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A HISTORY OF THE REHABILITATION SERVICE ADMINISTRATION (RSA) SUPPORT OF INTERPRETER EDUCATION

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Abstract

In 1978, Congress passed the Rehabilitation, Comprehensive Services, and Developmental Disabilities Amendments (P.L. 95-602). These amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 authorized federal grants to states to fund interpreter training programs. Based on that legislation, in 1980, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) began funding regional and national interpreter training projects and has done so continuously to the present. The history of the inclusion of interpreter training language in the 1978 Amendments can be traced to influential leaders in the field of rehabilitation of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. Their collaboration, relationship with supportive Congressional legislators and staff, and the confluence of time, talent and opportunity during the 1970s forged social change and influenced policy development regarding interpreters for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, This article traces the history of this interpreter legislation and includes a summary of the author's personal interviews with Jerome Schein, Robert Lauritsen, Bill Woodrick and Marty LaVor.

Introduction

The decade of the 1970s was a prolific period of legislative progress for persons who were deaf, having a profound impact on their ability to access all aspects of society. Before the decade was over, persons who were deaf had gained access to public school education through P.L. 94-142 and access to federally funded programs and services via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Deaf persons had garnered the right to interpreters in criminal and civil courts for actions initiated by the federal government through the Bilingual, Hearing and Speech-Impaired Court Interpreter Act of 1977, and had gained federal recognition of the need for interpreters and a commitment to fund interpreter training programs to increase the quality and quantity of qualified interpreters through Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA).

In 1978, Congress passed the Rehabilitation, Comprehensive Services, and Developmental Disabilities Amendments (P.L. 95-602). These amendments, among other actions: a) authorized federal grants to states to

establish interpreter referral service centers, b) called for the establishment of competency standards for graduates of post-secondary interpreter training programs, and c) authorized up to $900,000 of federal dollars to fund interpreter training programs (Anderson & Stauffer, 1990). These actions were, in the words of Richard Johnson, Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) Office of Handicapped Individuals, "no small accomplishment ...in a time of tight fiscal policy in Washington" (Johnson, 1981, p. D-7).

This paper seeks to address the third action focusing on P.L. 95-602 Section 304[d][1], which states:

> For the purpose of training a sufficient number of interpreters to meet the communications needs of deaf individuals, the Secretary, through the Office of Information and Resources for the Handicapped, may award grants under this section to any public or private nonprofit agency or organization to establish interpreter training programs or to provide financial assistance for ongoing interpreter training programs.
> (U. S. Department of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, n.d.)

Beginning in 1980, RSA did, in fact, fund regional, and later national, interpreter training programs/projects for successive five-year cycles (see appendix). The current cycle (2005-2010) was awarded to five bi-regional projects and one national project beginning October 1, 2005.[a]

Overview

To understand the history of this important legislation that is little known outside the field of interpreting, it is important to more fully explore four avenues: a) the historical development of deaf people's right to access interpreting services through vocational rehabilitation, b) the personal story and unique force of Boyce R. Williams and his collaboration with an associate, Jim Buress, c) the contributions of six prominent professionals in the field of deafness rehabilitation, and d) the influence of prominent members of Congress and their staff who were responsible for writing and supporting crucial legislation.

The origins of P.L. 95-602 can be traced to legislative foundations established during the 1960s; however, the actualization of this law is due to a confluence of time, talent, and opportunity that came to fruition in Tucson, Arizona during February, 1974. Through the efforts of six talented individuals attending a 1974 national conference on deafness rehabilitation, an idea was born. "At the meeting in an after-hours session around the hotel swimming pool, the first major national effort for training interpreters on a national level took place" (Lauritsen, 1997).

Robert Lauritsen of the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association (ADARA) remembers it as a conference of Professional Rehabilitation Workers with Deaf Adults (PRWAD)[b] (Lauritsen, 1997); however, Carol Tipton cites it as the National Rehabilitation Association's Congress on Deafness Rehabilitation (Tipton, 1975). Regardless, these six individuals who participated in the process were well known within the deafness and rehabilitation community, and included: Jerome Schein, New York University; Lottie Reikof, Gallaudet College (now Gallaudet University); Ray Jones, California State University at Northridge (CSUN); Bill Woodrick, University of Tennessee; Ron Lafayette, Seattle Community College; and Robert Lauritsen, St. Paul Technical Vocational Institute (TVI). They subsequently met with Jim Buress and Boyce Williams of RSA. "We 'created' the National Interpreter Training Consortium (NITC) that night which was the model for future federally funded interpreter training programs" (Lauritsen, 1997, PRWAD: The Site for Federal Leadership and National Impact section, ¶ 1).

