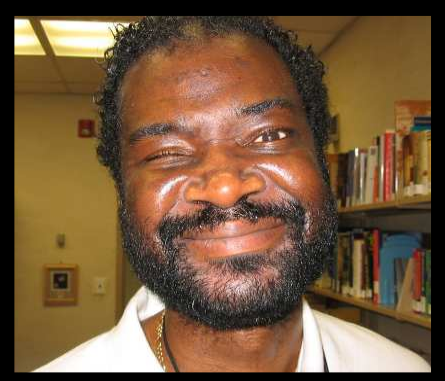


**HK
NC**

**Helen Keller National Center
For Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults**



Description of Services



**141 Middle Neck Road
Sands Point, New York 11050
www.hknc.org**

**HK
NC**

**Helen Keller National Center
For Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults**



**141 Middle Neck Road
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Table of Contents

GENERAL INFORMATION	4
WHO ATTENDS HKNC	4
REFERRAL AND ADMISSIONS INFORMATION	5
HKNC REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES CONTACT INFORMATION	19
Traditional Training Program	5
Instructional Areas	6-9
Vocational Services.....	6
Adaptive Technology Center.....	7
Communications Learning Center (CLC).....	8
Independent Living Department (IL).....	8
Orientation & Mobility (O&M).....	9
Consumer Support Services	9-12
Audiology.....	9
Case Management.....	10
Clinical Social Work	10
Creative Arts.....	11
Interpreting Services.....	11
Low Vision.....	11
Medical Services.....	12
Speech/Language Therapy.....	12
Residential Services	13
Specialized Short Term Programs	14-16
Comprehensive Assessment Training for High School Students (Ages 16-22) - 8 weeks.....	14
Summer Seminar for Transition Age Youth (Ages 16-22) - 2 weeks.....	14
Confident Living Program.....	14
Public Speaking Course.....	15
Community Services Program.....	15
Internships.....	15
Field Services	16
Regional Representatives.....	16
National Training Team (NTT).....	16
Senior Adult Program.....	16
Support Services	17
Volunteer Services.....	17
The Friends of HKNC.....	17
Development.....	17
Information Services.....	17
Special Projects	18
National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness (NCDB).....	18
National Family Association for Deaf-Blind (NFADB).....	18



The Conference Center

General Information

Authorized by an Act of Congress in 1967, the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNC) is the **only national vocational and rehabilitation program exclusively serving youths and adults who are deaf-blind.**

Our services include a **Vocational Training Program** and **Residence** at our headquarters in the suburbs of New York City, and information, advocacy and referral through our national system of **Field Services.**



The Training Building

Who Attends HKNC?

Any citizen of the United States who is 16 years of age and older with a **combined** hearing and vision loss is eligible to apply to the Center. Most consumers have a vocational goal. Each consumer's program is customized based on their goals, abilities and preferences.



Main entrance of the Helen Keller National Center located in Sands Point, NY

All of our consumers - whether they were born deaf-blind or lost their vision and/or hearing later in life - have one thing in common: a desire to live more independently. Older consumers may want to learn adaptive techniques for daily living. Younger consumers may be exploring "life after high school" - continuing their education or exploring work options. Those who have recently lost hearing and/or vision may wish to learn additional communication methods or adaptive technology.

Because we work **exclusively** with adults who are deaf-blind, HKNC staff are uniquely qualified to work with consumers who use a variety of communication methods, including American Sign Language (ASL - visual and tactual), the manual alphabet, speech, and braille, to name a few. While immersed in an environment that fosters self-determination and self-empowerment, consumers come to the realization that, at HKNC, their options are open!

