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Bee

Medalists: Two Deaf Students Among Fresno City College Stars

Doug Hoagland The Fresno Bee

The article below originally ran in The Fresno Bee on May 15, 2008.

Their names and honors will be announced tonight at Fresno City College's graduation, but Trisha Houston and Diane Dorais won't hear the words.

Houston and Dorais — winners of Dean's Medallions, the college's highest honor — are deaf. They are the first deaf students to win the award, college officials said.

"It is significant because it shows that deaf people can do anything but hear," Houston said, using American Sign Language.

Added Dorais in American Sign Language: "To be rewarded as a hardworking woman ... is a great honor, and I'm thankful for that."

Both women assertively say they see themselves as little different from other college students.

"I'm making my own choices specific to my education," Houston said. "I don't want anyone's pity. I don't need labels."

Dorais agreed.

Houston, a 29-year-old mother of three, wants to be an attorney. Dorais, 42 and single, earned a bachelor's degree in deaf studies from California State University, Northridge, in 1992. She wants to work in the health information field.

They and nearly 1,500 other students who earned associate degrees from City College are eligible to participate in commencement at Selland Arena. Five other graduates also are Dean's Medallion winners — each from a different division at City College.

Deans interviewed students who applied for the honor, and winners were selected based on academic achievement, community service and overcoming obstacles.

At least 15 students with disabilities have received the awards since 1986, said Robert Fox, vice president of student services and dean of students. Forty deaf students are among the 1,850 disabled students at City College this year.

Houston, who graduates with a 3.8 grade-point average, and Dorais, who has a 3.448 GPA, enrolled in regular classes where interpreters translated lectures into American Sign Language.

Dorais also took many online courses. She can read lips, but didn't want to rely on that in courses.

Dorais wears hearing aids but can't hear much with them.

Houston, who doesn't use hearing aids, overcame one instructor's doubts that she could succeed in a creative writing poetry class because the rhymes and rhythms of poetry are sound-related.

"Her poems were very imaginative, and her sense of language was very strong," said the instructor, Jim Ewing.

Ewing told Houston about his doubts at the beginning of the semester. She shrugged, smiled and went on to prove him wrong, Ewing said.

Houston, who lives in Fresno, will major in English — with a concentration in British literature and poetry — at University of California at Los Angeles in the fall. "I have a deep passion — a love — for reading," she said.

Her husband, who also is deaf, and their three children — who are not deaf — are moving with her to Southern California. Houston was born deaf to deaf parents.

Dorais — who was born deaf to hearing parents; her mother had measles during the pregnancy — majored in health information technology.

She is a determined and diligent student, said Sarah Edwards, an instructor in City College's health information technology program.

"She always asked good questions and was very interested in understanding the depth of the curriculum," Edwards said.

Dorais — as part of her course work — was an intern at Community Regional Medical Center, where she had an interpreter and did "a great job" of learning the hospital's health information processes, Edwards said.

Dorais, who lives in Clovis, previously did billing for a private business and helped find jobs for the deaf through a nonprofit organization. She now plans to volunteer and look for a job.

For now, though, she and Houston are savoring their success at City College — and the inscribed, golden medallion each will wear at graduation.

"It's just exquisite," Dorais said. Interpreters for the deaf will translate at the ceremony.

"It will be bittersweet," Houston said of graduation. "Everything I've done — the struggles, the growth — will all be there in that moment when my name gets called. Maybe I'll cry and maybe I won't."

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As Time Move on, Technology for the Deaf Keeps Improving

Renee Nealy Secretary, Board of Directors

Hello Community Members! As we go into Deaf Awareness week, September 21 to September 27, it is a time to reflect on the technological progress that has been made for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

There has been much development in assistive devices that benefit people who are Deaf. Remember when ttys were the preferred choice for telephone conversations? Well now we now have the videophone, cellular phones such as the sidekick and blackberry that are Deaf friendly and commonly used, closed caption devices built into televisions (we no longer have to use the little black caption box), the increase of captioned movies in theatres, as well as an increase in television programs that are closed caption, and cochlear implants, just to name a few.

I remember when my son was growing up, none of this technology was around. At a time of technological development such as this, it is always good to think back on the accomplishments that have been made during the last few years as well as to look forward to the future in anticipation of what is to come. With all the advances that we have had, it is difficult to imagine what will be thought up next!