The idea was shaped into a grant proposal written by Jerome Schein and submitted to RSA. Interestingly, the original grant request for funding was turned down, but the decision was appealed and overturned. The project was funded in the spring of 1974 (Schein, personal communication, October 15, 2005).

The establishment of the NITC might not have happened without the knowledge, expertise, and support of Boyce Williams, deaf since age 17, who became the first deaf person to be employed in rehabilitation at the federal level. His career with RSA spanned 38 years until his retirement in 1983. A memorial by Barry Strassler described Williams as "probably the greatest deaf leader this world has known. Many of the privileges we enjoy nowadays (interpreters, captions, TTY access, etc.) were ideas that originated from Boyce many years ago" (Strassler, n.d., Boyce Williams section, ¶ 1).

Williams credits other individuals who are unnamed, sadly, and circumstances for the creation of this law. At the Seventh Biennial ADARA National Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio, Williams (1980) stated that:

> The existence of this splendid law [P.L. 95-602] is due to many factors: to events, to social responsibility development in our voluntary and professional areas, and principally to the presence on Capitol Hill of key staff persons. These people are knowledgeable about the needs of deaf people, are interested in providing the means to meet those needs, and have teamed up with the extraordinarily complex process of giving birth to enabling legislations. (p. 195)

Interpreter Legislation and Interpreter Education History

While sign language interpreters have been around as long as there have been deaf people and hearing people who want to communicate, the number of college degree programs in interpretation has grown in response to the increased need for sign language interpreters following the implementation of disability rights legislation in the United States. In the early 1960s, there were no sign language interpreter training programs in the United States. Interpreting services were provided by family members, religious workers, teachers of deaf children, and other "helpers" in the field (Siple, 1982).

In 1964, the first interpreting workshop was held at Ball State Teachers College (now Ball State University) in Muncie, IN. This historic workshop was funded by the Vocational Rehabilitation Administration of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW), now the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) of the Department of Education, under the guidance of Boyce Williams (Reichman & Lovley, 2001; Stewart, Schein, & Cartwright, 2004). The workshop's purpose was to "bring a more formal and structured foundation to the training of interpreters and to upgrade services and support offered to persons who are deaf" (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, n.d., About RID section, ¶ 2). From these efforts, the RID was formed, creating the first national professional organization of sign language and oral interpreters in the U.S.

One year later, Congress, recognizing the inability of vocational rehabilitation counselors to effectively communicate with their clients,

enacted P.L. 89-333, the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1965. This act "authorized affiliated state rehabilitation agencies to employ interpreters for deaf clients as needed" (Stewart, Schein, & Cartwright, 2004, p. 20). This was the first time interpreting was authorized as a case service for deaf clients (Anderson & Stauffer, 1990; Pimentel, 1979). A decade later, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and P.L. 94-142, The Education of all Handicapped Children Act of 1975, increased the demand for sign language and oral interpreters for deaf people accessing programs receiving federal funding and for deaf children mainstreamed into public schools under "least restrictive environment" demands. After the passage of these Acts, deaf students were mainstreamed into public schools in large numbers, often with an interpreter; however, very few interpreter education programs existed at this time to prepare interpreters for community settings.

According to Stewart, Schein, & Cartwright (2004), the first formal interpreting programs were offered by CSUN in 1965, the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) in Rochester, NY in 1966, and St. Paul TVI (Minnesota) and New York University in 1969. In 1972, RID began interpreting skills testing and certification. By 1974, RID had grown to 500 members; however, many of these members had full-time employment and were not available to interpret in the community. In 1973, Sternberg, Tipton, and Schein produced an interpreter training curriculum guide, while at the same time lamenting that there were no well-established interpreter training programs and very few qualified personnel available to train interpreters. It was apparent to all that the demand for qualified interpreters far exceeded the supply and that training was sorely lacking by the time the key players gathered in Tucson, AZ, in February of 1974.

