



AMERICAN ERA

2024

A PUBLICATION *of the* AMERICAN SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

including the
2023-2024
Annual Report

AMERICAN ERA

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AMERICAN
SCHOOL FOR
THE
DEAF

The American ERA is published annually by the Office of Institutional Advancement at the American School for the Deaf, 139 North Main Street, West Hartford, CT 06107. Visit our website at www.asd-1817.org.

Our sincere thanks and appreciation to all who helped to make this issue possible: His Excellency Mody Oury Barry and the High Council of Timbo Elders from Guinea, West Africa, Jeff Bravin, Justin Brooks, Chris Brozak, Nicholas Campbell, Princess Karen Chatman, Rebecca Edwards, Dr. Artemus Gaye, Amarilis Gómez, Lisa Hamlin, Pamela D. Hans, Curt Hayward, Laurent Clerc Holt, Leah Katz-Hernandez, Jean Linderman, Belinda Lugo, Alexandra M. McGee, Donna McNeill, Paula Morabito, Sandra McLennon '74, Kat Northup, Anne Nutt, Angela Paydos, Jennifer Pizzoferrato, Michelle Reyes, Jon Rubin, Nelson (Tip) Simons, and Jennifer Weston.

A special thanks to Cris Villalonga-Vivoni from CT Insider for granting permission to reprint the article "American School for the Deaf PACES Residential Program in West Hartford Helps Students Learn & Grow" in this issue.

Thank you to Wollner Design for their incredible creativity in design and form in the creation of this issue. Thank you also to Defining Studios for the beautiful photography included within this issue. Visit them at www.wollnerdesign.com and www.definingphotovideo.com.

Every effort has been made to ensure that all information printed in this magazine is accurate. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact:

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LETTER FROM THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

Dear ASD Community, Supporters, and Friends,

It has been a true honor and privilege to serve as the President of the ASD Board of Directors for the past four years, and to serve on the Board in a variety of roles for the past 17 years. Throughout this time, ASD has undergone such exciting growth; now the school, just like its graduates, stands ready for all that awaits.

When I took on this role, a global pandemic was in full swing. ASD not only found ways to survive that difficult time but found opportunities in the midst of crisis. The Online Academy was launched in 2021 as the first accessible online education platform designed specifically for deaf and hard of hearing students—and has grown rapidly in the intervening years.

With the support of CHEFA, ASD then turned to its West Hartford campus to upgrade dormitory facilities to better serve the unique needs of our students enrolled in ASD's PACES Residential Treatment Program. In October, we celebrated the opening of the beautiful new dorms at the heart of the campus, which stand as a symbol of the community and its critical, caring vision to develop the whole child – intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially.

As these dorms were being built, ASD was busy on another campus—the beautiful grounds of Camp Isola Bella. The completion of renovations and enhancements to the camp would not have been possible without the support of our dedicated and hardworking alumni, our loyal donors, and the camp's wonderful neighbors in the Twin Lakes Association. I offer heartfelt thanks to all who made these improvements possible.

I am thrilled to hand the reins to Barbara Cassin, who has been a terrific, collaborative colleague on the ASD Board since I joined in 2007. As an ASD alumna and a passionate advocate for this community, Barbara could not be better situated to lead us into a bold new future. I would like to thank Barbara, the Board's officers, and our Board Committee chairs for their dedication and hard work in support of ASD. I would also like to thank all the dedicated and creative members of ASD's faculty and staff who make this a joyful place for our students to live and learn. Finally, I would like to give special thanks to Jeff Bravin, whose visionary leadership and deep commitment to this school have been an inspiring model for all of us.

ASD, a vibrant and innovative learning community, is ready to forge a future that prepares students for ongoing change and growth. As immediate past president of the Board, I am looking forward to working alongside Barbara and Jeff to support both the immediate and future needs of this incredible community.

Sincerely,



Jonathan N. Rubin
Immediate Past President, ASD Board of Directors



LETTER FROM THE INCOMING PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

Dear ASD Community, Supporters, and Friends,

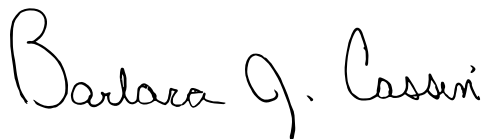
I am sincerely honored to serve as the newly elected President of ASD's Board of Directors. As an alumna from the Class of 1975, I have considered ASD an integral part of my life for over 50 years. This school community has truly shaped me into the person I am today, and I am so proud to have the opportunity to give back to ASD through this new role. In this exciting moment of growth, ASD is engaged in planning for a bright future in which we will continue to support, guide, and inspire deaf, hard of hearing and DeafBlind students from around the world.

This moment would not be possible without the dedicated and courageous team of ASD's Board of Directors, and I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to Jon Rubin, our retiring Board President, who has worked with such skill and energy in support of ASD for almost two decades. During his four years as Board President, ASD made remarkable strides forward. Jon's thoughtful leadership and steady hand have guided us through several significant moments, including navigating the unprecedented global pandemic, the creation of a visionary strategic plan, and the completion of two beautiful new dormitories that substantially enhance our PACES Residential Treatment Program.

I am also truly grateful to Jeff Bravin and the entire staff and faculty of ASD—their energy, passion and creativity enhance this community every single day, and our students benefit from their care and their talents. Visitors to campus see quickly how much happens here—how many thriving programs we run, how many varied needs we serve, and how many students and families consider this school community their home. Under Jeff's leadership, ASD maintains its legacy as a national and international leader in Deaf Education, always seeking to expand, innovate and grow.

As we work in support of the Strategic Plan, we are truly energized about everything the future holds for ASD—we have big dreams and a bold plan to turn them into a reality. I look forward to working with Jeff, Jon, and the entire Board of Directors in the years ahead as we strive to reach new heights to benefit deaf, hard of hearing and DeafBlind students everywhere.

Sincerely,



Barbara J. Cassin
President, ASD Board of Directors



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear ASD Family and Friends,

What an exciting time to be a member of the ASD community! Since our founding in 1817 as the first permanent school for the deaf in the United States, ASD has remained at the forefront of “what’s next.” We have always aimed to be responsive to the needs of the community and tailored our programs to meet those needs.

In 1982, this pioneering legacy led to the development of ASD’s PACES Residential Treatment Program. At the time, there were no options available for deaf and hard of hearing students with behavioral and emotional challenges. Traditional academic programs did not provide enough support, and these students often fell through the cracks. The launch of PACES provided a communication-accessible therapeutic environment for students to heal from their traumas and move forward with their lives. Forty-two years later, PACES remains one of only two such programs of its kind in the country and we continue breaking barriers. We recently opened two beautiful new dormitories for the students enrolled in this program, designed with their exact needs in focus. Standing at the heart of our campus, they are true game changers in our ability to support and care for our PACES students.



We are breaking barriers in other fields as well. Through generous American Rescue Plan Act grant funding through the Department of Aging and Disability Services, ASD is leading the way to raise awareness and improve communication access in healthcare and education for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing and DeafBlind. Our Lost in Translation campaign continues to gain traction in Connecticut, and our State serves as a model for the entire country.

At the center of all we do, our students have demonstrated adaptability, courage, creativity and strength. They have competed and placed in national STEAM competitions, represented the Deaf Community at the United States Capitol, and excelled in sports, academics, and the arts. They have been recognized for their positive attitude, leadership and service within the community, and they are the reason we continue to strive for excellence in everything we do.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to everyone at ASD – faculty, staff and administrators—who give their best every single day to ensure that our students continue to grow and thrive. I would also like to thank our community partners, loyal supporters, and dedicated Board of Directors who offer their time, talent and treasure so generously to help fulfill our mission. I would especially like to thank our outgoing Board President Jon Rubin for his tireless leadership over the past four years. His thoughtful guidance and willingness to stay on the board as our past president will allow for a smooth transition as we warmly welcome Barbara Cassin as our new Board President.

We are grateful for all the support that makes it possible for our students to pursue their dreams. Thank you for your continued friendship!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey S. Bravin". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Jeffrey S. Bravin
Executive Director

STAFF NEWS



Student Life Team Welcomes New Associate Director of Student Life

Justin Brooks '00 has taken on the role of Associate Director of Student Life, joining Jose Viera, who also serves as Associate Director of Student Life. Justin is a proud ASD graduate from the class of 2000 who returned to ASD as an alumnus to accept the position of Residential Counselor. For the past several years, Justin has served in a management role as Student Support Coordinator during which time he earned the respect of his students and colleagues alike.

“Justin is a perfect choice for this position,” notes Executive Director Jeff Bravin. *“He connects well with everyone on campus, students and staff alike.”*



Changes in Student Support Services

Amarilis Gómez (top left) and **Nicholas Campbell** (top middle) have each taken on the position of Coordinator of Student Support Services in PACES, and **Michael Marsan** (top right) has transitioned into the Assistant Coordinator of Student Support Services role in CORE. Together, Amarilis, Nick, Dean Karabetsos and Michael now work together to assist with the daily operations and efficient management of ASD’s CORE and PACES programs.

Amarilis joined ASD as a Residential Counselor in 2019 and has served as Assistant Coordinator of Student Support Services since 2023. Nick came to ASD in 2001 as a Residential Counselor before advancing to a Dean position in 2015. Michael joined ASD in 2013 as a Residential Counselor before transitioning to a Teachers Aid position in 2020. Throughout their time at ASD, Amarilis, Nick and Michael have each gained the respect of their colleagues through their

dedication to our students. Their commitment to student safety has earned them a reputation of trust throughout our school community. The skills and experience that Amarilis, Nick and Michael bring to their new roles will enhance our school culture and maximize student engagement and learning.

“We are thrilled to welcome these experienced staff members into these new roles,” says Assistant Executive Director Paula Morabito. *“Their energy and commitment will benefit our students immensely.”*



New Position in Human Resources

Belinda (Bebe) Lugo has started in a new position as Employee Relations and Training Coordinator within ASD's

Human Resources Department. Through this role, Bebe will serve as a liaison between Human Resources and the Student Life team. She will continue to work on regulatory items mandated by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) while also serving as the primary investigator for DCF, the New York Justice Center, and other agencies as appropriate. She will track all progress related to active investigations in collaboration with ASD colleagues who are also trained investigators. Bebe will bring an enhanced focus to orientation, onboarding, and training for the Student Life team by managing the professional

development and training programs for all Student Life staff. She will also take an active role in the hiring of new Residential Counselors to ASD through her participation on the RC Interview Committee and organization of the new hire orientation with a focus on helping RCs transition to their new role through mentorship and support.

"Bebe will be invaluable in this critical role," says HR Manager Gwynne Deveau. "She brings many important skills to this team and has a positive affect on so many in our community."



Kat Northup Named Coordinator of ASD Community Interpreting

ASD Interpreter **Kat Northup** has accepted the position of Coordinator for ASD Community Interpreting. In this role, Kat manages all requests for community interpreting services. Kat joined the ASD family in 2021, first as a freelance interpreter before joining the staff interpreting team. Prior to ASD, Kat was an interpreter at the Texas School for the Deaf and also served on the board of the Arkansas Association of the Deaf. Kat has a Bachelor's degree in

Psychology & Sociology, and a Master's degree in Teaching ASL. Kat is also overseeing the roll-out of ASD's new partnership with Hartford HealthCare.