For further information about the HKNC program, visit our website at: www.hknc.org or contact Information Services:

E-mail: hkncinfo@hknc.org or (516) 944-8900 ext. 253 (Voice/TTY)

Referral and Admissions Information

Referral for training at HKNC can be made directly through our regional representative in the area where the applicant resides. This *Description of Services* describes the various training programs to which consumers may apply - the Traditional Program; specialized short-term training for senior adults or high school students; and customized short-term programs. With few exceptions, consumers are sponsored by their respective state vocational rehabilitation agencies. The program runs 12 months a year and admissions are on a rotating basis.

Individual communication methods are accommodated during group meetings and social events.



Traditional Training Program

Job training and employment are the focal points for the vocational and rehabilitation training program at HKNC's headquarters. A case manager works closely with each consumer and their "team," which includes their state vocational rehabilitation (VR) sponsor, HKNC regional representative, HKNC instructors, and family members (if appropriate). The consumer and their team design an individualized evaluation and training program, which may include instruction or support in the following areas: vocational skills, adaptive technology/computer skills, audiology communication, independent living, orientation and mobility, creative arts/art therapy, interpreting services, low vision, recreation, counseling and speech/language. Routine medical care is provided on an "as needed" basis.



Instructional Areas : Vocational Services

Most consumers attending HKNC's program have a desire to gain experience and marketable skills for employment. Preparation for vocational evaluation and training begins before they even arrive at HKNC. Prior to entry into the program, the consumer and their team participate in a teleconference to explore their work history, job interests and opportunities for work in their home community. This **pre-planning meeting** allows the consumer to "hit the ground running" when they arrive in NY, or early in their evaluation. Very often, potential employers will already be lined up for possible community work experiences.



With help from technology, a local radio station provides a great work experience.

During the **vocational evaluation**, consumers have the opportunity to try different areas of work and are guided to viable vocational choices through the support of all departments. The information collected during the evaluation yields a functional vocational profile of the consumer including job interests and abilities, skills necessary to perform the job, and required supports.

Specific skills in communication, orientation & mobility, independent living, technology, low vision and audiology are best mastered at **work experiences** in the community. As actual challenges arise on the job, creative strategies, techniques or adaptations are developed with assistance from team members. This may be as simple as physically reorganizing the work space to using communication aids and devices, specialized software and/or adaptive technology.

Job development activities begin while a consumer is still in training. This may include the consumer researching potential employers in their home community, practicing interviewing skills, filling out applications and sending out resumes.

HKNC has affiliations with nationally known companies such as 1-800-Flowers, Hilton Hotel, Home Depot, TJ Maxx, Luxotica, Applebees and Tutor Time. After a successful work experience with one of these companies in NY, consumers may be hired by that company in their home community.

Beyond these national affiliations, other work experience sites have been developed according to individual interests and aspirations. These have led to **job placements** in positions such as retail clerk, research assistant, physical therapy aide, data entry clerk and engineer, to name a few.

When the consumer returns home, HKNC continues to be available through our regional representatives and headquarters staff. This support is available to the consumer as well as to their local VR team.



The use of a large print TTY gives a person with low vision access to telecommunications.

Adaptive Technology Center

The Adaptive Technology Center provides opportunities for consumers to learn to use the Internet, e-mail, word processing programs, spreadsheets, telecommunication systems, and note-taking devices. Through the recent expansion of this program, including the purchase of state-of-the-art equipment and a wireless network for laptops and note-takers, HKNC now offers a comprehensive range of training for vocational and personal use. Evaluation and training are provided on a one-to-one basis, taking into account individual communication styles, and employment and residential goals. Hardware and software adaptations provide access to the computer through the use of refreshable braille displays, screen magnification programs, and screen reading programs.

Consumers are eager to learn how to utilize technology in their daily lives. A young man working at a radio station keeps notes and organizes his workday using a portable notetaker with a braille display. Consumers learn to use Internet-based live-text communication. Those who use American Sign Language access a video relay service to call their hearing employer. Scanners and screen readers are used to read print memos and documents at job sites. One consumer learned to use a braille translation program to scan, translate, and emboss into braille a document he needed for work. Another used a global positioning system (GPS) with braille output to get directions to and from the workplace.