To help meet the growing need, the National Interpreter Training Consortium (NITC) was initiated by the RSA in response to Schein's grant proposal and as a result of that fateful poolside discussion. Again, Williams played an important role. Adler and Romano (1974) credit Williams as "instrumental in promoting a...training grant to increase quickly the national supply of trained interpreters" (p. 17). The NITC consisted of six experienced interpreting programs across the country: CSUN, University of Arizona, Gallaudet College (now University), New York University (NYU), St. Paul TVI, and the University of Tennessee (Stewart, Schein & Cartwright, 2004).[c] Funded from 1974-1979, this was the first time federal funding was earmarked for a program "designed to provide training to interpreters for the hearing impaired" (Siple, 1982, p. 1). The consortium's goals included: a) workshops

to upgrade the skill of working interpreters, b) a three month training program for new interpreters, c) programs to prepare interpreter educators, and d) the preparation of interpreters to work with deaf persons who were also "low verbal" (Stewart, Schein & Cartwright, 2004; Tipton, 1975). A fourth goal, to provide training to deaf individuals on how to use interpreters, was not funded (Schein, personal communication, October 15, 2005). The NITC became the model for the federal funding of interpreter training programs that began under P.L. 95-602 in 1980 and continues today.

Leadership in Rehabilitation at the Federal Level: Boyce R. Williams (1910-1998)

In August 1910, Boyce R. Williams was born in Racine, WI. As a senior in high school, he contracted spinal meningitis, leaving him totally deaf and with impaired balance (Garretson, 1996). After graduating from his hearing high school a year later, Williams decided to attend the Wisconsin School for the Deaf (primarily to continue playing football) where he learned sign language. He attended Gallaudet College from 1929–1932. Upon graduation with a bachelor's degree in mathematics, Williams became a teacher at the Wisconsin School for the Deaf (Firkins, n.d.). Two years later he moved to the Indiana School for the Deaf where he eventually became director of vocational training, a position he held until 1945. During summers, he worked on his master's degree in education, completing his degree in 1940 (Firkins, n.d.; Panara & Panara, 1983).

By 1945, having acquired degrees in mathematics and education and with experience in vocational rehabilitation and education, Williams was ready to advocate for the needs of deaf people at the federal level. He applied for a position with the national Rehabilitation Services Administration in Washington, D.C. but was rejected because he was deaf. He lost an appeal of that decision and decided to take a state-level job with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in Indianapolis, IN, where he began establishing his credentials and qualification for Civil Service. In 1945, he was able to move to the federal level as a consultant for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Speech Impaired. During these years, he worked tirelessly to promote rehabilitation of deaf individuals, and to convince state agencies that deaf clients were capable workers who needed counselors who could communicate with them through sign language. According to Merv Garretson (1996), in a tribute to Williams:

> As the first director of the Office of Deafness and Communication Disorders in the federal government, Boyce Williams was able to enlist the interest and support of Mary E. Switzer, the widely respected and non-nonsense commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) during the late 1950s and 1960s. Working together, these two people were largely instrumental in initiating and blazing the way toward deaf empowerment and in forcing open communication doors for deaf people everywhere. (p vii)

Williams helped provide vital grants for developing programs. In 1964, RSA provided $17,572 to support the first workshop on interpreting (Reichman, 2005). "It was largely Williams' influence that the federal rehabilitation office sponsored the Workshop on Interpreting for the Deaf, held at Ball State Teachers College in Muncie, IN, in 1964, with the purpose of providing better interpreting and translating services for the deaf" (Panara & Panara, 1983, p. 69). Williams understood intimately that interpreters were the key to accessibility for many deaf Americans, an important concept he brought to that pivotal Arizona meeting in February 1974.

In 1960, thanks to Williams' efforts, the RSA funded the National Leadership Training Program in the Areas of the Deaf at CSUN, leading to a master's degree in educational administration supervision and higher education. The director of this program was Dr. Ray Jones, one of the six key individuals seated around the pool that night in 1974.

Among his many other contributions, Williams became a pivotal player with the National Association of the Deaf. He was also instrumental in getting the VR Administration to fund the National Theatre of the Deaf. Williams served on many boards and committees, serving as president of the Alumni Association and chairman of the Board of Fellows for Gallaudet University, president of the Commission on Social Rehabilitation of the World Federation of the Deaf, and vice president of the Professional Rehabilitation Workers for the Adult Deaf (later ADARA), to name a few. In recognition of his many other accomplishments, Williams was awarded an honorary doctorate of laws from Gallaudet in 1958, and the honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree by Carthage College in Wisconsin in 1972.