Chief Financial Officer Jennifer Pizzoferrato notes, *"We are grateful every day for all Kat does to support communication access throughout our community!"*



ASD Staff Promoted to Dean
Eleni Miller (Top Left), **Clement Lovelace** (Top Middle) and **William Whipple** (Top Right) were each recently promoted to the Dean position on the Student Life team. Eleni joined ASD in 2015 as a Residential Counselor before becoming a Transition Service Assistant and



eventually stepping up into the role of Dean of Students last April. Clement Lovelace joined the ASD family as a Residential Counselor in 2008 and also serves as a coach within our athletic program. He was promoted to Dean in October. William Whipple was also hired in 2015 as a Residential Counselor



before accepting the Dean position in November of this year. Throughout their many years here, each of these valuable team members have demonstrated their commitment to our students every day, which has earned the respect of their colleagues.

INTRODUCING LIFT ASD

DIVERSITY COMMITTEE ADOPTS NEW NAME



ASD's Diversity Committee recently announced a new name: LIFT ASD. "LIFT" is an acronym for Leading with Inclusion, Fairness, and Trust. The committee is also proud to share vision and purpose statements to serve as guides moving forward, as well as a new logo, designed by Director of Operations Randy D'Angelo.

Purpose: To lead with inclusion, fairness and trust where everyone belongs.

Direction: Where we are all empowered to thrive.

Behaviors

- Mutual Respect
- Trust
- Value Difference
- Understanding
- Transparency

The committee also developed a draft calendar listing several significant days that may be important for ASD to recognize as a school community. This list was shared with staff as a resource and guide to help plan events throughout the year.

In alignment with the LIFT ASD Council, ASD's Board Diversity Sub-Committee has also set their goal for this year to *"increase cultural competency across ASD – from leadership, to staff, to classrooms – while strengthening ASD's place in the Community (locally, nationally, and globally)."* ASD is especially grateful for the time and commitment of ASD LIFT co-chairs Jenilee Terry and Paige Kenausis.

HORTICULTURE AND CULINARY STUDENTS BRING "FARM TO TABLE" TO LIFE AT ASD



Preparing the kabocha squash

This fall, two ASD teachers began collaborating – with delicious results! Chef Curt's Culinary Arts Program and Anne Nutt's horticulture classes have been demonstrating what "Farm to Table" is all about. Anne Nutt first teaches students about sustainability through gardening. They compost fruit and vegetable scraps from the cafeteria for soil. They then plant a variety of fruits and vegetables and nurture those seeds to grow. Once the fruits are harvested, they save the seeds for future plantings.

This fall, Anne and her students were thrilled to harvest vegetables and herbs that were planted in the spring – tomatoes, squash, corn, and beans. They were proud to deliver high-quality kabocha squash to Chef Curt, who in turn worked with his culinary students to prepare Japanese-style kabocha soup. Notably, the skin from this squash is safe to consume and proved to be exceptionally delicious! The Culinary Arts team then hosted a soup sale, which garnered widespread acclaim among staff and students alike. We all look forward to seeing and tasting what this new collaboration will produce next!



ASD STEAM TEAMS SHINE

This year, four separate STEAM teams from ASD traveled for competitions across the United States. ASD is proud of all of their wonderful achievements, and we would like to give special thanks to the Henry Nias Foundation and the Robert G. & Marguerite M. Derx Foundation for their generous support of our ROV and Robotics Programs.

Robotics

In February, ASD's robotics team headed to Kansas to participate in the VEX Robotics Competition, where our students grew in both experience and skill. Their sportsmanship also set them apart as they earned recognition for assisting teams from competing schools who encountered setbacks. One ASD team jumped in to help the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf reprogram their robot, while another ASD team helped a school who suddenly lost their driver. Through this experience, our students' commitment to helping others was admired by all around them.

Remote Operated Vehicle Competition (ROV)

In March, ASD's ROV teams participated in competitions at the local, national, and international levels. Locally, ASD competed in the Northeast Regional SeaPerch Competition at Ethel Walker School, where our middle school team was awarded first place for the mission course and named middle school overall champion!

Left: Robotics teacher Cynthia Rumery with her middle school class

Right: ASD's ROV team at the International SeaPerch Competition in Maryland last May

Two middle school and two high school students then made their way to Austin, Texas for the national ROV SeaPerch Challenge at the Texas School for the Deaf. Our high school team won first place in both courses and took home the Excellence Award. ASD's middle school team placed first in the Mission Course and also won the Excellence Award—a performance that resulted in both teams being invited to International ROV SeaPerch Competition held this year in Maryland at the end of May. The teams were excited to receive letters from CT Senator Christopher Murphy congratulating them on their top honors in the Texas Regional SeaPerch Competition and wishing them luck at the International SeaPerch Competition. At the International Competition, both teams placed in the top 20 out of 71 teams!

While in Maryland, the teams made a stop in Washington, D.C. for a tour of The White House, which was made possible by Senator Murphy.

Drone

In an exciting first this year, ASD students took part in the NRSC Deaf/HH Aerial Drone Competition at Texas School for the Deaf. Both the middle school and high school teams placed in the top ten among 44 schools, and the high school team was awarded the Think Award, which recognizes the team with the most effective and consistent use of coding techniques and programming design solutions in autonomous flight.

Culinary Arts

This past spring, ASD's Culinary Arts Team headed to California to participate in the Culinary Bowl Competition at the California School for the Deaf. Executive Director Jeff Bravin was on site to witness their remarkable performance, and the team earned second place in the competition!

On the Road to Our Nation's Capital

In March, three ASD students continued the tradition of participating in the Washington D.C. CEASD/Capitol Hill trip and had an enriching experience learning about the U.S. Capitol, U.S. Memorials, and the U.S. Constitution. On the first day, the students visited Gallaudet University for a tour and workshop to learn about the Cogswell-Macy Act – a bill to support greater access for deaf and hard of hearing students in the classroom. Students also enjoyed a meal at Mozzarella, a local D.C. restaurant owned by deaf individuals.

The grand finale was a private tour of the U.S. Capitol, made possible by Senator Murphy's team.

On Day 2, students participated in CEASD/Capitol Hill Advocacy Day where they met with Staff Advisors from the offices of Senator Richard Blumenthal, Senator Christopher Murphy, and Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro to share their experiences at ASD. Congressman John Larson even took time out of his busy day to meet them and take a photo together! The grand finale



Culinary Arts teacher Curt Hayward gives a class on baking



ASD students visit with Congressman John Larson in Washington D.C.

was a private tour of the U.S. Capitol, made possible by Senator Murphy's team, through which our students learned about the history and workings of the Capitol. The students all agreed that this trip was an unforgettable learning experience!

ASD CLASS OF 2024 SOARS TO NEW HEIGHTS



The American School for the Deaf

(ASD) held its 207th Commencement ceremony on the evening of Monday, June 10th. Graduates, along with families, friends, teachers, staff, and other supporters, gathered to celebrate the achievements of ASD's Class of 2024.

This class of sixteen proved to be quite diverse, with a wide range of talents and interests. As board president Jon Rubin noted in his Board Welcome, *"The Class of 2024 are celebrated artists, STEAM champions, master chefs, aspiring actors, dedicated students, and great friends"* and their achievements were no accident, but *"the result of*

determination, hard work, perseverance, and most importantly – the faith in yourself to be ALL ways able." He went on to point out that this year's graduating class started high school in the fall of 2020, when most of the world was still shut down and students were feeling uncertainty about their futures. Rubin emphasized that this group of graduates came through that period with a resolve and strength that will serve them throughout their lives.

After the Board Welcome, Executive Director Jeff Bravin offered his remarks, also sharing the challenges faced by this class due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite this uneasy beginning to their

high school careers, the Class of 2024 secured very noteworthy achievements. Bravin listed these impressive accomplishments, such as placing in national and international competitions like VEX robotics, SeaPerch ROV, culinary arts, and the Marie Jean Philip Competition. They even represented ASD and the broader Deaf Community at the United States Capitol, where they advocated for their rights among federal legislators.

Next were messages from two graduates – the Student Welcome delivered by Jayx Dudley, followed by Nathaniel Rusinowicz's Student Address. Jayx urged peers to chase their dreams, and *"always aim for success."* Jayx also reiterated the resilience of this class mentioned by Jon Rubin and Jeff Bravin, ending with this reminder, *"We are STRONG!"* Nathaniel touched on his sometimes-challenging educational path, that eventually led him to ASD, and how he now proudly identifies as a deaf person. This educational path is particularly significant because, as the son of immigrants, he is not only a first-generation American, but also the first deaf person in his entire family. Of his time at ASD, Nathaniel remarked, *"Thanks to your unwavering support, I am now confident to pursue my goal of attending Gallaudet University as a college student."*

The Commencement Address was given by ASD alumna and Board Corporator and Director, Alexandra McGee. The



Rubin emphasized that this group of graduates came through the Covid-19 pandemic with a resolve and strength that will serve them throughout their lives.

class of 1973 graduate recounted some of her experiences at ASD and beyond. She also shared in the night's theme of perseverance and encouraged the Class of 2024 to *"never give up!"*

The ceremony continued with the awarding of the Monte Scholarship to Nathaniel Rusinowicz. This scholarship was established through the generosity of ASD graduate Althea Monte (class of 1929) to help college-bound ASD seniors meet the financial challenges of college. That was followed by the presentation of diplomas, and the Executive Director's Award, of which Nathaniel was also the recipient. The evening ended with the procession of the new graduates,



undoubtedly inspired by class of '24 peer Priscilla Hanley, who was quoted by Jeff Bravin in his earlier remarks: ***"You can't wait for life to come to you – you have to go get it."***

ASD STUDENTS EXPLORE CULINARY CAREER DREAMS THROUGH NEW WORK PROGRAM

Open seven days a week for three meals a day, the ASD cafeteria is a busy place. Walk in at any mealtime and you will notice the constant motion, and all the typical sights and scents of a school kitchen. You might also notice that not all the ASD students you see are in the receiving line—some are behind the counter in uniform serving the meal.

In 2020, ASD welcomed a new food service to campus, Brock & Company. Since then, the Brock team – under the leadership of Chris Brozak – has offered our community so much more than three meals a day. Not only does Brock warmly greet ASD students and staff as they enter the cafeteria, but the team also pays attention to the individual needs, requests, and ideas of our students.

It didn't take long before Chris noticed the student interest in working in the kitchen, and he set about to create a popular new student work program. This tiered program encompasses our whole student community: PACES, Core, and Bridge students.

ASD's 5th Year Bridge Program is available to students who have completed their required courses for graduation and who would benefit from an additional transition year (or more). Bridge students interested in exploring a culinary career are able to gain valuable experience and an authentic feel for this world through their work with Brock & Company.