A technology instructor helps his student find the braille cells on his refreshable braille display.



Evaluation and training may be provided on a short term basis. Professional seminars and consultation specifically geared to technology and deaf-blindness are available.

The Center is actively involved in research and development with a variety of companies in order to keep up with the demand for products which meet the unique needs of users who are deaf-blind. Adaptive technology is an integral and continually expanding area which provides resources and essential skills for deaf-blind individuals for employment and everyday living.

A young man with low vision uses a program that magnifies text on his computer screen so that he can complete data entry.

Communications Learning Center (CLC)

"The way we communicate with others ultimately determines the quality of our lives."



The face-to-face text and braille communicator is one of the devices used by a person who is deaf-blind to communicate with the public.

An integral aspect of training offered to all consumers who come to HKNC is communication. There are a variety of effective communication methods that individuals who are deaf-blind use with their peers as well as with the hearing/sighted public on the job or in the community. These may include simple adaptations such as using communication cards with pre-printed messages, print-on-palm or note writing, to the use of devices with braille and print output for face-to-face communication.

Individualized training is provided in all of the above techniques as well as in braille, sign language (visual or tactual) and the manual alphabet. Basic academics, such as reading comprehension, written English and mathematics, are addressed as well as completing forms/applications and preparing resumes.

Additionally, consumers may receive training in telecommunications (TTY, FAX, the use of a video relay service, and TTY software programs), banking and budgeting. For those who wish to pursue higher education - technical school, vocational programs or college - CLC offers one-to-one instruction to strengthen academic skills to meet entrance requirements of these programs.

Independent Living Department (IL)

The Independent Living Department offers training in rehabilitation techniques for all aspects of managing a home including cooking and cleaning. Sleep shade training is offered to afford the consumer the opportunity to acquire tactual skills.

In addition to dormitory living, consumers may choose to reside in an apartment on campus or in the local community to apply the skills they've learned in IL. This real life experience is invaluable as the consumer identifies support needs for the future and develops the confidence to live in and maintain an apartment. Situational learning promotes problem solving skills and the use of community resources.

At the completion of training, staff members from Independent Living are available to assist consumers and/or their local team in setting up their home.



People who are deaf-blind enjoy learning how to safely prepare their own meals.

Orientation & Mobility (O&M)

The Orientation and Mobility Department offers consumers the opportunity to receive training to travel more safely and independently within their environment utilizing strategies specifically designed for adults who are deaf-blind.

Orientation and mobility training is customized for each consumer and may include, as appropriate, the following: utilizing a human guide; how to use protective techniques; how to effectively utilize a long white cane; how to safely cross streets; and how to use a variety of transportation options, which may include, paratransit systems, taxicabs, buses, subways and trains.

Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists (COMS) work in collaboration with the Vocational Services staff to evaluate travel conditions at employment sites and to ensure that consumers can travel independently to and from work via public transportation. This team training helps facilitate successful work experiences for the consumer in the local and home communities.



Using a street crossing card, a deaf-blind traveler (L) requests assistance.

Consumer Support Services: Audiology



Our audiologist is experienced in testing people who not only have a hearing loss, but also have a vision loss.

In addition to hearing assessments, HKNC's audiologist provides information about hearing loss and opportunities to learn about state-of-the-art hearing aids and assistive listening devices. The audiologist makes recommendations for specific aids, and offers training in their use and care. The consumer may evaluate these devices through a trial use on the job, or during other daily activities, to determine which ones would be beneficial to them.