For almost four decades, Williams was "...at the hub of the national rehabilitation movement in Washington, D.C." (Panara & Panara, 1983, p. 71). By the time he retired in 1983, he was chief of the deafness and communicative disorders branch of RSA. During his tenure, he worked with state vocational rehabilitation agencies, public and private organizations, and consumer groups. "In essence, Dr. William's government tenure has also been the history of the vocational rehabilitation of deaf people" (Adler & Romano, 1999, p. 16). A longtime colleague of Williams, Stephen Quigley, said it differently: "We shall not see a man like him again in our time" (Firkins, n.d., ¶ 13). Clearly, if any man could bring the resources of RSA together with the needs of deaf consumers to support quality interpreter education programs, Williams was "the man!"

The Times: Decade of Change: 1970-1979

For those who lived it, the 1970s was a unique decade marked by positive, yet contentious, social change and growing political action and accountability. Coming off of the 1960s, a decade known for the devastating political assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, and Robert Kennedy, the civil rights movement, the race for space and a moon landing, the hippy and peace movement, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Cold War, and the Vietnam War, there was a collective feeling of relief when the new decade arrived. However, the relief did not last long. On May 4, 1970, a thousand students at Kent State University protested the Vietnam War. National Guardsmen opened fire on the students, killing four. Political protest in America had taken a deadly turn.

Other early events in the 1970s were more positive, such as celebration of the first Earth Day (April 21, 1970), the introduction of soft contact lenses in 1971, the ending of the Vietnam War in 1973, the creation of the first Apple computer, and the introduction of "lite" beer. Still, the decade saw its share of turbulence and controversy (Gross, 1999). Watergate and the resignation of President Nixon contributed to a decay of trust in the presidency. The world learned the dangers of secondhand smoke. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) cuts in oil production led to nation-wide gas rationing. The Supreme Court legalized abortion. Patty Hearst was kidnapped by the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA). Elvis Presley died from a drug overdose at age 42.

The year also marked a change in the history of disability action and activism. Barnartt and Scotch (2002) describe the 1970s as a time of increased protests by persons who were deaf and persons with physical or mental disabilities to "...change society's reactions to disability, as well as its policies towards people with impairments" (p. xi). According to Rubin and Roessler as described by Middleton, Rollins, and Harley (1999), through the passage of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, people with disabilities no longer had to "implore and petition" for equality in access to education, employment, healthcare and other services, marking a major change in public policy. Accessibility increasingly became equated with social fairness and personal rights, though these rights were not won easily.

The decade also benefited from the political activism and anti-discrimination legislation of the civil rights movements of the 1960s. People with disabilities saw African-Americans jeopardizing their safety and their very lives for their belief in a society characterized by equality regardless of race. "Yet to be certain, an earlier movement [American civil rights movement] served as a buttress to...the militancy displayed by persons with disability in the 1970s" (Middleton, Rollins, & Harley, 1999, p. 3). Americans with disabilities, including 1.8 million who were deaf (Schein & Delk, 1974), together with their families and professional colleagues, had a model of action and were ready to fight for their rights at a time when the window of opportunity was open to use political action as a tool to change social policy.

The Opportunity: As Told Through Interviews with William Woodrick, Jerome Schein and Robert Lauritsen

By 1974, there was a group of individuals in place who were relatively young, highly motivated, real "pushers" who had history together, a successful record of working for new programs and services within rehabilitation, and who felt that they could make things happen. Additionally, there were people poised at the federal level who were willing to "step up and take a chance" (Schein, personal communication, October 15, 2005). Williams was positioned at the federal level with a top position in RSA. Congress was soon to pass sweeping federal laws affording accessibility and equal opportunity for deaf people as well as other persons with disabilities such as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 and the Bilingual, Hearing and Speech-Impaired Court Interpreter Act of 1977. This is, *de facto*, a definition of "window of opportunity."

Sitting around the pool that night discussing needs and planning action, while pivotal, was not an unusual event. In a time when there were no computers, fax machines, nor e-mail, networking took place by phone and at conferences or meetings. Typically, after a day of meetings, this group would sit around and chat about what needed to be done, what resources were available, and brainstorm avenues to achieve these goals. They would share knowledge, ideas, and resources. Often, they would leave these meetings with assignments. Each would "do their piece of the pie," according to Bill Woodrick (personal communication, October 9, 2005). For example, in pulling together numbers, Ray Jones (CA) would gather statistics for the West coast, Ron Lafayette (WA) for the Northwest, Woodrick (TN) for the South, etc.

This night in February was no different. Earlier that day, Jerome Schein had won the Boyce R. Williams Award, given to a distinguished leader in deafness rehabilitation. That night, according to Bob Lauritsen, Jim Buress called a meeting and the group decided to meet poolside around 10:30 p.m. From that meeting, the idea for the NITC was born.

This group had history. Most of the six had been instrumental in setting up the Professional Rehabilitation Workers with Adult Deaf (PRWAD) organization. Most worked in rehabilitation, although some worked in post-secondary institutions, such as Lottie Reikof of Gallaudet and Jerry Schein of NYU. They had already worked together and drafted legislation to get four federal centers on rehabilitation for persons who were deaf and one national center funded, i.e. NTID in Rochester, NY.

This group had broad support from the Deaf community. These individuals had worked with people who were deaf for many years. They had respect as influential leaders in the field of rehabilitation; persons who could make things happen. Interestingly, according to Bill Woodrick (personal communication, October 9, 2005) they did not seek the support of the disability community in general until after the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.[d]

This group had cohesion, though not total homogeneity. While most individuals in the group of six were male (one female), all were White, and all were knowledgeable about service provision to people who were deaf; however, they differed politically and religiously. Some were deaf, and some were hearing. This was not a partisan group, but they did share common dreams and goals.

This group knew the problem and had the vision. These individuals had supported the rehabilitation law, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, mandating the provision of interpreting services in postsecondary and rehabilitation settings (U.S. Department of Education, n.d). They were acutely aware that there was a dearth of competent interpreters to work in these or other settings. Even if deaf people received training or were accepted into postsecondary institutions, there were no interpreters creating an extremely frustrating situation faced by the six regularly. They knew that they needed federal support for interpreter training programs.

This group was politically astute. They understood that if they were to ask the federal government to set up a funded interpreting project, they would need a goal with measurable outcomes, such as a specific number of trained interpreters with a specific level of competency. They set out to do this by working with state RID chapters in setting up in-service training for interpreters. They realized that individuals with strong signing skills, such as children of deaf adults (CODAs), were scattered; that CODAs had linguistic competence, but had not been objectively evaluated. Through their work at the state level and through the NITC, these leaders were able to identify people who could benefit from training. At the end of the five-year NITC (1974–1979) project, they were armed with statistics on the number of people who had been trained and how many had upgraded their skills. This documentation helped support the passage of the 1978 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act. The NITC raised to national attention the problem of the shortage of interpreters and provided a way to solve the problem. This group understood that providing a doable solution, rather than just stating a problem, was essential for congressional support (Jerome Schein, personal communication, October 15, 2005).

This group was politically savvy. According to Woodrick (personal communication, October 9, 2005), Williams "knew everything happening in Washington, and was a God-send to us. He knew we were involved and helped the group to keep abreast of upcoming legislations. We were keenly aware of legislation that was going to be put in place." Though clearly the group's success was due to the "group effort," according to Woodrick, if one man were given credit, it would have to be Williams. He was the key. In fact, Williams was instrumental in getting Buress, also of RSA, to the poolside meeting that night, knowing that Buress[e] was sympathetic to their cause.

Schein believes there is always a personal element in policy development. Each member of the group made a concerted effort to personally know influential and supportive U.S. Senators and Congressmen such as John (Jack) Duncan (Republican) from Tennessee, Bob Dole (Republican) of Kansas (who had a war-related disability) and Ted Kennedy (Democrat) of Massachusetts (who had family members with mental retardation and a psychiatric disability). Additionally, they courted their own senators and Congressmen, often meeting with them in their offices while attending meetings in Washington, D.C. They let the legislators know of the need. They shared population numbers in their home state as well as examples and pictures of deaf people from the Congressmen's hometowns so the legislators would understand the scope of the need.

The Congressional Connection

The group made friends of Congressional aides in Washington, D.C. who worked on key committees. These ongoing relationships proved successful across many issues during those years, interpreting training being only one.[f] One such person was Pat Morrissey, a Senate aide and an attorney who had a mobility impairment and used a wheelchair.[g] She often was included in the group socially when attending conferences. A House of Representatives aide, David Larson, worked with Pat Morrissey on disability issues, Both individuals made sure the group's concerns were understood and their documentation presented to members of Congress with whom they worked.

Lauritsen (personal communication, October 22, 2005) recalled other influential Congressmen and their aides with whom he worked over the years. Of particular note was Dr. Martin LaVor[h], Senior Legislative Associate to Republican Congressman Al Quie[i] from Minnesota and Senator Rudy Boschwitz,[j] also of Minnesota. Having a personal relationship with members of Congress and their top aides was essential to getting important information and legislative issues to the attention of Congressmen and Senators prior to votes. According to LaVor (personal communication, March 15, 2006), the Congressional staffers provided much needed continuity and were the conduits between the members of Congress for whom they worked and professionals and constituents seeking legislative action.

Another influential person was Patricia Forsythe, whose second husband, Jack Forsythe, was a lawyer and senior legal advisor to the U.S. Senate.

Forsythe worked for Senator Jennings Randolph[k] who was the chairman of the Senator Subcommittee on the Handicapped, and she had a deaf son from her first marriage. According to Robert Lauritsen (personal communication, October 22, 2005), "Patricia knew every senator, what kind of candy they liked, the name of their favorite dog…She was fabulous!" LaVor (personal communication, March 15, 2006) describes her as the person, more than any other, who had the greatest impact on legislation affecting persons with disabilities.

Pulling It All Together: P. L. 95-602.

It takes more than knowledge, resources, and opportunity to make things happen. Action is required. Clearly, this group of remarkable individuals was ready when they met poolside one evening in February of 1974. They brought with them their experiences of working together, their individual and collective knowledge of the problems facing people who were deaf, and their ability to divide and carry through with the work that needed to be done. They also brought their insight into the political landscape, their understanding of the political process, their relationships with key political players, their support from highly placed persons at the federal level and in Congress, and their support from the Deaf community. They shared a belief that they could make things happen…and they did.

Because of their efforts and all the events that conspired together, the NITC was born and funded. Five years later, with the cycle nearing an end, these influential individuals wanted to see RSA commit to ongoing federal funding of interpreter training. LaVor (1978) wrote the interpreter training language included in the 1978 amendments legislation. He stated:

> It's a bizarre story, but it's true. Last December, I had major surgery. I had a portion of my lung removed. The doctors didn't know what my problem was prior to the surgery. They didn't know whether the growth was malignant or not. I was operated on December 22, 1977 at 7 a.m. Between 5:30 and 6:00 they gave me a relaxer shot which they give to all major surgery patients. At 6:00 a.m. I apparently wrote myself a two-page memo. I said "apparently" because to this day I don't remember writing the memo. In it I outlined the interpreter bill, both

> the training and service parts, plus the reader services for the blind bill, and two amendments to Section 504. ...I put it in my briefcase and locked it and I didn't find it until 10 days after I returned home from the hospital. When I opened the briefcase I saw this note sitting on the top...in my handwriting. (p. 28)

P.L. 95-602 was passed with language establishing regional and national interpreter training projects. Funded for the first time in 1980, and again in 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2005, this legislation is responsible for millions of dollars being funneled to interpreter education. National curricula have been written, such as the national deaf-blind curriculum, the national educational interpreting curriculum, the National Multicultural Interpreting Project curriculum and materials, and a mentoring curriculum and model. Additionally, countless in-service training opportunities have been provided at little to no cost for working interpreters and new interpreters to meet the demand for qualified interpreters on a national basis.

Conclusion

In summary, the long-term commitment of federal funds for the preparation of interpreters to meet the needs of people who are deaf and hard of hearing was the result of a group of knowledgeable and dedicated rehabilitation professionals, together with dedicated legislators and their staff, who seized the time and the opportunities presented. No one individual could have accomplished this alone. It was the perfect confluence of the personal element with a legislative window of opportunity to forge social change and policy development.

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The events retold in this account happened more than thirty years ago. As with any event retold over such a long time, memories may fade, participants are apt to remember things differently, individuals view some events and details as more or less important than others, and details are omitted in the interest of privacy. This is most certainly the case here. However, any errors in understanding, retelling, or interpreting the impact of these events are strictly my own, for which I take full responsibility and trust readers will be generously forgiving.

Footnotes

[1] Region I/II: Northeastern University, Region III/IV: Gallaudet University, Region V/VII: College of St. Catherine, Region VI/VIII: University of Arkansas Little Rock, Region IX/X: Western Oregon University, National Project: Northeastern University.

[2] Note: PRWAD later become the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association (ADARA) still later to become Professionals Networking for Excellence in Service Delivery with Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing though keeping the acronym, ADARA.

[3] Frishberg (1986), cites two different institutions, Delgado Community College (New Orleans, LA) and Seattle Central Community College in place of the University of Arizona and the University of Tennessee as part of the original NITC.

[4] This has traditionally been the case that people who are deaf and use American Sign Language are seen by society as outside the disability community, due in part to the Deaf community's view of Deaf people as a cultural minority rather than a disability group.

[5] Jim Buress, an African-American man, had a physical disability of the arm and worked under Boyce Williams in RSA.

[6] Bill Woodrick states that this group also successfully influenced legislative progress and action on the inclusion of chips for closed captioning in television sets.

[7] In 2001, Pat Morrissey was appointed Commissioner of the Administration on Developmental Disabilities. After working for both the Senate and the House of Representatives and with President Reagan, "She [Pat Morrissey] was a contributor to President George W. Bush's New Freedom Initiative and in 2000, while with the Senate, worked with then-Wisconsin Governor Thompson's office during the development and passage of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act" (Stewart, 2001).

[8] Marty LaVor holds a Doctorate in Special Education and served as the Senior Professional staff member on the Committee on Education and

Labor, U.S. House of Representatives. After leaving the legislative arena, he established The LaVor Group specializing in political and public service. He is an award-winning photojournalist, author, and artist traveling to more than 98 countries (LaVor, n.d.).

[9] Al Quie spent 28 years in public service as a governor, state senator, and as a U.S. congressman representing Minnesota's 1st District.

[10] Rudy Boschwitz served in the U.S. Senate from 1978-1991 and served as President Bush's emissary to Ethiopia in the spring of 1991.

[11] Jennings Randolph served seven terms in the House of Representatives and later was elected to the United States Senate where he completed five terms. He helped create a federal program to help persons who were blind and visually impaired.

APPENDIX

Rehabilitation Services Administration
Federal Interpreter Training Consortium

1980-1982, 1982-1985
University of South Florida
University of Tennessee
St. Paul Technical Vocational Institute
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Delgado Community College
Johnson County Community College
Denver Community College
Ohlone Community College
University of Arizona
Seattle Community College

1985-1990
Region I: Northeastern University
Region II: University of New Hampshire
Region III: Gallaudet University
Region IV: University of Tennessee
Region V: Waubonsee Community College
Region VI: University of Ark. at Little Rock
Region VII: Johnson County Community College
Region VIII: Front Range Community College
Region IX: University of Arizona
Region X: Western Oregon University

1990 - 1995
Region I: Northeastern University
Region II: City University of New York (CUNY)
Region III: Gallaudet University
Region IV: University of Tennessee
Region V: Waubonsee Community College
Region VI: University of Ark. at Little Rock
Region VII: Johnson County Community College,
Region VIII: Front Range Community College
Region IX: California State University, Northridge (CSUN)
Region X: Western Oregon State College
National Rehabilitation: Northwest Connecticut Community College
National Educational: University of Tennessee

1995-2000
Region I: Northeastern University
Region II: Laguardia Community College
Region III: Gallaudet University
Region IV: University of Tennessee
Region V: Waubonsee Community College
Region VI: University of Ark. at Little Rock
Region VII: Johnson County Community College,
Region VIII: Front Range Community College
Region IX: El Camino Community College
Region X: Western Oregon University
National Multicultural: El Paso Community College
National Deafblind: Northwest Connecticut Community College.

2000-2005
Region I: Northeastern University
Region II: CUNY/Laguardia Community College
Region III: Gallaudet University
Region IV: University of Tennessee
Region V: The College of St. Catherine
Region VI: University of Arkansas at Little Rock
Region VII: Johnson County Community College,
Region VIII: Front Range Community College DO-IT Center
Region IX: El Camino Community College
Region X: Western Oregon University
National Distance Ed: Front Range Community College DO-IT Center
National Training Interpreter Educators: Northeastern University.

2005 – 2010
Region I/II: Northeastern University
Region III/IV: Gallaudet University
Region V/VII: College of St. Catherine
Region VI/VIII: University of Ark at Little Rock
Region IX/X: Western Oregon University
National Project: Northeastern University