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Be sure to join us at the Valley Deaf Festival next year May 16, 2009!



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A New Twist on the ADA for DHHSC



Danielle "Dani" Thompson, Executive Director

Summer is gone and now we are in fall season. I miss the fall foliage of the east coast, however, I enjoy Central California's fall season, being 60-70 degrees Fahrenheit.

I grew up on a tiny island near South America and having 70 degree weather is like winter for us! Everyone becomes worried about why the island is suddenly getting cool. Heaters were unheard of back in my teenage days.

Today our weather has been rather extreme. Fall in Central California is experiencing wild fires, drought, unusual heat or cold weather. Often we wonder why this is happening. The answer is simple: previously we did not have the extreme burning

of fossil fuels. We had less human impact on green house emissions, because there were less cars on the road, less demand for gas, less demand for luxury living and less stress in our lives so we did not have to utilize fossil fuels as much (e.g. taking more vacations to relieve stress).

Our lives are plagued by stressors and high demands for better quality of life which is causing us to experience drastic weather changes. As we can see in California we are experiencing wild fires in Monterey/Santa Cruz area and throughout the state, extreme drought in the South Valley, and extreme heat in the Central Valley.

Why is this a concern for DHHSC and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community? DHHSC is the heart and soul of the Central Valley and we are committed to working with our beloved Deaf/Hard of Hearing community. DHHSC is a second home to many community members.

Unfortunately our home is not 100% comfortable as we would like it to be! Our AC/Heater needs to be replaced, our kitchen and garden both need drastic make-overs, our walls need to be painted and the lobby, bathroom, and conference room needs to be more welcoming and friendly.

What can I do to assist my second home (DHHSC)? Join us in the new ADA approach! No this is not the political ADA I am talking about where we are protected under federal law to have equal access to services as hearing persons do. I'm talking about a new ADA for comfortable living:

A: Adorable - volunteer your time to help make DHHSC a more lively home.

D: Dandy - donate money to make DHHSC one cool Deaf agency.

A: Adventurous - attend our fundraising events to assist DHHSC in repairing/upgrading our home, allowing us to shine and to continue to provide high quality services to the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf-Blind and Late Deafened.

Where do I start? Simply go to any DHHSC office and let a staff person know you are ready to join DHHSC in the new ADA approach. Be sure to specify your desire whether to volunteer your time, to donate money or to seek more information on future events DHHSC is hosting.

My dream is to see you doing one of the above for our new non-political ADA – donating money, volunteering your time and/or attending our future events.

Keep turning the pages of this Deaf Bee newsletter to see information on future events and happenings around DHHSC. We look forward to seeing you at our offices in the near future!

With Joy, Danielle "Dani" Thompson

Local Senior Moves to All Deaf Home

Joelene Spires ILS Specialist, Fresno

It is with great sadness that I announce that the Healthy Senior program ended last spring on April 30th, 2008 after only one year. We want to thank the Department of Rehabilitation for contributing the grant for this program. I truly enjoyed working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing seniors and I wanted to thank the seniors for the enriching opportunity to meet and get to know such a wonderful group of people.

Guess who's moving to the California Home for the Adult Deaf (CHAD) in Southern California? One of the senior women that I worked with named Virginia Willey. After her move I had the opportunity to chat with her on Videophone about her moving experience, which I'll share with you now.

How long did you live in Fresno before going to CHAD?

I moved with my friends to Fresno from Anaheim (Disneyland's hometown) in 1971. I was originally from Long Beach.

How did you feel before you left for CHAD – Worried? Scared? Excited?

I was very excited to move to CHAD because I want to be close to my family.

I had a hard time saying good bye to my special friends [in Fresno]and DHHSC staff.

Why did you decide that you wanted to move into CHAD?

I decided to move because I always wanted to be closer to my family and I have no family living in Fresno. I can visit my granddaughter, grandson and sister often now.

What was your experience moving?

I was excited when my granddaughter and grandson were coming to Fresno. They brought a trailer for the moving trip. It was a pretty long trip and it took us about 5 hours to get there. It was an awesome trip because I was looking forward to meeting new friends at CHAD.