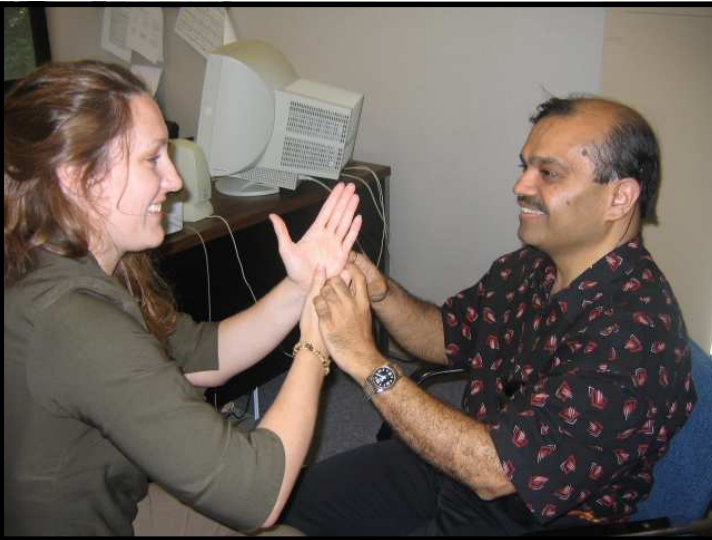
For those interested in exploring cochlear implants, the audiologist can assist in gathering information and resources.

A tactile audiogram helps consumers learn about their hearing loss.



Case Management

The case manager is the primary support and contact person for consumers attending the HKNC program. A consumer works with their case manager to:



A case manager and a consumer discuss his program using tactile sign language.

- formulate a class schedule to address their individual goals.
- discuss vocational and career planning.
- identify appropriate residential options in the home community.
- facilitate employment planning meetings and team meetings.
- communicate with the VR counselor and the consumer's home team.
- develop a plan for working and living in their home community.

Clinical Social Work



At
time

during training, a consumer has the opportunity to participate in individual counseling and therapy, support groups and/or family counseling as appropriate. The clinical social worker and ISSD staff provide these supports with the focus on a consumer's well being.



any
dur-

Creative Arts

The Creative Arts Department presents consumers with the opportunity to explore art as a means of relaxation and expression and, in some cases, as a vocational goal. An open studio format encourages consumers to choose activities that are of interest to them. When necessary, materials and techniques are adapted to suit individual needs.

As skills are developed in desired areas, consumers begin to explore ways in which these activities may be continued upon leaving the Center, either in the community or in the home, as a means of maintaining a balanced lifestyle.



Consumers of all ages enjoy the creative aspects of art.

Interpreting Services



Interpreters are well versed in the many methods of communication used by people who are deaf-blind.

The goal of the Interpreting Services Department is to assure clear and effective communication between and among consumers, staff and visitors. Interpreters provide support in a variety of methods of communication including American Sign Language (visual and tactual), typed text (magnified with a computer) and speech aided by voice-over using assistive listening devices.

Consumers benefit from interpreting support in one-to-one and group interactions such as job interviews, meetings and medical appointments. A consumer may also receive training on their rights and responsibilities and how to work with an interpreter and/or a support service provider (SSP).

Low Vision

In Low Vision classes, consumers are educated about the nature of their vision loss, the importance of environmental modifications (lighting, glare, contrast) and the availability of assistive low vision devices which best meet their needs. This information allows the consumer to make informed decisions when determining adaptations for their home or work environments.

Consumers learn which contrasting backgrounds work best for them in a variety of settings.



Medical Services



Our nurse practitioner administers day-to-day medical care.

The Medical Services Department assists consumers with meeting routine health needs. Nursing staff are available on the premises on a regularly scheduled basis. The department provides support with daily medication administration as needed. Low Vision and ENT clinics are held on the HKNC campus on a regular basis. Medical services are also available locally at area hospitals, clinics and private physician's offices.

Medical Services also offers health education and instruction on a variety of health concerns including medication administration, nutrition, diabetic education, disease management and sex education.

Speech/Language Therapy

Speech/voice training is available if the consumer wishes to improve their speech, or practice words and phrases for community interactions (i.e., names of family/friends, social phrases, work-related phrases, brand names for shopping).