Chris sets professional expectations and standards from the start. Students go through an official interview—he expects professional dress, guides them as they advocate for communication access, asks them real questions about why they want to work in the kitchen. Students who *"make the team"* are supported and challenged in equal measure. Chris works with their sports coaches and the Academic Hub to make sure their schedules are sustainable – ten hours are the maximum a student can work in any given week since Chris understands they are students with many commitments. At the same time, he welcomes them onto his team as full members. They wear the same uniform all Brock staff wear, and their contributions to the work of the kitchen and cafeteria are



Bridge Program student Sandrine Umuhoza '25 enjoys her work for the Brock team in ASD's cafeteria

Chris Brozak offers them all the experience he can about how foods are prepared, cooled, served and stored. The kitchen is a place of constant action, and student workers are right in the middle of it.



essential. Chris' ultimate goal is to have all his student workers be a true part of the Brock team. He currently works with three students and has three more "on the bench," getting ready to be part of the program.

"They are learning hard skills here, and I want their accomplishments to stand for themselves," Chris explains. *"I also want to spark their curiosity."* Chris remembers his own teenage years, and not knowing what direction his life would take—until he landed his first job in food service and knew he had found his life's path. He is committed to helping ASD students grow and develop in a diverse, fast-paced environment—he points out that student workers on the Brock team are learning not just about the hospitality and food service world, but about the whole world. He offers them all the experience he can about how foods are prepared, cooled, served and stored. The kitchen is a place of constant action, and student workers are right in the middle of it.

Learning goes both ways for the Brock team and the students. Chris works with his staff to ensure they understand the expectations for communication access with a crew that has deaf and hard of hearing workers. He has revised safety measures so that they are communicated in both American Sign Language (ASL) and English. He aims to remove for student workers any apprehension about working in a fast-paced kitchen. Each student receives a Brock chef coat just like those of the staff, and the Brock staff are truly invested in the ASD students finding success as team members.

One recent ASD graduate is proof of the success of this program. While she no longer lives on campus, and has moved to a group home in Stratford, she has maintained a connection here. As a former student worker in the kitchen, she has been hired by Brock and works every Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the ASD cafeteria. As Chris points out, she is a perfect example of what it's all about: the *"strength of team."*

SETTING THE BAR

ASD UNVEILS NEW DORMS FOR PACES PROGRAM

This October, ASD celebrated the opening of two new PACES dormitories with an exciting ribbon cutting ceremony attended by campus and community members. Among our distinguished guests were Connecticut's Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz and United States Senator Christopher Murphy, D-Conn., along with representatives from the Connecticut General Assembly. Project leadership also attended the event, including Jeanette Weldon from the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority (CHEFA), Steve Andrea with BBE Construction, and architect Tai Soon Kim of TSKP Studios.

The new dorms were specially designed to meet the unique needs of our students enrolled in ASD's PACES Residential Treatment Program. The PACES program serves students between the ages of 6-22 who experience severe behavioral and emotional challenges. As one of only two in the nation, this year-round program offers specialized therapeutic supports to help students manage their intense challenges and thrive. Senator Murphy praised the project, noting that ASD has *"built something exceptional, thinking deeply about what these students need—not just about what they need today, but getting them ready for life after school."*

Properly designed facilities are a critical component in our ability to best meet the visual communication needs of our students. These two new dorms are single-floor buildings utilizing a pods concept which allow students of similar ages and support needs to live together safely and comfortably. Not only does this design aid in their social and emotional development, but the clear lines of sight also allow for accessible communication in American Sign Language amongst students and staff. *"The American School for the Deaf is a national model—you are a national leader. This is a place that provides students with a level of services that you can't get virtually anywhere else in this country or the world,"* Senator Murphy remarked. *"You change the lives of students here—and you will be able to do more because of facilities like these—but you also challenge states and school systems and political leaders all across the country to do better and do more because you set your sights high."*

The new dorms were specially designed to meet the unique needs of our students enrolled in ASD's PACES Residential Treatment Program.

Longtime partner CHEFA, whose past grant support made possible the development of ASD's Visual Communications Center and therapeutic sensory rooms, helped us to secure low-interest financing for this project. ASD is grateful to CHEFA for their ongoing commitment to our mission to maximize our students' potential while empowering them to become educated and self-directed lifelong learners.

Emergency Preparedness

As part of our commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of our students, staff, and campus community – especially during emergencies and weather-related events, ASD embarked last May on a major project: the underground relocation of our campus-wide electrical systems and high-voltage wiring to protect against downed trees caused by inclement weather. We will also add generators to our dormitories. Over the past several years, increasingly strong storms and weather systems have resulted in power outages on campus, sometimes lasting for several days. These occurrences have a significant impact on our students, particularly those in our PACES Residential Treatment Program who call ASD home. PACES is a year-round program that remains open 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. The children enrolled in this program require specialized therapeutic supports to manage their challenges, and ASD provides this support in a barrier-free, communication-accessible environment. This campus-wide work will ensure we continue to meet the unique needs of these students at all times, including during significant weather events.



Senator Christopher Murphy enjoys meeting an ASD student on his visit to campus



Senator Murphy with Executive Director Jeffrey S. Bravin and ASD's Executive Leadership Team: CFO Jennifer Pizzoferrato, Director of Institutional Advancement Liz DeRosa, and Assistant Executive Director Paula Morabito



The ribbon cutting for the new dorms

ASD PACES RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM IN WEST HARTFORD HELPS STUDENTS LEARN & GROW

Reprinted with Permission from CT Insider, October 18, 2024

The Positive Attitude Concerning Education and Socialization program, or PACES, is an all-year residential treatment program for students ages six to 22 who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, but also face unique emotional or behavioral challenges that make it difficult to learn in a traditional setting.

Students work with a team of support services, such as clinicians, social workers, psychologists and a child psychiatrist, on their individual behavioral and academic goals. The program started in 1982 and is one of just a few organizations offering these types of services in the U.S. PACES has consistently grown over the years, most recently culminating in the opening of two new dorms for its students.

Jackson said she'd built memories with both peers and staff members, who have encouraged her to explore her interests and express her emotions over the last three years as a student.

"I feel so much more different than I used to. I feel safe and the staff are so supportive, so helpful here," Jackson said in American Sign Language (ASL). *"I have these really good relationships, so I feel that I'll continue to grow and change."*

PACES has 43 students and is constantly growing in student population, said Justin Brooks, an Associate Director of Student Life at the

American School for the Deaf. Of them, 32 live in residential dorms.

According to the school's website, students have individual treatment plans to address their specific needs and individualize care when they enroll. The treatment process includes a variety of therapeutic support, such as individual and group therapy, mindfulness activities, art and music therapy and animal-assisted therapy.

Brooks said counseling is the key to their work. Since staff consistently hang around the dorms, he said students can get the support they need in a moment's notice and can provide support even late into the evening.

Similarly, Jose Viera, the other Associate Director of Student Life on the West Hartford campus, said the treatment program takes a team-based approach to care and individualizes the support as much as possible. In addition, they offer students different types of supervision levels, depending on the level of support they need.

Not all students need *"one-to-one"* aid every day, he said. *"It all depends on his behavior. Has he improved? Has he declined? It's a day-by-day process, and we do the best we can for our students."*

In addition to the typical academic courses, PACES students also can participate in classes focused on life skills that teach them how to live independently. These skills can include but aren't limited to menu setting, cooking, budgeting, homemaking, accessing public transportation, and job readiness.

Before coming to PACES, Jackson attended classes in a "less structured" school setting where she struggled to thrive. She didn't have the same opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities, like sports and the culinary arts, as other students, she said.

Now, Jackson works with counselors regularly and said the staff encourages her to communicate and express her feelings. These connections have helped Jackson grow as she takes on more responsibility.

"I feel like people have such a positive attitude, and everybody's so focused on helping the students. On helping us learn, helping us grow," Jackson said using sign language. *"I love culinary arts and that stemmed from my time here and all the different ways that the staff work with us. When I'm having some challenges emotionally, they help me work through that, and that's really helping me to grow and mature."*

A homey feeling

Jenn Pizzoferrato, the school's chief financial officer, said they had several debates over how to make the new dorms feel like home for the students, from the furniture to the blinds.

PACES students originally lived in multi-floor dorm buildings towards the front of campus, Pizzoferrato said. The buildings were constructed in the 1960s and weren't ideal for a behavioral treatment program that relied on visual communications, like ASL.

The two new dorms are single-floor buildings that divide the living areas into three "pods" for elementary, high school and autistic students. The pods are separated by age and ability, with high school students on one end and elementary students on the other. In between them is the pod for autistic



ASD students enjoy their brand new lounge

"Sometimes the autism kids, they like to pace. That's a stimulating, comforting kind of thing. This is a perfect design for that group of students," Brooks said in sign language.

The pod common areas have two televisions, several comfy chairs and couches and a game table.

Randy D'Angelo, Director of Operations, said one of the TVs is dedicated to communications: dedicated shows such as the day's schedule and any announcements and emergencies in each pod, giving students easy access to information throughout the day.

At the end of each pod area, there are multi-sensory rooms where students can relax. This chill and quiet space has sensory-friendly devices, like plush toys and a "cuddle swing" where students can sit and feel comfortably wrapped up.

Viera said that when the students moved into the new dorms, it was like they were getting a new toy on Christmas. He said the space gives the students more opportunities to socialize with their peers while also having staff easily accessible.

When she walked into the new PACES dorm, Jackson said she loved the bright colors and spacious rooms. In comparison, she said the old PACES dorms were dark and small. The new space gives them more room to mingle and get to know each other. Jackson lives in a single dorm, but she said having her own space allows her to be responsible by keeping her room neat and her clothes organized.

Originally from New York, Denzel McKoy, 13, is new to the PACES program and has enjoyed his experiences there. He said he needed this type of support throughout the day, which is why his mom enrolled him in the

program. McKoy's favorite part of the program is all the time he spends with his friends, especially with the dorm's new common areas and televisions. PACES has helped him be more responsible and respectful while giving him a space that made him feel safe and supported, he said. *"I feel good that I'm here and that I have full access to communication with sign language,"* he said using ASL.

McKoy has a roommate, which Brooks said is essential to the socialization aspect of the program. Brooks said roommates are paired based on what they observe with students to ensure they're behaviorally appropriate to live together. They work closely with the clinical team to ensure the student is ready to live with someone else.

"It's age-appropriate, and we want to encourage that to help them learn how to develop relationships and social skills," Brooks said in ASL. *"That's something that really is going to benefit them."*

Looking at the future, Pizzoferrato sees more expansion in the autism program with PACES. She said the school's autism program started back in 2018, but only recently expanded PACES to include hearing non-verbal autistic children. Pizzoferrato said the school is also looking into creating an education center dedicated to PACES.

"We need an appropriate education facility. We need dedicated clinical spaces and group therapy spaces. We need dedicated sensory spaces, classrooms that are conducive to clear lines of sight," she said. *"Many of our PACES students have a dedicated one-on-one support with them, so we need classrooms. They could give us a little more elbow room so that we can comfortably educate and have staff in those rooms as well."*

—Cris Villalonga-Vivoni

students, staff offices and the shared kitchen space.

Having all the dorms and common areas on the same floor with expansive windows dividing them creates a "clear line of sight" for staff to supervise while providing communication opportunities. *"We wanted to be homey and noninstitutional,"* Pizzoferrato said.

The one-floor dorm building can accommodate 28 students, and a staff supervisor is always hanging around the office space or in the common area of each pod.