What has been the best part of living in CHAD?

The best part of living in CHAD is "GOING OUT." I love to go shopping, to the beach boardwalk and church as well as socializing with other deaf seniors. Recently, the other seniors and I went to the circus. We enjoyed watching the circus!

Have you made friends?

Yes, I have new friends at CHAD. They are great friends because they are so nice. Of course, I've seen some seniors

get into arguements, but I stay out of it. The living room is nice because they have CCTV, VP, and crafts - that is how I made new friends. Also, high school students come to CHAD and give CHAD seniors candies and different kind of gifts that they made.

Is your family nearby?

Yes, my granddaughter lives in Rancho Cucamunga and my sister lives in San Diego. We are very happy because we can see each other more often now. My family members come and take me out for dinner or shopping which I really enjoy.

Would you recommend CHAD to other Deaf seniors?

Yes, I recommend CHAD to other Deaf seniors because they take good care of the seniors here. I have made new friends and they have wonderful people who work at CHAD. I really love Marlena, who is the director of CHAD. I recommend it highly to any deaf seniors if they are trying to find a place to live.

Special friends and DHHSC staff truly missed Virginia Willey but we are very happy for her!

If you want to know more information about CHAD information is available at www.ohsoez.com/chad.htm.

Advocating for Interpreting Services at Medical Appointments

Cheryl Parreira

Case Manager, Fresno

When it comes to health care, it is crucial to have an interpreter working with the doctor and the patient. The use of a professional interpreter allows you and medical professionals to both find out what is happening with your health quickly and accurately.

It is not recommended that relatives interpret for Deaf patients for several reasons. The first is that they have not had formal training in medical interpreting and they may not understand everything the doctor is discussing. Another reason is that they can be very emotional about the diagnosis that the doctor may give you, especially if it is bad news.

Many people struggle with convincing their medical providers that they need to provide an interpreter for their appointments. If you have had the same struggles, there are several things that you can do.

Check with your insurance provider to see if they will pay for interpreting service. Many insurance companies such as direct Medi-Cal, Blue Cross Managed Care, or Health Net under Medi-Cal will cover interpreting services. For Blue Cross client, your doctor will need to call 800-407-4627 ext. 7119 and give them all of the information about your appointment. If you have Blue Shield of California your doctor should call 707-547-4814 or 707-546-6869 and give them all of the information about your appointment.

Even if your insurance does not cover the cost of interpreting services, you still have the right to an interpreter. You can advocate for yourself by explaining to the medical office that the American's with Disability Act (ADA). ADA says that private doctors and hospitals, including referrals to other doctors, are required to provide an interpreter for your appointments.

At DHHSC we have done a lot of advocating for clients

to get their doctor to provide an interpreter for their appointments. If you are unsuccessful advocating yourself you can contact our offices. We will be happy to help work with you and the doctor. Often all it takes is a little bit of time to explain to the medical providers about the importance of the ADA.



Deaf Blind Support Group Meets Monthy

Annette Carter Support Service Provider

Meet ngs

The Deaf-Blind Support Group (DBSG) started approximately 12 years ago with Janet Drane's idea for people with both hearing and vision loss. The group is varied from Deaf to hard-of-hearing; from Blind to low-vision. Everyone has a beautifully unique way of communicating and doing things. DHHSC hosts events so there is a place where people can get together and share common concerns, interests, and activities. It is also a way that the larger world of Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals can learn more about us and how we communicate differently with vision loss. Everyone is invited to join us!

Daily life activities are unique with the "dual sensory loss" such as food shopping, clothes shopping, reading the news, making appointments, cooking, cleaning, etc. To make these activities possible, we use Support Service Providers (SSPs). SSP's can be hearing, Hard of Hearing, or Deaf. We use many SSPs to make DBSG possible and there is always a need for more not only for the meeting, but also for our other life activities. At the DBSG SSPs are usually fed very

well and get to join the fun. Just a small amount of time given as an SSP opens up a much bigger world for someone else.

When does DBSG meet? 2nd Tuesday of each month from 12pm to 3 pm.

Upcoming DBSG dates: September 9th, October 14th, December 9th, and January 13th (November TBA).

