INTRODUCING...

OUR NEW VISION

A world where the Deaf, hard of hearing & those at risk of hearing loss are recognized and respected so they can fully participate in society.

OUR NEW MISSION

To bring together Deaf, hard of hearing & hearing Albertans with service and technology options to advance access and opportunity.
BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

WE THANK ALL OUR FUNDERS, WHO HELP US BRING OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO FRUITION:

- Allard Foundation
- ATCO Electric - EPIC
- Bowness Lions Club
- Butler Family Foundation
- CAF America
- Calgary Heritage Lions Club
- Calgary Learns
- Campbell McLaurin Foundation
- CHHA Calgary
- City of Calgary Emergency Resiliency Fund
- City of Calgary Family and Community Support Services (FCSS)
- Edmonton Elks Lodge No. 11
- Ernie & Jeannette Hauser Endowment Fund, North Calgary Rotary Club
- Foundation for Seniors’ Care – Heart of Excellence
- Government of Alberta - Community Initiatives Program
- Nickle Family Foundation
- Southern Alberta Deaf Centre Fund
- Springbank Lions Club
- Stollery Charitable Foundation
- Suncor Employee Matching Program
- Tom & Kathy Pinder
- Telus Employee Matching Program
- United Way of Calgary and Area
- Westjet
On February 10, 2018, by popular demand, we revived and refreshed our famous “Turkey Dinner” as our new February Friendship Feast.

Catered by Kuko Catering, over 100 people enjoyed a full, gourmet-style turkey dinner in a homey and relaxed new venue, the Scandinavian Centre.

There were tons of prizes and a few raffles, and a chance to share food and fellowship with some old and new friends. No one left wanting more – except maybe to come back again next year!

“I’m so happy turkey dinner came back. It was great!”

Deaf & Hear Alberta
Peer-to-Hear Mentoring matches adults dealing with hearing loss with a trusted mentor who has walked a similar path and can offer support. The mentor provides lived experience, sharing stories, strategies and steps along the journey to help overcome the hurdles that come with hearing loss.

One to one mentoring allowed our mentees take steps towards a more fulfilling social life. We also provided group mentoring sessions for those who like a group setting.

Some comments from our clients:

- “I had amazing mentors who assisted me to reach my goal, helping me, motivating me while having a great time with great conversations.”
- “I received solid advice points on social relations and relationships.”
- “The program inspired me to get hearing aids.”

“\textbf{I received solid advice points on social relations and relationships.}”
We offered our first ever FIRST AID COURSE for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in October and November with great success. Over 25 clients took advantage of the class with full ASL interpreting provided.

The difficulty for Deaf people is finding suitable organizations that can deliver First Aid & CPR training in American Sign Language. In addition, employers often do not have the financial resources for the added cost of Interpreters for their Deaf staff member to attend and complete a Standard First Aid Course & CPR training program - the cost would be over $2000 when interpreters are required for one Deaf learner. This closes the door for many working Deaf people when it comes to equal employment opportunities.

We are uniquely qualified to provide this training within a Deaf learner's setting. This program was made possible through support provided by the City of Calgary Emergency Resiliency Fund.
We began a “Deaf Immigrant” Customized ASL session for some newcomers to Canada. The session is attended by Deaf immigrants or refugees from places like Syria, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Iraq.

The Deaf newcomers need to be able to understand both English AND ASL before they can enter any programs, training, or participate in other activities (i.e. doctor's appointments, meetings with immigration officials) but most importantly they need to be ASL proficient so that they can understand interpreters and vice versa!

We are the only agency offering this service at this time. Thanks to the City of Calgary Emergency Resiliency Funding, DHA was able to offer this ASL literacy to Deaf newcomers for the first time ever, and we're looking for funding to continue this much valued program.
We provide ASL interpreters for an array of life situations. Medical interpreting is our mainstay but that is not all we do. You may be surprised to learn that we have been involved in providing interpreters for some amazing and unique scenarios.

We help people engage within their communities. Using our interpreters,

- A Deaf person successfully completed a month long class 3 Truck driving course
- A certified Deaf Yoga teacher attended and completed a Yoga teacher training and upgrading weekend
- A Deaf electrician wanted to make a positive impact in his future career direction and took a week long safety certificate course
- A Deaf person attended an employment banquet with his family and received a lifetime service award
- Deaf people were engaged in their communities attending events such as a Residential Tenancy meeting or a Condo Board meeting
We also worked with agencies and organizations to provide community-based interpreting services that allow full participation for all. We provided ASL interpreters for:

- Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s town hall in Edmonton, allowing Deaf community members to voice their opinions and concerns.
- Rogers Place in Edmonton to provide interpretation at Michelle Obama’s informal talk with the community.
- The National Geographic Live Talks in Calgary.
- Citizenship Canada, to allow Deaf new Canadians to take the citizenship test and for the citizenship ceremonies that follow.
- The Government of Canada, for the Air Passenger Protection Town Hall public consultation to gather input regarding new air passenger rights regime in Canada.
- The Canada Deaf Women’s Conference in the summer.

In addition to these, on an ongoing basis, we continue to provide service for important ceremonial life events such as weddings, funerals and graduations.
In 2017/2018 we worked with Calgary Recreation to provide 20 Counter Loop units at their Customer Service Desks at the following locations:

• 13 Indoor Pools, Fitness, and Leisure Centres
• The Calgary Soccer Centre
• 6 City of Calgary Golf Courses

We trained City Staff on how to use the units; sensitivity training was provided to help staff better understand the need for hearing accessibility; and signage was installed so that the general public is aware that they have access to technology for better communication.

One of the City staff reported that within 30 minutes of installing the equipment at their centre, a customer noticed the counter loop and was overjoyed that it worked for them! Another pool facility was thrilled to provide this new option to enable better communication with their customers and, at the same time, for a staff member who has a hearing loss and wears hearing aids.
On a day-to-day basis we continued to enhance communication, safety, and quality of life.

- A refugee family from Pakistan, whose oldest daughter is Deaf, came to our office because they wanted to nurture their daughter’s independence. We showed them the safety and signaling devices they needed and why these are so important. We found available funding to help them obtain the equipment. In addition, information on the Calgary Vulnerable Persons’ Self-Registry was provided, as well as Text with 9-1-1 information. The father contacted us to say that his daughter now feels safe in her home and is more confident to be alone.
WRAPAROUND SERVICES
EMPOWERING CLIENTS

We empower our clients with “wraparound services” through a coordinated effort of our teams.

For example:

- For the refugee family described previously, Deaf Services staff found funding for the daughter to take ASL classes.

- For a Lebanese refugee with hearing loss, our Accessibility, Interpreting and Deaf Services staff came together to provide the client with home safety signaling devices and communicated with him and his family through the help of a Deaf Interpreter.

- For a client who initially received assistive listening equipment from Accessibility Services, he became one of the first to sign up for our Hearing Services Speechreading classes and was one of our first Peer-to-Hear mentors!
During Speech and Hearing Awareness Month in May, we brought awareness about hearing health, hearing testing, and all the programs, services, and technology available to help people understand their hearing better. Some of the activities we did included free hearing tests at City Hall and the Safe Sound Awards. We continue this information sharing year round with presentations to groups and individuals on the various issues surrounding hearing and hearing loss.

Cindy Pilz, Manager of Deaf Services, signed “O Canada”, our national anthem, alongside singer Michela Sheedy. Scott Oake, sports commentator, mentioned the ASL signing in recognition of IDPD during the Hockey Night in Canada national broadcast of the game.