Brooks said the office space is intentionally placed in the center, with large windows that provide easy viewing of the adjacent common rooms. He added that the pod space for students with autism has slightly more room to better accommodate their needs.

STRONGER TOGETHER

ASD WORKS WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS TO EXPAND “LOST IN TRANSLATION” CAMPAIGN



For over 200 years, the American School for the Deaf has been a pillar of excellence in Connecticut. By continually evolving to meet emerging needs in our community, we have maintained a reputation for leadership. As leaders, we believe in a collaborative approach, and always seek to partner with other community leaders to create change.

In 2022, ASD received American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding through the Connecticut Office of Aging and Disability Services to evaluate communication accessibility in education and healthcare for Connecticut’s deaf, hard of hearing and DeafBlind communities. The findings of a statewide needs assessment confirmed that communication accessibility, particularly in emergency, medical, and hospital settings post-COVID, has been a significant challenge. The broad unavailability of in-person interpreters during planned and unplanned medical visits made communication between medical providers and their deaf, hard of hearing and DeafBlind patients extremely difficult, if not impossible.

To meet this challenge, ASD has been leading the charge to raise awareness and improve communication access in

healthcare and education for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing and DeafBlind. In this work, ASD has benefitted from two vital community partnerships to improve communication accessibility in healthcare settings: the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) and Hartford HealthCare.

As part of the ARPA project, ASD developed a training video to help healthcare providers better communicate with and care for patients who are deaf, hard of hearing, and DeafBlind. In collaboration with CHA, the video was shared with all hospitals across Connecticut. In the development of the video, ASD met with healthcare professionals, including Hartford HealthCare leadership, to learn the topics and points that would be most helpful for their staff to ensure that these perspectives were infused within the material. In addition to an overview of available accommodations to meet the communication needs and preferences of patients with hearing loss, the training video also addresses the importance of communicating directly with deaf patients and taking time to learn the accommodation and approach that works best for them.

Academy Award-winning actor Marlee Matlin provided the introduction for the video. *“When we can’t connect, we are lost*



Marielle Daniels welcomed ASD Executive Director Jeff Bravin to NBC CT for an interview about “Lost in Translation”

in translation” explains Matlin. “When you’re deaf, hard of hearing, or DeafBlind, it can be frustrating, isolating, even devastating. It’s time to come together to stand up for access to meaningful, effective communication for all.”

In conjunction with this important video project, Hartford HealthCare released a Request for Proposals to seek a preferred provider for American Sign Language Interpreting Services, and ASD Community Interpreting is proud to have been selected.

“These partnerships will be an incredible resource to raise the level of care for deaf, hard of hearing, and DeafBlind patients across Connecticut,” said ASD Executive Director Jeffrey S. Bravin. “We are excited to witness the improvement in healthcare outcomes that will inevitably result from this work.”



Scan QR code to watch ARPA Medical Training Video.

ASD Receives Additional Funds from the American Rescue Plan Act

ASD is proud to share that we have received an additional \$220,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding through the Connecticut Department of Aging and Disability Services. This additional funding will allow us to develop statewide initiatives in support of Connecticut’s DeafBlind community, and conduct a statewide needs assessment from the perspective of Connecticut’s medical and interpreting communities.

PACES PROGRAM THRIVES



(L to R) Psychologist Holly Miller, Assistant Executive Director Paula Morabito and Psychologist Sarah Gaines-Boehm

Last Spring, ASD’s PACES Program successfully earned accreditation through the Council on Accreditation (COA). COA is an international, independent, not-for-profit, child- and family-service and behavioral healthcare accrediting organization. As a partner to human service organizations, COA improves service delivery outcomes through its accreditation process.

Fresh off of this exciting achievement, ASD Counselors Holly Miller, Ph.D. and Sarah Gaines-Boehm, Ph.D., under the supervision of Assistant Executive Director Paula Morabito, organized the National Autism in Deaf Education Conference (NADEC) in partnership with Deaf Autism America (DAA). The conference, entitled *BELIEVE THEY CAN: Transforming the Educational Experience for Deaf Autistic Youth*, brought the Deaf Education community together to connect, learn and empower each other to better serve deaf students on the autism spectrum. The conference provided a space for educators to engage in dialogue, expand knowledge and understanding, and also offered strategies, tools and resources aimed at helping all who work with deaf students on the autism spectrum to elevate the educational experience for these children.

One participant noted, *“The presentations were incredible. There wasn’t a single one that didn’t leave me with something I could bring back to my classroom or my program and implement right away.”* Another added: *“I loved connecting with everyone who is in the same field and realizing that I am not alone in this.”* With 140 participants from around the country in attendance, the conference was a phenomenal success.

COMMUNITY CROWD PLEASERS



Fun at the Wolf Pack (above) and the Yard Goats (below)

ASD helped to raise awareness around deafness and hearing loss through our participation at two sports events this year. In February, our students were honored to perform the National Anthem at the Hartford Wolf Pack Game at the XL Center. They even had the opportunity to get on the ice to compete in a puck contest between periods! Traffic to the ASD table was brisk, and the night was a great success. Later in the spring, ASD celebrated Deaf Awareness Night with the Yard Goats at Dunkin' Stadium. In a strong showing of support, Yard Goats fans from all over the state shared their interest in ASD.

ASD FOUNDERS' DAY CELEBRATES ITS 207TH ANNIVERSARY

In April, ASD celebrated **Founders' Day** with a series of events. Board President Jon Rubin welcomed guests to campus, and West Hartford Councilor Barry Walters read the Proclamation of Deaf Heritage Week from the Mayor's Office. ASD was then treated to two films developed by Sharon Halscheid's class ('Of Course ASD Has...' And 'Of Course ASL Has...'). Finally, we honored four new Wall of Success inductees – MJ Bienvenu, Leah Katz-Hernandez, Ann Silver and Laurene Simms. Leah, MJ and Ann traveled to campus for the day and offered workshops to our students.



To see Leah's tour of the West Wing in ASL, scan this QR code.

Leah Katz-Hernandez presented to our middle and high school students about her fascinating experience working at the White House under the Obama Administration and shared stories about her time as the Receptionist of the United States (which even has its own acronym – ROTUS)! Our students were inspired and asked many thoughtful questions.



Scan code to learn more about Ann.

Ann Silver shared her experience as a Deaf artist with an eager audience! Ann is a co-founding member of the historic Deaf Art Movement (DAM) of the 1960s and continues to advocate for recognition of Deaf Art in the world of academia and museums.

MJ Bienvenu offered workshops to staff on the important topics of Audism and Linguicism. These presentations reflected ASD's ongoing journey to improve our school's culture so that all staff feel respected, valued, and engaged.

Congratulations to these four new inductees, who are excellent role models for our students and demonstrate what it means to be **ALL Ways Able!**

Congratulations to the four recent inductees to ASD's Wall of Success. These excellent role models demonstrate what it means to be **ALL Ways Able!**



Captions

Top: ASD Wall of Success Inductees (L to R) Leah Katz-Hernandez, Ann Silver, and MJ Bienvenu celebrate Founders' Day with Executive Director Jeffrey S. Bravin. Missing: Laurene Simms

Left: Leah Katz-Hernandez offers a presentation about her experiences while working in the White House under President Obama

THE PRINCE AND GALLAUDET

PRINCE ABDUL RAHMAN IBRAHIMA AND REV. THOMAS H. GALLAUDET



Executive Director Jeffrey S. Bravin and West Hartford Mayor Shari Cantor welcome Princess Karen Chatman and the commission of elders from the Republic of Guinea

An unexpected email from the Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Guinea, invited ASD to meet a delegation of distinguished Elders of Timbo, West Africa, to celebrate the unusual history they shared with ASD. Featured members of the delegation included Princess Karen Chatman of Natchez, Mississippi, Dr. Artemus Gaye from Monrovia, Liberia, and His Excellency Elder Mody Oury Barry from Guinea West Africa—ancestors of Prince Abdul Rahman Ibrahim Ibn Sori of the Official Royal House of Sori.

Prince Abdul Rahman was born in 1762 in Timbuktu, the son of Sori Ibrahim Mowdy, king of the Fulanis in Timbo, Fouta Djallon (what is now the Republic of Guinea on the west coast of Africa). After completing his education at the age of 17, Prince Abdul became a member of his father's army. In 1788 he was given command of 2000 cavalry troops against a rival tribe. After an exhaustive battle, the Prince's army was ambushed; those who

survived were taken as prisoners, including the Prince. His captors sold him into slavery and he was taken to Africa's "slave coast" to join other captives waiting to board a slave ship for America. Upon arrival in America, the Prince was auctioned to a man named Colonel Thomas Foster. For the next 38 years, the Prince worked as a field hand on Col. Foster's cotton plantation in Natchez, Mississippi. As an educated man, the Prince was of great value to Col. Foster - his plantation became one of the leading cotton producers. The Prince became a foreman, and in 1794 he married a woman named Isabella (also enslaved by Col. Foster) and they had nine children.

The Prince's circumstances changed one day when he was selling produce in a Natchez market and met an old acquaintance, Dr. John Coates Cox. In the 1780s Dr. Cox had been serving as a surgeon on an English ship along the West African coast when he became lost and sick while onshore, then abandoned by his vessel. It was the Prince's family who

had rescued him, restored his health, and returned him to America after six months. Upon learning that his friend Prince Abdul was enslaved, Dr. Cox tried to purchase him from Col. Foster so he could send him home to Africa, but Foster refused. The doctor continued to seek the Prince's freedom until his death in 1816, after which time his son, William, pursued the effort. Ten years later, William and Andrew Marschalk (a local newspaper publisher) campaigned together to free the Prince. The effort caught the attention of U.S. Secretary of State, Henry Clay who convinced President John Quincy Adams to free Prince Abdul. In 1828 the Adams Administration secured Prince Abdul's freedom. Shortly after, his wife Isabella was released, too.

Our deepest gratitude is extended to the Clerc family for their goodwill and foresight.

The Prince's children remained enslaved, however, and in an effort to liberate them, the Prince and his wife embarked on a 10-month tour of the northern states to solicit funds to free his family. The Prince worked with the press and made many personal appearances. More strategically, he appealed to abolitionist groups like the American Colonization Society, where he met ASD Founder Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, thus beginning his shared history with ASD. On October 1, 1828, Gallaudet introduced his new friend to the students and faculty at the American School for the Deaf.

The Prince saw his connection with Gallaudet as an opportunity to meet



Special guest Princess Karen Chatman of Natchez, Mississippi with Brad Moseley and Jean Linderman from ASD's Cogswell Heritage House

wealthy individuals who could help him, while Gallaudet saw this as an opportunity to spread Christianity across Africa. Moved by the Prince's story, Gallaudet wrote a dissertation titled, "A Statement with Regard to the Moorish Prince, Abduhl Rahhman," published in New York on October 22, 1828. Although widely distributed, Gallaudet's pamphlet only yielded enough funds to release two of his children and their families.