Where? DHHSC, 5340 N. Fresno St., Fresno, CA 93710 (or outside trip or activity)

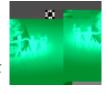
What do we do? All kinds of activities. We usually start with a wonderful lunch, then share some announcements, then do an activity. Some activities include learning how to make interesting crafts, playing games, having a spa day, having people come in and inform us of different services or agencies that interest us, share information with SSPs on things specific to our vision/hearing loss, etc.

Want to subscribe to the DB Newsletter? Send your contact info to dbnewsname@pacbell.net or call 559-355-4095.

Interested in how easy and rewarding it is to be an SSP? Contact Kathy Yoshida or dbnewsname@pacbell.net 559-355-4095

Leaders Needed!

Are you already serving as a leader in your community, Deaf Clu , Church, Local Organization or other place of



Do you feel you would enefit from some training or support to ealeader with a positive power for change

DHHSC is looking for project team memers to estallish Support Service Provider SSP program for Deaf Blind, mentor program for youth, Driver's Education, more jos for Deaf, Cochlear Implants Support group and more

If you have a dream and want to make it happen come today to DHHSC and ask a out

d in id

Quote of the Day:

"Dream what you want to dream; go where you want to go; be what you want to be; have a dream happen today."

Learn how to:

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e e d se er t es e contact stephanie Flerchinger at stephanief@dhhsc.org

Breast Cancer: Know the Risk Factors

Disease prevention education is crucial for early detection of this global killer.

Michelle Bronson Coordinator of Client Services

It is a privilege for DHHSC to have received the Sue G. Komen for the Cure grant with the purpose of reaching out to our local Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. It is important for us to fully understand breast cancer and its available treatment options so that we can make well-informed decisions regarding our health.

Many people shy away from the topic of breast cancer because some consider it to be taboo while others might view it as a personal health matter. The sad truth is that breast cancer remains a prevalent disease (and killer) among women.

Globally more than 1.1 million women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and more than 410,000 women will die from the disease this year. A case of breast cancer is diagnosed every 29 seconds and a woman dies from breast cancer every 75 seconds worldwide.

Nationally nearly 240,000 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer—and nearly 180,000 will be diagnosed with the most deadly type (invasive)—this year.

More than 40,000 women will die from the disease this year, which is the equivalent of the population of Grand Rapids, Michigan!

FACTS

- One in eight women in the U.S. will develop breast cancer in her lifetime
- Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women
- Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death among women and the leading cause of cancer death among young women
- The causes of breast cancer are unknown

RISK FACTORS

• Testing positive for the gene mutations commonly associated with breast cancer

- Having a previous biopsy which shows overactive cell growth or cancer contained within the breast
- Having a mother, daughter, or sister who has had breast cancer
- Having dense breast tissue
- Having a personal history of breast or ovarian cancer
- Starting menopause after age 55
- Never having children or having your first child after age 30
- Being overweight after menopause or gaining weight as an adult
- Having more than two alcoholic drinks per day
- Using hormone replacement therapy
- •Being under age 12 at the time of your first period
- Recent birth control use

Today, a person who

has been diagnosed with breast cancer in the earliest stages has a 98 percent chance of living at least five more years, on average, compared to

only 77 percent in 1982. TREATMENT BARRIERS

Although many strides have been made in the medical field relating to breast cancer, not everyone is receiving the proper or best care available. Some barriers to receiving the much-needed screening, testing and treatment options include:

- Poverty
- Not enough funding for screening programs
- Cultural issues and beliefs
- Practical barriers (such as lack of childcare or lack of transportation)
- Geography
- Misperceptions and lack of awareness
- False sense of security
- Shortage of qualified medical personnel and screening facilities
- Differences among screening facilities (e.g., whether they offer mammograms)

• Limitations and costs of screening technologies

Although the causes of breast cancer remain unknown, we can take steps to help reduce risks of breast cancer. "Today, a person who has been diagnosed with breast cancer in the earliest stages has a 98 percent chance of living at least five more years, on average, compared to only 77 percent in 1982." Hence, the more familiar we are with our bodies and the more often we insist on proper and regular screening, the better our chances of early detection. Education on breast cancer is crucial to our physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

INCREASING AWARENESS

- •Talk to your family to learn about your family health history
- Talk to your provider about your personal risk of breast cancer
- Ask your doctor which screening tests are right for you if you are at higher risk
- Have a mammogram every year starting at age 40 if you are at average risk
- Have a clinical breast exam at least every three (3) years starting at 20, and every year starting at 40
- Know how your breasts look and feel and report changes to your health care provider right away
- •Make healthy lifestyle choices that may reduce your risk of breast cancer, such as maintaining a healthy weight, adding exercise into your routine, and limiting alcohol intake.