The speech/language therapist also assists in promoting language development and exploring augmentative communication devices if needed.



Wireless FM systems provide direct auditory input for individuals with residual hearing.

***"While they were saying among themselves it cannot be done, it was done."
- Helen Keller***

Residential Services

While receiving training at HKNC, consumers reside at the Peter J. Salmon Residence in dormitory-style rooms. Typically, consumers share a room with one other person. Each bedroom has twin beds and a private bath. Common areas include two TV lounges, a computer lab and Library, both of which have closed circuit TVs for reading, and a room with TTYs/telephones and videophones. All consumers' rooms also have Internet access for those who bring their own computer. The Residence is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



For some consumers, HKNC offers the first opportunity to meet and socialize with peers who are also deaf-blind.

Laundry - Consumers are responsible for the laundering and upkeep of their clothing. Washers, dryers and laundry soap are available in the Residence. Towels and bed linens are provided.

Cafeteria -The kitchen prepares three meals a day and an evening snack. Kitchen staff offer special diets for medical or religious reasons.

Apartment Living Options - For some consumers, on-campus apartments are used as part of a training experience. Two off-campus apartments (Apartment In the Mainstream - AIM Program) are used for more comprehensive training in this area.

A **recreation specialist** is on staff to assist consumers in developing and participating in leisure-time activities during evenings and weekends. A gym with exercise equipment is available to those who have been medically cleared. Indoor and outdoor events and activities are varied monthly, based on input from consumers.



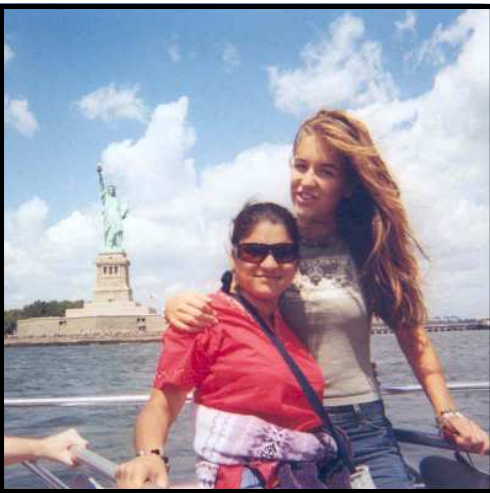
“All work and no play...”

A sudden snowfall (L) and visit from a canine friend (R) provide entertainment for the consumers during evenings and weekends.

Specialized Short Term Programs

COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT/TRAINING FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF-BLIND: Eight weeks (Ages 16-22)

Through our 8-week summer program, high school students are offered individualized evaluations in all of the training areas - adaptive technology, communication, independent living, vocational evaluation, orientation and mobility, low vision, audiology and creative arts. As a result of this experience, students leave with a greater understanding of their abilities, interests and goals. The evaluation report includes information that can be used to guide the final years of their high school program. On-campus housing offers opportunities for socialization with peers who are deaf-blind - a new experience for many students! Self-determination and self-advocacy are encouraged. This has been an empowering experience for many students in the past.



New York City is in close proximity to HKNC, and field trips to points of interest make the weekends more fun.

SUMMER SEMINAR FOR TRANSITION AGE YOUTH Two weeks (Ages 16-22)

The Summer Seminar provides a group of 6-8 high school students two weeks of learning and fun during the summer months. Each high school participant is paired with a “buddy” - a current consumer at HKNC - who helps them learn about life at the Center.

Throughout the program, discussions are held on topics related to employment, communication, college life and self-advocacy. Participants have opportunities to meet and socialize with successful adults who are deaf-blind.

Confident Living Program

Each year, HKNC offers two, 1-week special training and information programs for senior adults, age 55 years and older. One program focuses on the needs of senior adults who are blind or visually impaired and hard of hearing and who rely on their hearing for communication. The other program focuses on the needs of senior adults who are deaf-blind or deaf and visually impaired and whose primary mode of communication is American Sign Language (ASL).

An outstanding aspect of the programs is the opportunity for participants to meet other senior adults experiencing combined vision and hearing loss and to learn from one another.



You're never too old to enjoy a tricycle built for seven.

Public Speaking Course

In the Public Speaking Course, consumers learn how to organize information and formally present it to an audience. The goal of this course is to give consumers the confidence to advocate for themselves in their home communities and to present themselves to potential employers with self-assurance.

Students confidently await their first presentation to an audience.



Community Services Program



A local supermarket provides a great opportunity for vocational exploration.

For consumers living in the NY metropolitan area, the Community Services Program (CSP) offers an array of training options in the consumer's work site, community and home. This model program is a collaborative effort between the Helen Keller National Center and the New York State Commission for the Blind (CBVH). The CSP staff provide job development and job coaching as well as assessments and training in work skills, independent living, orientation and mobility, low vision and adaptive technology.

CSP staff provide consultation to those who are working with people who are deaf-blind in community-based agencies in the NY area. In addition, training is provided to employers and co-workers of deaf-blind individuals at their work site.

Internships



Interns at HKNC get hands-on experiences to help them decide their future plans.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM (PEP) and INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

The HKNC Internship Program provides an opportunity for college students at the bachelor's and master's level to explore careers in the field of deaf-blindness. Though it is suggested that the program be a full-time commitment, flexible schedules can be designed to meet an individual's academic or agency requirements.

For further information or formal application, please e-mail: hkncinfo@hknc.org

Field Services: Regional Representatives

Regional representatives are located in ten offices across the country and are resources for information on deaf-blindness. They assist in identifying and advocating for people who have combined vision and hearing loss, assessing their needs, and coordinating local services, if necessary.



HKNC Regional Representatives

In addition, the regional representatives provide consultation to families, consumers and agencies; assist with the application process to HKNC; provide follow-up services to former HKNC consumers; and assist in maintaining the National Registry of Persons who are Deaf-Blind.

For contact information, see back cover.

National Training Team (NTT)



The HKNC National Training Team was established to support the development of skills specific to working with consumers who are deaf-blind. NTT members, and/or HKNC staff, provide interactive and participatory training in a variety of settings including seminars at HKNC, on-site agency training and customized, short term programs.

For more information, contact the NTT office at:
(516) 944-8900, Ext. 233/239 or
e-mail: NTTHKNC@HKNC.ORG

The Leona & Harry B. Helmsley Conference Center in the Training Building contains state-of-the-art technology.

Senior Adult Program



Learning new ways to do routine tasks help senior adults adjust to their hearing and vision loss.

The senior adult specialist provides program consultation, technical assistance, training, and support for the increasing number of people who experience problems with both hearing and vision loss in their later years. These services may also include providing professionals with up-to-date information, resources and techniques to effectively work with senior adults; coordinating and participating in workshops, seminars and conferences; and development and dissemination of materials designed to increase community awareness.

For more information, contact the senior adult specialist at:
(804) 827-0920 (Voice/TTY) or e-mail: paige.berry@hknc.org

Support Services



Volunteer Services

Volunteer Services provides a corps of trained volunteers who assist consumers and staff. Volunteers, ranging from teenagers to senior citizens, are involved in numerous activities at the Center:

1. In the **Residence**, they accompany consumers on trips, work with consumers on art projects, play board games, take walks and socialize.
2. In the **Training Building**, volunteers work on a one-to-one basis with consumers, reinforcing skills taught in the classroom and working on special projects.

Volunteers light up our lives!



The Friends of HKNC

A group of volunteer community members known as "The Friends of Helen Keller National Center" raise funds to enhance the lives of people who are deaf-blind.

All funds raised by The Friends are used exclusively for individual consumer's special needs which are not provided for in the Center's operating budget,

including purchasing special aids and devices.

Development

The Development Department organizes fund-raising events, such as an annual walk-a-thon, "Helen's Walk." They develop and distribute all materials for the annual world-wide celebration of "Helen Keller Deaf-Blind Awareness Week."



Information Services

The HKNC Library provides a quiet spot for consumers to do homework or enjoy reading material in braille, large print and audio format during



a free period. For professionals, the Library has a collection of books, journals and videos on deaf-blindness. The Library is equipped with a Perkins Braille, CCTV, computer, multiple 4-track talking book players and a video phone for students to utilize. Information packets about specific topics related to deaf-blindness are available, as are informational brochures about the Center. The department also produces braille materials for in-house use and conducts tours of the Center for interested visitors, including potential consumers and their families.

The many resources in our Library help consumers with their studies.

Special Projects



National Consortium On Deaf-Blindness

The National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness works collaboratively with families, federal, state and local agencies to provide technical assistance, information services (through the project formerly known as DB-LINK*) and personnel training related to children and youth who are deaf-blind from birth through 21 years of age. NCDB brings together the resources of Teaching Research Institute of Western Oregon University, HKNC and Perkins School for the Blind with long histories of expertise in the field of deaf-blindness. For additional information, go to www.nationaldb.org

*DB-LINK identifies, coordinates, and disseminates, at no cost, information related to children and youth who are deaf-blind from birth through 21 years of age. For more information, contact DB-LINK at (800) 438-9376; by e-mail: dblink@tr.wou.edu or at website: <http://www.nationaldb.org/>

NATIONAL FAMILY ASSOCIATION FOR DEAF- BLIND (NFADB)

HKNC provides funding and administrative support to NFADB, the largest national network of families focusing on issues surrounding deaf-blindness. NFADB is a non-profit, volunteer-based family association whose philosophy is that individuals who are deaf-blind are valued members of society and are entitled to the same opportunities and choices as other members of the community.



For more information, contact NFADB at (800) 255-0411; by e-mail at NFADB@aol.com or at website: www.NFADB.org



HKNC Regional Representatives



Helen Keller National Center
For Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults

Region 1 - New England Region

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont

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Region 2 - Mid-Atlantic Region

New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands

Molly Reimer

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Region 3 - East Central Region

Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia

Cynthia L. Ingraham

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(301) 459-5433 (TTY)
(301) 459-5070 (FAX)

E-mail: cynthia.ingraham@hknc.org

Region 4 - Southeastern Region

4a: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi

Barbara Chandler - E-mail: barbara.chandler@hknc.org

4b: Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee

Monika Werner - E-mail: monika.werner@hknc.org

1003 Virginia Avenue
Suite 104
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(404) 766-2820 (TTY)
(404) 766-3447 (FAX)

Region 5 - North Central Region

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Laura J. Thomas

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(309) 755-0018 (Voice/TTY/VP)
(309) 755-0021 (Voice/TTY)
(309) 755-0025 (FAX)

E-mail: laura.thomas@hknc.org

Region 6 - South Central Region

Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas

C.C. Davis

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(972) 490-6042 (FAX)

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Region 7 - Great Plains Region

Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska

Beth Jordan

4330 Shawnee Mission Parkway
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Region 8 - Rocky Mountain Region

Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming

Maureen McGowan

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(303) 934-2939 (FAX)

E-mail: maureen.mcgowan@hknc.org

Region 9 - Southwestern Region

Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Guam, Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Cathy Kirscher

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San Diego, CA 92131
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(858) 578-3800 (FAX)

E-mail: cathy.kirscher@hknc.org

Region 10 - Northwestern Region

Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington

Dorothy Walt

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(206) 324-1133 (TTY/VP)
(206) 324-9159 (FAX)

E-mail: dorothy.walt@hknc.org

Susan Lascek – Supervisor of Regional Representatives

1003 Virginia Avenue
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E-mail: susan.lascek@hknc.org