On February 7, 1829, the Prince and his wife sailed for Liberia, with the final destination of his homeland, Timbo, in mind. Although he had gained support and transportation by committing to adopt Christianity, the Prince returned to the full practice of Islam "as soon as he got in sight" of Africa. When they arrived in Monrovia in March 1829, the first thing he did was unroll his prayer mat and bow to the earth. Sadly, the Prince never realized his dream to return home; he became ill in Liberia and died on July 6, 1829 at age 66, never seeing his children again. (Col. Thomas Foster died the same year as Prince Abdul. His estate, including the children and grandchildren of the Prince, was divided among his heirs.)

It's difficult to imagine Prince Abdul Rahman's lifelong journey from royalty to slavery, and the people and events that affected his fate: the serendipitous meeting with Dr. Cox in Natchez, Andrew Marschalk, Henry Clay, President Adams, and finally, Thomas Gallaudet.

On May 14th, ASD proudly hosted the commission of elders from the Republic of Guinea as well as family friends and descendants to celebrate our shared heritage. The scores of attendees – all strangers just a few hours earlier – were now linked to each other through the interwoven paths of the Prince and Gallaudet.

"He appeals to our humanity. The case of this venerable old man and his affectionate wife is so touching that simply to state it is the best way to give it its full effect upon every heart that can feel for the sorrows of others."

**- Rev. Thomas H. Gallaudet,
"The Moorish Prince"**



ASD Class of 1974 celebrates their 50th reunion on a beautiful Homecoming weekend

HOMECOMING 2024

ASD welcomed many alumni and their families back to campus for a lovely Saturday in early October. Homecoming 2024 showcased a visit to Camp Isola Bella, volleyball and soccer games both at Camp IB and in West Hartford, tours of the Cogswell Heritage House, an alumni parade, and the annual general meeting and banquet for the ASD Alumni Association (ASDAA). The weather cooperated beautifully this year and all enjoyed returning to their ASD home!

ASDAA Update

On Friday, October 4, Barbara Cassin '75, the incoming ASD Board President, welcomed guests to ASD for the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new PACES dormitories, with many ASD Board members, staff, students and special guests in attendance.

That same afternoon, over 35 ASD alumni traveled to Isola Bella, where they saw a new sports court, two new cabins,

a kitchen renovation, and a renovation of bathrooms at the Pavilion – these improvements made possible by many of our amazing alumni! We also enjoyed watching the girls and boys volleyball and soccer games. Thank you to Louis Rivas, Kathy Falco, and Jeanne Magnon for cooking an amazing meal for all!

On Saturday, October 5, the weather was gorgeous for Homecoming. Many took the time to visit the Cogswell Heritage House (known informally across campus as the ASD Museum), the new PACES dormitories, the volleyball and soccer championship tournaments, community exhibitors, and the Class Reunion March and Alumni Parade, which included representatives from the classes of: 1954, 1964, 1969, 1979, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014, and 2019. It was amazing to see Edward Frith, who graduated from ASD 70 years ago in 1954, riding around campus on the Gator! Our day concluded with the ASDAA General Meeting and banquet.

Eighteen members from the Class of 1974 returned to ASD during Homecoming to celebrate their 50th reunion this year! In matching orange and black vests, they toured all the key spots on campus: the Cogswell Heritage House, the front of the Laurent Clerc statue, the Gallaudet and Alice Cogswell



Barbara Cassin '75 and Alexandra McGee '73 celebrate Homecoming with Tiger Pride

statue, and the front steps of the Gallaudet Clerc Education Center (GCEC). That evening, the 50th reunion class attended the ASDAA banquet and Hall of Fame celebrations. They concluded the weekend with a Sunday brunch in the Ward Gym, where they received a nice clock with a picture of the statue of Gallaudet and Alice.

Thank you to the ASDAA Core Circle (Sandra McLennon, Kathy Flaco, Lori Hylinski, Alice Bianco, Jeanne Magnon, Alexandra McGee, June Freeman, and Tom Buell)! We will be looking for new ASDAA officers in the fall of 2025, especially those with technology skills in social media, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word, Page, Numbers, Google Drive, and others. The group typically meets four times per year by Zoom, including during Homecoming, ASD Founders' Day, ASD Graduation Day, and ASDAA Cookout. Contact Sandra McLennon asdaapresident1914@gmail.com, for more information.

Finally, congratulations to Barbara Cassin '75, our first ASD graduate to serve as ASD Board President—we wish her the best of luck!

—Sandra McLennon '74, ASDAA President



Former IB campers and staff gather to celebrate the camp's 60th birthday

CAMP ISOLA BELLA TURNS 60!

This July, Camp IB Alumni celebrated a very special occasion: the camp has been in operation for 60 years! Former campers and staff gathered for a fun-filled overnight from July 27-28 at IB's beautiful campus on the Twin Lakes in Salisbury, CT. The fun included waterfront activities, dinner, a S'mores bonfire, an overnight in the bunkhouses, and a continental breakfast on Sunday morning. Attendees included four campers who were in the first group in the first year of the camp: Jeanne Magnon '72, David Biskupiak '72, Barbara Cassin '75, and Wesley Miller '70. Happy 60th, IB!

DARLENE BORSOTTI RETIRES

After 35 years of dedicated service to the ASD community, Darlene Borsotti retired in early October. Darlene graduated from ASD in 1976 before returning as an employee in 1989. Throughout her three-decade career, Darlene provided instrumental support to the educational teams while ensuring processes were streamlined and efficient. Her reliability and attention to detail were valued skills relied upon by staff throughout the school.

As an active member of the American School for the Deaf Alumni Association (ASDAA), Darlene also served a critical role as a liaison between association leadership and school staff. She was frequently called upon to assist with event coordination, volunteer management, and membership correspondence. Darlene was a trusted resource regarding alumni news and she gracefully shared information between the ASDAA and school departments.

Darlene has also been instrumental in her work with the Cogswell Heritage House and the ASD archives team. She is dedicated to preserving ASD's rich legacy and is a proud member of the ASD Pioneers. She often shares our school's phenomenal history by providing tours to outside guests. We are grateful to Darlene for her many years of dedication and we know as a member of the ASDAA and Pioneers, she will remain active in the ASD family!



Proud ASD alumni celebrate Tiger Pride at Homecoming 2024

ASD ALUMNA ELECTED AS FIRST DEAF FEMALE BOARD PRESIDENT

In October, ASD's Board of Directors elected Barbara Cassin as its new President – marking a significant first in our history. Barbara is the first Deaf female Board President to serve in the school's 207 year history.

Barbara graduated from ASD in 1975 after enrolling at the young age of three. In the decades since, she has remained an integral member of the community. During her time at ASD, Barbara was a natural leader who was involved in a variety of activities. She served in Student Body Government, Jr. NAD (National Association of the Deaf), Close Up in Washington, D.C., and national youth leadership programs. Her lifelong love for nature and the outdoors was also sparked at a young age as a camper at ASD's Camp Isola Bella. When describing her time at ASD, Barbara's fondest memories include her time swimming and hiking at IB, as well as the constant presence of deaf role models – her teachers and dorm counselors – who she could communicate with directly. *"My peers and I challenged each other in classes, in sports, and in other activities,"* Barbara explains. *"I could focus on the content of what I wanted to do or say without struggling to communicate. I could just be me."* Barbara believes her confidence to follow different paths is a direct result of this significant reality. She was never hindered by her hearing loss and felt confident to pursue her dreams. *"I felt free. I knew I could achieve anything if I worked for it."*

Barbara's legacy as a leader continued well beyond ASD. She would go on to receive her Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Work from Gallaudet University before earning her Master of Arts degree in Deaf Rehab and Counseling from New York University. Her career path brought her to the New Jersey School for the Deaf where she worked as a dorm counselor, and the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf where she served as Dean of Students. In 1988, Barbara was hired by the State of Connecticut as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor – a position she would hold for 28 years before her retirement in 2015.

Throughout her life, Barbara has been a dedicated advocate for the deaf, DeafBlind, and hard of hearing communities. She served as President of the Connecticut Association of the



Deaf (CAD) for two terms, and President of the ASD Alumni Association for several years. She also served on several task forces to ensure that the perspectives of those who are deaf, DeafBlind, and hard of hearing are included and valued. Most recently, Barbara has served as co-chair of the Connecticut Advisory Board for Persons Who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind, which advises the Governor on issues affecting individuals with hearing loss across the State. *"My focus has always been to serve the members of my deaf, DeafBlind, and hard of hearing communities,"* Barbara said. *"I want to work towards improving our lives by breaking down barriers, advocating for better services, and ensuring full access to those services."* Barbara's leadership recently helped to establish a state level Bureau of Services for Persons Who Are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing – an incredible step forward in Connecticut that would not have been possible without Barbara's dedicated service.

In addition to her many other responsibilities, Barbara has always remained steadfast in her commitment to ASD and our school community. She first joined ASD's Board of Directors in the 1990s and began serving on several Board Committees. Barbara also accepted various leadership roles on the Board, including the positions of Secretary, 1st and 2nd Vice President before her election as President this fall.

Barbara attributes her success in life to ASD, as well as her ability to fully participate in any activity she sets her mind to.



“

ASD made me who I am today and I am honored to be the first Deaf Board President at the first Deaf School in the United States...

”

“ASD made me who I am today and I am honored to be the first Deaf Board President at the first Deaf School in the United States,” Barbara beams. “It feels even more special for me because I am also an ASD alum.”

When looking to the future, Barbara holds aspirational dreams for her alma mater. *“I hope to see ASD continue to grow – through both enrollment and also our involvement in the field of Deaf Education across the country.”* She wants parents and educational leaders to recognize that ASD is a place for all deaf, DeafBlind, and hard of hearing students – a vibrant, fully accessible learning environment where they can be their true selves and achieve their dreams. *“ASD has the most talented faculty and staff,”* Barbara said. *“Together, we can show the*

world that deaf, DeafBlind, and hard of hearing students are ‘ALL ways able’.”

As Board President, Barbara wants to continue strengthening ASD’s financial infrastructure to maintain our standard of excellence and prepare for future growth. She also hopes to further engage with alumni and help them stay connected to the school. *“ASD is our family, and it is our heritage,”* Barbara explains. *“I want our alumni to know that they are always a part of us and we value their involvement and contributions – both their financial gifts, as well as the time they dedicate as volunteers.”*

When asked to reflect on the things for which she is most grateful, Barbara thoughtfully explains that she will forever thank her parents for making the decision to enroll her at ASD and for being involved in her educational journey. Through their involvement in the parent-teacher organization and service on the Board, Barbara credits her parents for her lifelong commitment to advocacy. *“My parents believed in helping and advocating for everyone to be included,”* Barbara shares. *“I can see how my life and values have been shaped by both of my families – my parents and ASD.”*

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ASD BOARD NEWS

This fall, the ASD Board voted in four new Directors: Nelson Simons (continuing on the Board), Lisa Hamlin, alumna Alexandra McGee (both re-joining the Board), and Pamela Hans (new to the Board). The Board also voted in three new Corporators – Michelle Reyes, Rebecca Edwards and Laurent Holt.