Remember: Knowledge is power! Early detection = Higher chances of survival.

All information for this article was culled from "The State of Breast Cancer," presented by Susan G. Komen for the Cure. For more information about Susan G. Komen for the Cure, check out www.komen.org.

Save the Date...



Fresno, CA

Wouldn't it be neat to form a Deaf Team for the Race for the Cure? We can show our local community that we have a "Can Do!" attitude while simultaneously showing support for our Deaf and Hard of Hearing breast cancer survivors. Come sign up today!

Show us your support by joining one or more of the following:



eaf Awareness Week

Wrong Game Movie Friday, September 19, 2008

Doors open at 6:30pm **Location:** Clovis **Memorial District**

Theater

453 Hughes Avenue Clovis, CA 93612

Cost: \$5 - tickets available at DHHSC

& at the door

For more

information about

the movie check out www.aslfilms.com





Deaf Trivia and Ice Cream Social Monday, September 22, 2008

6pm—8pm

Location: DHHSC 5340 N. Fresno Street Fresno CA 93710

FREE

Me & Ed's Pizza Fundraiser Night Tuesday September 23, 2008

5pm—7pm

A percentage of proceeds will be donated

to DHHSC

Location: Me & Ed's Pizza

3150 N. Fowler Ave Clovis, CA 93611

Coffee Social & Game Night Wednesday, September 24, 2008

6pm—8pm

Location: Starbucks—Riverpark

Fresno, CA

The Deaf Family Movie Saturday, September 27, 2008

Doors open at 630pm

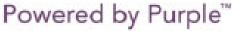
Location: Clovis **Memorial District** Theater 453 Hughes Avenue

Clovis, CA 93612



Cost: \$5 - tickets available at DHHSC and at the door

For more information about the movie check out www.hovrs.com









How to get a Direct Videophone Number

DirectVP numbers are available for Sorenson VP-100® and VP-200® videophones and no account needs to be set up or activated. SVRS users simply select their own DirectVP number from their videophone. Once a DirectVP number is selected it will appear on the home screen. All calls placed via the new DirectVP numbers are free of charge. SVRS users can call each other by dialing either a new DirectVP number or through the existing Sorenson videophone number.

> For an ASL explanation of Direct Connect go to http:// www.sorensonvrs.com/dvp/



Nicole Wolfe first became interested in interpreting when she was studying for her Masters in Deaf Education at California State University, Fresno (CSUF). Although no members of her family are Deaf, she still was interested in pursuing a career in the field of Deafness. While at CSUF, she was first asked to begin interpreting.

She continued to develop her skills in interpreting. While she was completing her MA degree, she started to work as a staff interpreter at DHHSC. Of her experience at DHHSC Nicole explained that "This opportunity truly allowed me to grow and become the person and interpreter I am today." She worked at DHHSC for about four years, during which time she received the Employee of the Year Award in 2004.

After working at DHHSC she was hired as the lead interpreter at CSUF where she continued to work until this past year. Most recently, Nicole has been working full time as the call center manager at Sorenson Communications while still occasionally freelance interpreting for DHHSC.

Nicole currently holds dual certifications: Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf CI/CT and the National Association of the Deaf Level IV Certification. Over her ten years of experience she has had an array of experience interpreted in many different settings including the Fresno Superior Courts. Nicole is the current president of the Central California Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