Lisa Hamlin, rejoining the Board of Directors, was elected to the Board of Corporators and Directors in 2016. She served as a Director from 2016 to 2022. She served on the Education Committee and was Vice Chair of the Institutional Advancement/Marketing Committee and she will become Chair of this

committee this year. Ms. Hamlin is owner of the company Lori Hamlin Inc. out of New York City. She partners with her sister Lori, a celebrity make-up artist, to provide talented make-up artists and hairstylists to an impressive roster of celebrity and high profile clients. They also provide private and group education programs, business consulting for aspiring and established artists, and product development assistance. She previously worked out of Texas for Davines North America as a skincare Territory Manager and Decleor USA as a skincare sales Territory Manager. Prior to that she worked out of New York City at Westhill Partners, Inc. as an Operations Manager for this management consulting firm specializing in solving complex marketing and communications challenges. She earned her BS from Lyman Briggs College at Michigan State University, with an emphasis in Biology and Biochemistry.



Michelle Reyes, new Board Corporator, works at The New York Foundling providing direct supervision of the implementation of clinical services related to Functional Family Therapy-Therapeutic Case Management. She received her Bachelor and Master of Social Work from Gallaudet University. She is a Certified

FFT-TCM Supervisor and a Licensed Master Social Worker. She has over 15 years in the human service field with experience in overseeing clinical services and managing support staff. She is also skilled in mental health support, program monitoring, and effective documentation management. She is proficient in providing trauma-focused counseling, crisis intervention and mental health advocacy, as well as program monitoring—tracking program performance, analyzing data, and developing strategies to enhance outcomes. She previously worked as a Social Worker at the Lexington School for the Deaf and Barrier Free Living Inc. She is a native American Sign Language user.



Rebecca Edwards, new Board Corporator, is a Professor/Chair in the Department of History, College of Liberal Arts at the Rochester Institute of Technology and has been there since 1998. She has a BA from the College of the Holy Cross and a Ph.D. in American History from the University of Rochester. She

specializes in Deaf history and culture. Her research is focused on the impact of deaf individuals in society, and changes in the societal and sociological understanding of deafness. She recently presented a lecture titled “Seeing the Signs: Doing Deaf History at Holy Cross and Beyond.” She has written a book entitled “Words Made Flesh: Nineteenth Century Deaf Education and the Growth of Deaf Culture” (NYU Press, 2012). The book “explores the educational battles of the nineteenth century ... and explains how the unexpected emergence of Deafness (as a culture) provoked the pedagogical battles that ... still reverberate today.”



Alexandra M. McGee, who is rejoining the Board of Directors, had served as Ex Officio Board Director as American School for the Deaf Alumni Association President from 1996 -2013. She then served as a Board Corporator and then Director again from 2016 – 2023. She has served and is currently active on many of the Board

Committees. She attended Mystic Oral School for the Deaf, then ASD and graduated in 1973. She graduated from the National Technical Institute for the Deaf with a bookkeeping/ accounting degree. She attended the CT Business Institute in Stratford for bookkeeping/accounting and was the first deaf student to attend there. She then worked at Merchant Farmer Bank in Bridgeport, CT as an Investing Assistant for 5 1/2 years. She worked at the State of CT Judicial Branch as an Administrative Assistant II for 28 1/2 years until she retired. She also served as their Office Supply Coordinator for the unit and on their Affirmative Action Advisory Committee. She has served as Treasurer for Connecticut Association of the Deaf and Outreach Director for Core Circle ASDAA.



Pamela D. Hans, new Board Director, has been a Lawyer/Shareholder/Partner at Anderson Kill since 2004. She went to the University of Manitoba and received a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science in Civil Engineering. She then attended Vermont Law School, where she earned a JD in 2000. Her thesis was

on the Discharge Estimation Techniques for Hydraulic Efficiency Testing. Her Bar admissions include Pennsylvania (2001), New Jersey (2001), New York (2014), and Missouri (2008). Her current practice concentrates in the area of insurance coverage on behalf of policy holders and she focuses on mining, energy, oil and gas, and manufacturing sectors as well as independent / private schools and religious institutions.



Nelson (Tip) Simons, continuing on the Board of Directors, was elected to the Board of Corporators/ Directors in 2007. He was a Director from 2007-2014 and 2018-2020. He was Board Treasurer from 2020-2024. He was Chair of the Investment and Finance Committees and on the Executive Committee. He is

a graduate of Union College in Schenectady, New York, with a BA in Economics. He has retired from Sovereign Bank as a Vice President in Commercial Lending. In banking for over 20 years, he previously worked for BankBoston and Key Bank in various positions. He is a trustee and a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees for the Sage Colleges in Troy/Albany, New York, a past President and Board member of the Exchange Club of West Hartford, and a volunteer for the Greater Hartford Arts Council.



Laurent Clerc Holt, new Board Corporator, is the 4th great-grandson of ASD founder Laurent Clerc and grandson of Guy B. Holt, past ASD Board President. He graduated from Providence College with a Bachelor in Social Work and Community Organizing, then completed his Masters

Degree in Clinical Social Work at Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. He had a twenty-year career as a Clinical Social Worker in Vermont. Upon immigrating to Montreal in 2003, he had a thirteen-year career as a social worker in the provincial child protection system. Since his retirement, he has worked with the ASD Cogswell Heritage House in expanding knowledge and collections related to ASD's early history, and he even makes his own donations of valuable Clerc material. In the United States and France, he has promoted ASD's early history to elementary and high schools, university ASL programs, libraries and historical societies, always promoting ASD's unique place in Deaf Education innovation.

THE 2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024



The American School for the Deaf relies on philanthropic support to provide our students with the tools they need to succeed.

We thank you for your help in giving our students what it takes...

To Think, Question, Decide, Dream, and Achieve.

Because of your support, we are able to continue our goal of helping deaf, DeafBlind, hard of hearing, and hearing non-verbal students participate in everything tomorrow will bring!



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Gifts-in-kind, also referred to as in-kind donations, are a kind of charitable giving in which individuals or businesses give goods and services in lieu of cash, credit card or stock.

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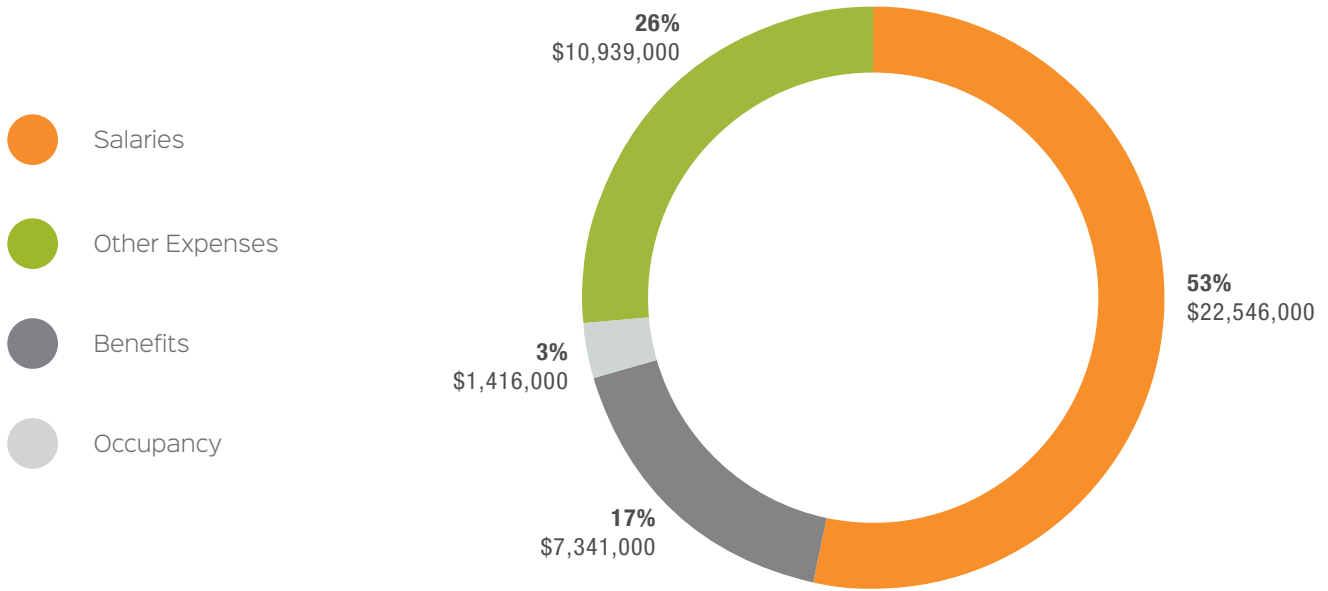


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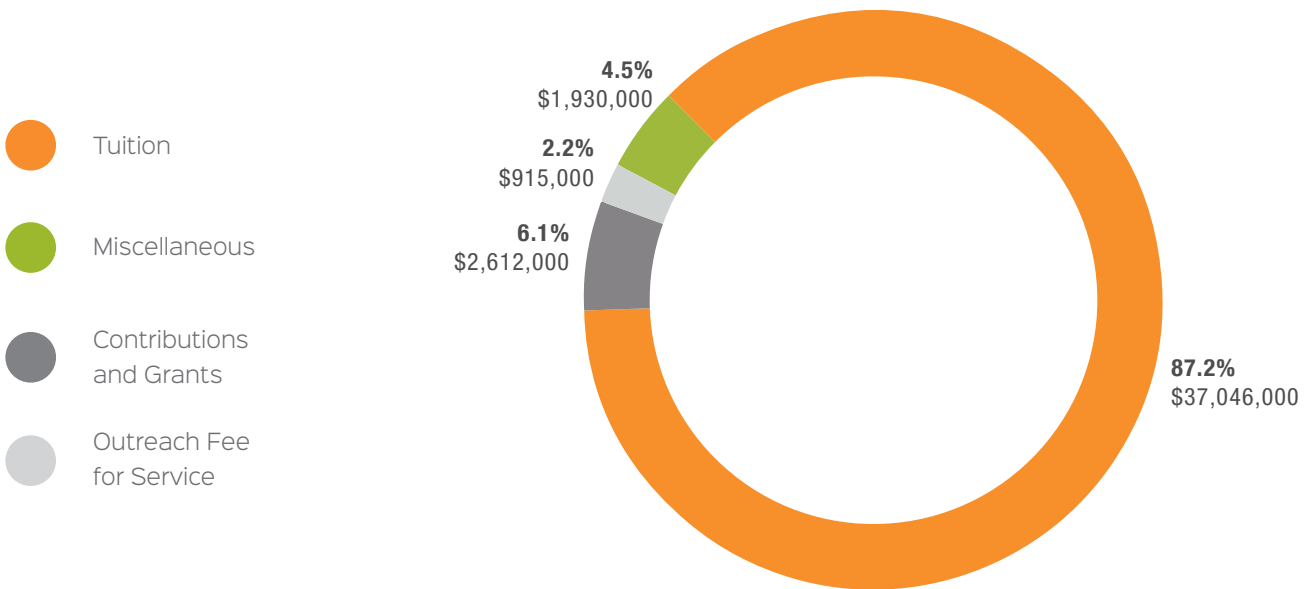
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024

Actual Operating Expenses = \$42,242,000



Total Operating Revenue = \$42,503,000



GRANTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

ASD Common Spaces Gain New Flexibility Thanks to the Ahearn Family Foundation

Walk into ASD's common learning spaces and classrooms in the Gallaudet Clerc Education Center and you will see a new kind of chair: the Tripp Trapp chair. Introduced by occupational therapist Cheryl Harrington, these chairs flex to fit students of all ages and sizes, making them the perfect solution for classrooms that serve our whole school population, from 3- to 18-year-olds! With appropriate seating, all our students will now be able to focus better on their learning activities.

Connecticut State Library (CSL) Conservation Connection Grant Funds Allow ASD Archives to be Part of the Subject Guide Project.

ASD was selected to participate in The Subject Guide Project, sponsored by CSL Conservation Connection and the Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board. Through this grant, a traveling archivist worked with ASD to create a subject guide related to the records in our archives documenting the experiences of African Americans, Native Americans, and other people of color at ASD. Since 1829, ASD welcomed students of color and this proud piece of our history is now formally documented through the Connecticut Library's Archive Online.

ASD's Birth to Three Program Develops New Equipment Lending Library Thanks to the Joseph S. Stackpole Charitable Trust

ASD's Birth to Three program recently launched a pilot program, ASD's Lending Closet, to allow our families to borrow costly occupational and physical (OT/PT) equipment before determining whether to purchase it. The pilot proved a clear success, with participants noting how helpful the Lending Closet has been: *"This is the first time we have ever had a chance to try out equipment before buying it, and it has been an eye opener. The equipment we thought would be perfect for our son didn't exactly work for him but other equipment that we thought he wouldn't like, he loved!"*



GIVING EVERY STUDENT EVERYTHING THEY NEED

Support ASD

Like many non-profit organizations, the American School for the Deaf depends on philanthropic gifts to support our many programs. Donations made through our Annual Fund allow us to support the school's most critical needs. This fund supports many areas, including:

- › Academics, residential life, athletics, extracurricular activities
- › Early Childhood Intervention/Birth-to-Three Program
- › Camp Isola Bella
- › Online Academy
- › Preservation of ASD's historical archives

Ways to Give

Giving has never been easier! In addition to the traditional cash or check gifts, you may also make a secure donation online at asd-1817.org/support-us/donate-now. All major credit cards are accepted, and all online gifts are processed through Blackbaud Merchant Services to ensure that any personal information provided is kept safe and secure.

You can make a difference!

The American School for the Deaf has been empowering deaf and hard of hearing children since 1817. Your generosity makes our mission possible by enhancing the learning opportunities available for our students every day. The entire ASD family, especially our students, thank you!

For more information, or to discuss other ways to give, including planned giving opportunities, please contact ASD's Institutional Advancement team. Office: (860) 986-7042 (VP)

Liz DeRosa

Director of Institutional
Advancement
Elizabeth.Derosa@asd-1817.org
860.570.2212

Molly Cooper

Assistant Director of Institutional
Advancement
Molly.Cooper@asd-1817.org
860.570.2355





These foundations have given funds to support general operations and an exciting range of targeted projects. Grant funding has helped ASD bring Trauma Informed Care to our PACES Program; expand our STEAM Programs (robotics and ROV); enhance our Education Technology, Counseling, Vocational and Occupational Therapy Programs; provide more camp scholarships for our Camp Isola Bella, and digitize our archives. Grant funding is allowing us to host the National Autism in Deaf Education Conference, and it is allowing the students in our Autism Expansion to benefit from community field trips. Our grantors help us fulfill our mission of leadership and innovation, and ASD appreciates the generous support of each of these philanthropic organizations.

Local Foundations Offer Critical Support

The American School for the Deaf would like to extend special thanks to the foundations who have offered us critical support for programs and capital projects in Fiscal Year 2023-2024:

- › Ahearn Family Foundation
- › Barnes Group Foundation
- › Budd Family Fund
- › Burns Family Fund
- › Carleton Family Fund
- › Cohn Zucker Giving Fund
- › Connecticut Humanities Council
- › Connecticut State Library
- › Frontier Communications Employees' Community Services Fund
- › The Fund for Greater Hartford
- › George L. & Grace A. Long Foundation
- › Give Lively Foundation
- › Gladys B. & Robert E. Dunn Fund
- › Grant & Karen Bogle Charitable Fund
- › The Harry E. Goldfarb Family Foundation
- › Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
- › Henry Nias Foundation
- › Henry E. Niles Foundation
- › Hubbert Fund
- › Jack Langerman Community Foundation
- › John and Kelly Hartman Foundation
- › Joseph Family Charitable Fund
- › Lily Palmer Fry Memorial Trust
- › Mildred A. Kelly Fund
- › Mowell Family Fund
- › Nevers Charitable Fund
- › Pledgeling Foundation
- › Robert G. & Marguerite M. Derx Foundation
- › Rosen Family Foundation
- › The Schuman Family Fund
- › Sorensen Pearson Family Foundation
- › Stanley D. and Hinda N. Fisher Fund
- › The TJX Foundation
- › Town Fair Tire Foundation
- › Travelers Foundation
- › Weston-Murphy Family Fund
- › William & Alice Mortensen Foundation
- › William Beecher Scoville Foundation
- › Zachs Family Foundation

IN MEMORIAM

It is with great sadness that we report on the loss of alumni, friends and family of ASD who have passed away. We extend our sincerest sympathy to the loved ones of those we have lost.

ALUMNI

**Elizabeth (Betty) D. Baaden
(2/13/2024)**

Betty attended ASD before moving to New Jersey and graduating from the NJ School for the Deaf in 1963. Betty enjoyed sewing, making pillows, doing fill-in puzzle books and a variety of crafts. She was beloved by her family and will be dearly missed.



**Christine
(Maloon) Boutin
'67 (4/21/2024)**

After graduating from ASD, Christine came back to the

school and worked in the Business office.



**Michael Burke
'74 (7/23/2024)**

Michael attended both ASD and Beverly School for the Deaf in Beverly,

Massachusetts. He then worked as a groundskeeper at Whetstone Gulf State Park for many years until his retirement in 2022. He enjoyed hunting and fishing.

Carolina (Cruz) Deleon (2/4/2024)

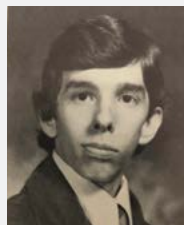
Carolina attended ASD from 1972-1980. She was a gymnast who loved to crochet and never missed a party. Carolina spent the last 21 years with her family in Tampa, Florida.

Parin Docust '84 (12/1/2023)

Parin was most recently living in Maine.

Burton Driggs Durian '42 (4/26/24)

After graduating from ASD, Burton worked at Aetna Insurance Company until 1988. He and his wife Martha were married for 37 years before she died in 1985. Burton was devoted to flowers, clocks, toys and his 1939 Plymouth.



**Jay Grillo '76
(6/20/2024)**

Jay came to ASD Homecoming every year. Born in Milford, MA, he was a lifelong

member of The Framingham Learning Center for the Deaf. He was a charismatic and loving brother, friend and uncle; all who knew him will miss his joyous smile.

James Hill '67 (7/19/2024)

James, of Danvers, MA and formerly of Worcester, MA, is survived by his wife Penelope.

**Dorothy (Balberchak) Leonardi '51
(11/6/2023)**

After graduating from ASD, Dorothy married Mario Leonardi in 1952 and they moved to Waterbury. Dorothy worked for a local boating company for 25 years and was a devout Catholic who remained very involved at St. Timothy's Catholic Church in West Hartford, CT. She and her husband were also very involved with the International Catholic Deaf Association and the National Fraternal Society for the Deaf.

Mary Eileen Lukes '70 (8/2/2024)

Although Mary was born with cerebral



palsy and significant hearing loss, her mother made sure she lived a full life. Mary graduated from

ASD in 1970 and then worked for 40 years at the National Institute for Health as a computer programmer. She was an exemplary employee, receiving many awards and accolades during her career. She was a kind, compassionate and loving soul whose smile, laughter and love for life will be missed.



**Judith (Howe)
Martin '67
(11/2/2023)**

After graduating from ASD, Judy spent many years working in various

roles in the insurance industry before retiring in 2005. Judy loved her children and grandchildren, always doing her best to be present at events both big and small in their lives.



**Albert Miller '95
(4/17/2024)**

Albert was the son of retired ASD teacher Laura Miller.

Carol (Flood) Moore '71 (4/4/2024)

Carol attended Austine School for the Deaf in Vermont and transferred to ASD in her final year for further job training. She married Ronald Goodell in 1975 and they had two children; after Ronald died in 1992, Carol



remarried Allen Moore. She worked at the Vermont Department of Employment and Training for 30

years and after retiring, she continued to work part time at St. Michael's College until 2014. Carol was a lifelong advocate for the Deaf Community. Her playful sense of humor and warm spirit brought joy to all who knew her, and her deep faith and the comfort of prayer were guiding lights, shaping her life with hope and light.



Stephen Piscitello '69 (1/19/2024)

Stephen had most recently been living in Boston and

employed as a hairdresser.



John C. Pittman '68 (7/31/2024)

Johnny graduated from ASD in 1968. He spent many years in North Carolina

and lived most recently in Virginia, working as a Manager of Quality Assurance at Parker Hannifin.

Gillian Hall Ratcliffe '57 (2/2/2024)

Gillian was a competitive and champion synchronized swimmer, competing at the local, state and national levels. She was an avid tennis player and loved ballet and



modern dance, music, and theater. Gillian attended Gallaudet College and married Lyndon Hanes

Ratcliffe in 1961. The two traveled extensively and were blessed with three children.



Anna Rinaldi '62 (5/15/2024)

After graduating from ASD, Anna pursued her BA at Gallaudet University and an

MA at California State University Northridge. She then began a long teaching career, which included years at ASD and concluded at Northwestern Connecticut Community College, where she was an assistant professor until her retirement in 2009. Anna became a certified deaf interpreter for many years until her retirement in 2023. Anna was very active in deaf organizations, advocated for deaf and hard of hearing patients in healthcare settings, and was very involved in deaf community theater.



Herb Rosen '55 (3/20/2024)

Herb transferred to ASD from Toronto, Canada and went on from ASD to graduate from Gallaudet University in 1959 with a degree in chemistry. He then acquired credentials in computer

programming, which became his lifelong career. Herb married Roz Goodstein in 1961 and they had three children. He loved his family, friends, good food, traveling and poker.



Gilbert Sanborn '73 (5/17/2024)

After graduating from ASD, Gilbert worked for Pratt & Whitney. He then moved to Rhode

Island. He was active in many deaf community groups throughout New England, particularly the Rhode Island Senior Citizens.

Denielle Christy VanZandt (4/11/2024)

Denielle attended ASD and then Lee High School in Massachusetts. Denielle loved all animals, from cats to dogs to goats to sheep—they all made her smile. She loved showing her creative side and excelled at art, with a particular passion for painting and drawing.



Ronald Wages '53 (4/1/2024)

Ronald excelled academically and athletically at ASD. As a star football player, he

was recognized in the ASD Hall of Fame. He worked for 39 years at Connecticut General Life Insurance Company as a master printer, retiring in 1992. Ralph loved sketching, traveling and meeting new people. He and his wife Betty had three children.

FORMER STAFF AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Ellen Boyne (5/18/2024)

Ellen spent many years working as a nurse and administrative assistant at ASD—the school was a huge part of her life. Ellen enjoyed her friends, playing cards, bowling, golfing, traveling, looking good and most of all, family. Ellen was, first, a parent at ASD, then an amazing administrative assistant in Cogswell Building, and finally a nurse in the Student Health Center. She was so efficient, no matter her role, that a parent once referred to her as Mrs. Cogswell.

Marybeth Cenci (9/30/2024)

MaryBeth Cenci taught at ASD for 35 years, both in Boatner Building and Cogswell. She was a classic ‘Boatner Lady’, and brought her teaching skills, humor and classiness to Cogswell, as well. She also volunteered at Cedarcrest in Newington and was very active at St. Mary Church in Newington, where she served as a Eucharistic Minister, a bereavement counselor and an office volunteer. After losing a daughter in 1978 to leukemia, she was also very involved with the Leukemia Society. She will be greatly missed by family and friends.

Gary Curtis (8/2/2024)

Gary chose a life of service to the deaf thanks to the influence of his deaf grandfather, with whom he spent much time as a youth. After earning a master’s from Gallaudet, he taught language and composition at ASD from 1958-1961. He left to work at West Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind, then Indiana School for the Deaf. In 1965 he returned to ASD as Assistant

Executive Director. He moved from that position to become superintendent at the Texas School for the Deaf and then the first Director of Deaf Services for the State of Texas. Gary received a Cogswell Award from ASD for Distinguished Service to the Deaf, as well as the National Council on Communicative Disorder’s Distinguished Service Award.

Marlene E. Foss (9/26/2024)

Marlene was a dedicated employee at ASD for more than 20 years. She enjoyed reading, gardening, watching soap operas, and vacationing—especially on Cape Cod. An avid Red Sox fan, she was also a great cook and cherished more than anything spending time with her family. She will be truly missed.

Gail (Hungerford) Gavalis (8/13/2024)

Gail was the oldest sister of eight children in a close-knit family and a devoted mother who always made time for her children. After graduating from Central Connecticut State University in 1977 with a degree in Physical Education and Health, Gail started her career as a PE teacher and coach at ASD.

Caroline T. Halberg (10/5/2024)

Caroline Trasko Halberg worked at ASD for 40 years and was married to ASD Principal Dave Halberg. Caroline began her career in deaf education when she received a Fulbright Scholarship to study and teach at Odsal House School for the Deaf in Bradford, England. Caroline will be remembered for her unwavering love,

loyalty and dedication to her family, those she considered family, and her special friendships. She will be truly missed.

Gina Hoag (2/27/2024)

Gina worked for 33 years for the State of Connecticut, with 19 years in the State Department of Education. She was an experienced teacher and a nationally recognized professional dog trainer. With her dog, Jackson, Gina provided animal assisted therapy to ASD students in the PACES Program, and our students adored her.

Karen (Stoupe) Jedson (1/21/2024)

With a master’s degree in library science, Karen worked for the Hartford Public Library and then the American School for the Deaf. She and her husband retired to South Carolina in 2010.

Philip J. Lohman (8/11/2024)

Phil was born and raised in the Bronx and after graduating college, pursued a career in illustration and graphic design. He worked at the Museum of Natural History in NYC then served in the Army. After the Army, he moved to Connecticut and worked as a teacher at ASD, where his own art was often displayed in Cogswell. He then took a job with the Hartford Courant, where he worked in the Graphics Department as a political cartoonist for 23 years. Phil will be missed by all who knew him.

Merrily Gengras Moynihan (9/28/2024)

Merrily grew up in West Hartford, one of ten children. After graduating from



St. Joseph College, she went to work at ASD and later worked on the election campaign of Lowell Weicker, Jr. followed by a job with the State of Connecticut working for the Coast Guard. Merrily was a loving mother, grandmother and great grandmother who will be deeply missed.

Thomas J. Mullaney, Jr. (8/26/2024)

A Chicago native, Tom served in the Navy as a communications officer and

operations officer, including on a ship deployed to the Cuban Missile Crisis. After the Navy, he began a career in banking, working in a variety of roles in both Chicago and New York City. In 1977, Tom and his family moved to West Hartford when he took a job as senior vice president at Hartford National Bank and then became executive vice president of Shawmut Banks of Connecticut and Massachusetts. Upon retirement, he founded an investment advisory firm, which became Mullaney, Keating & Wright. Tom was active in many Hartford area organizations, including his service as Investment Committee Chair at ASD. He was an integral part of our Board committee work and will be deeply missed by family and friends.

Linda Murphy-Nicotera (7/3/2024)

Linda (Lin) was passionate about dog training, teaching, performing and books, and made countless community connections relating to these passions. Lin was generous with her time and possessions, giving away what she could not use and making little gifts for her friends and co-workers. Before teaching at ASD, she worked as a street performer in the Baltimore and D.C. areas, providing mime shows for all ages. She had a creative spirit and strong will and will be truly missed.

Elizabeth D. Torrey (9/1/2024)

Elizabeth, also known as Betsy, worked for the American School for the Deaf and later as a print production manager for multiple Fortune 500 corporations in the Hartford and

Boston areas. She enjoyed playing the piano, decorating, gardening, swimming, tennis and spending time with her friends and family.

William Thomas Tyrrell (11/7/2024)

Bill Tyrrell served tours in Korea and West Germany as a U.S. Army Infantryman, and later joined the American Legion Post No. 96 in West Hartford. He was a student at ASD and then worked here for 30 years. He also drove motor coaches for the New Britain Transportation Company and served for 18 years under the West Hartford Police Unit as a beloved neighborhood crossing guard, until the age of 85. Bill also proudly served as a volunteer fireman for over 40 years with the Oakland Gardens (Farmington) Fire Department. Bill was an enthusiastic card and bingo player, an avid boater, and an adept handy man, whose knowledge for gadgets, power tools, and general maintenance problem-solving were legendary. A fun-loving spirit with a youthful sense of humor, he will be dearly missed.



Non-Discrimination Clause

The American School for the Deaf (ASD) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, nationality, disability, sex or age in treatment or employment at ASD, admission or access to ASD, or any other aspect of the educational programs and activities that ASD operates.

ASD is required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (Age Act), and their respective implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. Parts 100, 104, 106 and 110, not to discriminate in such a manner.

Inquiries concerning the application of each of the aforementioned statutes and their implementing regulations to ASD may be referred to the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights, at 617.289.0111 or 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109-3921 OR to the ASD Title IX Coordinator; Gwynne Deveau, Human Resources Manager



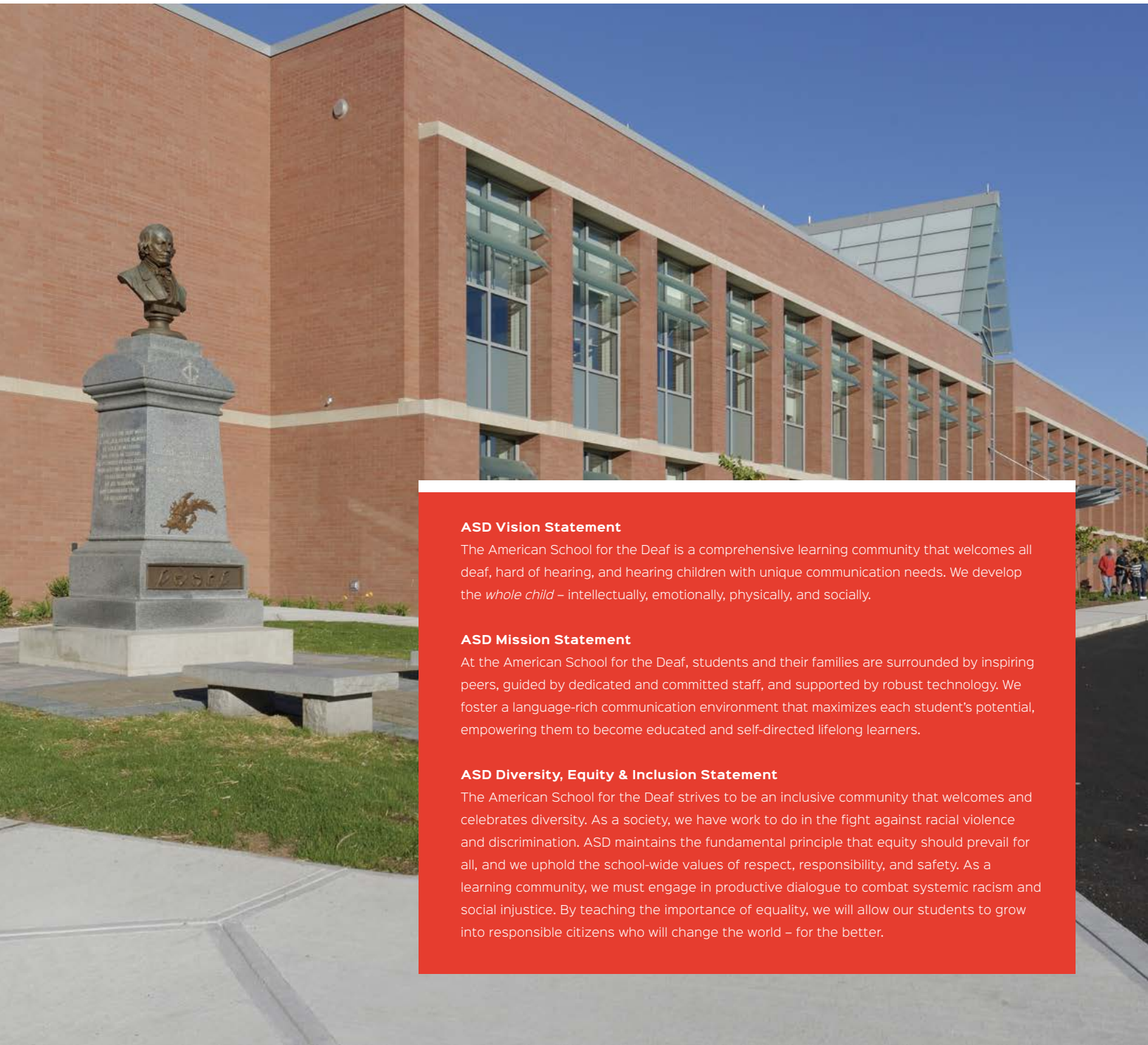


**AMERICAN
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Founded in 1817

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(860) 570-2300 (Voice)
(860) 899-1217 (VP)
www.asd-1817.org



ASD Vision Statement

The American School for the Deaf is a comprehensive learning community that welcomes all deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing children with unique communication needs. We develop the *whole child* – intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially.

ASD Mission Statement

At the American School for the Deaf, students and their families are surrounded by inspiring peers, guided by dedicated and committed staff, and supported by robust technology. We foster a language-rich communication environment that maximizes each student's potential, empowering them to become educated and self-directed lifelong learners.

ASD Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Statement

The American School for the Deaf strives to be an inclusive community that welcomes and celebrates diversity. As a society, we have work to do in the fight against racial violence and discrimination. ASD maintains the fundamental principle that equity should prevail for all, and we uphold the school-wide values of respect, responsibility, and safety. As a learning community, we must engage in productive dialogue to combat systemic racism and social injustice. By teaching the importance of equality, we will allow our students to grow into responsible citizens who will change the world – for the better.