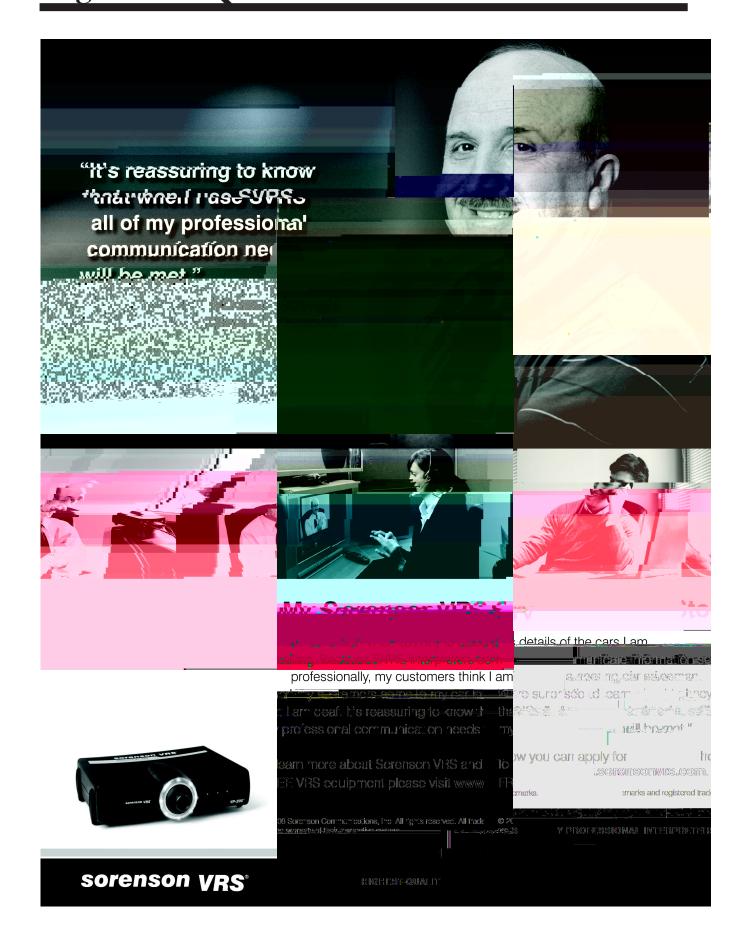
In her personal time, Nicole is involved with various outdoor activities such as hiking and jogging. Recently she has begun to do some jewelry making, which she enjoys tremendously.

For Linda Day, music has always been a part of her life. She grew up singing in the choir and was a member of a house band for a number of years. When she was pregnant with her second child she discovered that her hearing had begun to deteriorate. Because of the hearing loss Linda decided recorded an album of her own songs. "I wanted my children to have something of my musical past in case I became totally deaf and was unable to sing for them," she explained. In the process of doing this, Linda discovered that she had a passion for encouraging and advocating for other hard or hearing individuals.

After years of being a stay-at-home mom and with the advent of pagers, Linda returned to the work force in the telecommunications industry. She witnessed the growth of technology and worked increasingly in the arena of disability access on a nationwide level. As a result of her diligent work in disability access she was the recipient of the Oticon Focus on People Award for Advocacy presented by the hearing aid manufacturer Oticon.

As the years went on and technology for people with hearing loss increased, Linda discovered that she was a good candidate for a Cochlear Implant (CI). It was a difficult decision to make because "I couldn't imagine myself having surgery to fix my hearing, yet I also couldn't imagine my world without sound." In the fall of 2005 Linda was implanted with the Nucleus Freedom. Because Linda had lived so long in the hearing world, she quickly adapted to the CI; after 30 days she had regained 98% speech recognition.

Since that time Linda has become an advocate in the CI community and now works as the Awareness Manger for Cochlear America. As she says, "I love talking to people about this amazing technology and helping those who decided to take this journey to make it as successful as possible. I also respect that a CI is not for everyone, however it has been the best choice for me."





What if Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center earned a penny every time you searched the internet? Well, now we can!

Goodsearch.com is a new search engine that donates half its revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. You use it just as you would any search engine, and it is powered by Yahoo!, so you get great results.

Just go to www.goodsearch.com and be sure to enter Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center as the charity you want to support. Just 500 of us searching four times a day will raise about \$7300 in a year without spending a dime! Be sure to spread the word!

We would like to extend a special THANK YOU to our "Circle of Friends" who continue to support DHHSC with their donations and contributions! Orchard Supply Hardware

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Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center's mission is to advocate, seek equality, and promote self-determination through empowerment for those who seek our assistance, and to enhance the awareness and understanding of the Deaf Culture and the unique communication needs of Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals.