



MINNESOTA  
HANDS &  
VOICES™

Supporting families  
with children who are  
deaf & hard of hearing



# FOCUS

## Congratulations to the 2018 MNH&V High Five Award Recipients

Congratulations to this year's Minnesota Hands & Voices (MNH&V) High Five Award recipients, from the metro area; Diana Chabot and Kitri Larson Kylo, and from greater Minnesota, Pete Billodeau. The MNH&V High Five Award recipients were nominated by families or care providers of children who are deaf or hard of hearing (dhh).

The MNH&V community would like to thank all of the award nominees and winners for their dedicated service. The MNH&V High Five Award was created as a way for parents to publicly recognize individuals who have gone above and beyond on behalf of children who are dhh. Past recipients represent a diverse group of parents, teachers, students, interpreters, providers, advocates, volunteers, and role models.

Nominations for next year's 2019 MNH&V High Five Award will be accepted from May 1st to July 1st, 2019. To nominate someone simply write a 200 word or less explanation of 1) what the nominee has done above and beyond what is typical for their role and 2) how this individual has made an impact on a child and/or the community. At least one specific example is very helpful. Email your nomination to [mnhv@lifetrack-mn.org](mailto:mnhv@lifetrack-mn.org) and include in the subject line "High Five Award". Please submit only one nomination per family per year. MNH&V High Five Award submissions information can be found at [www.mnhandsandvoices.org](http://www.mnhandsandvoices.org).

### Diana Chabot

Pearl Devenow nominated Diana Chabot for the MNH&V High Five Award in appreciation of Diana's passion in working with and supporting individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing (dhh). Some years ago Diana participated in an interpreter training program in order to become more involved with individuals who are dhh and the Deaf community.



2018 MNH&V High Five Award recipient, Diana Chabot, with Gabe and Pearl Devenow, and Laura Godfrey, MNH&V Program Manager.

About six years ago, after noticing Pearl's son, Gabe, who is profoundly deaf with additional disabilities, Diana introduced herself and over the years has continued to build a relationship with Gabe.

"Since their initial meeting, Diana has been a part of my son's life. Their acquaintance has led to a deep and abiding friendship that has made a significant difference my son's life," said Pearl.

Diana voluntarily interprets at events for Gabe, meets with him weekly for recreational activities, and helps him meet other individuals who are dhh or who know American Sign Language (ASL). Diana is involved and active in Gabe's life, as well as a number of other individuals who are dhh in the area. Not only is this amazing on its own, but Diana herself is a young woman with a disability that can cause anxiety in new situations. Despite this barrier, Diana puts herself out there time and time again for the sake of others.

"I would award Diana a High Ten Award if one exists, because one hand is not nearly enough credit for all that she does," added Pearl.



2018 MNH&V High Five Award recipient, Kitri Larson Kylo, with Curtis Knutson, Chief Executive Officer at Lifetrack, and Stephen Stadelman.

### Kitri Larson Kylo

Stephen Stadelman, father of a teenage

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son who is deaf, nominated Kitri Larson Kylo for the MNH&V High Five Award to show his gratitude for all she has meant to his family. Kitri retired a year ago after forty-plus years in education for students who are dhh.

“During her career in education she has had a huge positive impact in our lives,” said Stephen, “As well as the lives of countless other students and families.”

As Assistant Director of ISD 917 Deaf/Hard of Hearing Program, Kitri was the driving force in developing a unique program using both ASL and English through Cued Speech for students who are dhh. Kitri’s leadership was evident in the exceptional way the ISD 917 staff, consisting of over 70 people, carried out and embrace the program’s mission of achieving English literacy and embracing ASL.

Year after year in the program, even if IEP team members changed, the Stadelman family could rely on ISD 917 staff to be exceptional and professional. Kitri’s attention to details and consistent delivery of services provided them with an educational team who were well informed, uniformly trained, and creative in their approach to provide their son with an education that was best for him.

“We credit Kitri’s leadership and her commitment to this program model and to her staff for our son’s ability to succeed academically and for his love of both English and ASL,” added Stephen.

While Kitri had her eye on leading the ISD 917 program, she still made personal connections with families. Kitri actually knows the families in the program. Within the first week after the family contacted ISD 917, Kitri had set up in-home services, enrolled the family in Cued

English classes, and told them about an amazing organization called MNH&V and other networking opportunities. From the beginning she worked closely with the family to meet their son’s communication needs both at school and at home.

“My wife often says the community at ISD 917 has been like a warm blanket of support and we credit Kitri for leading by example,” added Stephen.

Over the years Kitri has tirelessly written articles, presented at conferences, offered workshops, and spent time one-on-one with educators and families to share her knowledge, and experience. She has volunteered her time and served on boards for many organizations that support families and students who are dhh.

“There is a long list of Kitri’s contributions and accomplishments that I am likely forgetting to include,” Stephen said, “But it is Kitri’s individual attention to our son and to every student she has had over the years that is truly exceptional. We will be forever grateful to Kitri for always having our son’s best interest at heart.”

### Pete Billodeau

Katie Schur nominated Pete Billodeau from Detroit Lakes for the MNH&V High Five Award for all he does for the community and for individuals who are dhh, even the youngest amongst them, and their families.

“He will probably hate the fact that I’m nominating him,” remarked Katie, “But he deserves some recognition.”

Katie Schur first met Pete a little over two years ago in February of 2017, when her daughter, Jillian, was born and first identified as dhh.

“Pete took to ‘Jilly’ immediately,” said Katie. When the family was unsuccessful

in finding ASL classes in their area, Pete, who is a certified ASL Interpreter and co-owns Certified Interpreting and Consulting (CIC) in Fergus Falls, MN, set up a community education class and has continued to give up his time every Monday night to teach ASL to anyone who is interested.

At the church where Katie’s family attends services, Pete will often step in to assist members who are deaf and fluent in ASL communicate with non-ASL members. Pete and his wife Lori also have organized a monthly family friendly Deaf community event at the church. The event is a great opportunity for individuals who are dhh and families with a child who is dhh to get together and interact over a shared meal.

“I have contacted Pete several times over the past two years with questions and concerns about Jillian, and he never hesitates to offer advice and a listening ear,” said Katie. “Pete’s friendship and obvious love for my daughter has been a very important support for me in a time I truly needed it!”



2018 MNH&V High Five Award recipient, Pete Billodeau, with Michelle Rolewitz, Lori (Pete’s wife), Nicholas, and Shannon Hohrman, MNH&V Northwest Parent Guide.



## MNH&V Events

### Saturday October 6th

“Daily Technology”

**1:00 pm to 3:00 pm**

Engwall's Corn Maze  
Hermantown, MN

### Thursday, October 11

“The Importance  
of Family Involvement”

**6:00 pm to 8:00 pm**

Lifetrack  
709 University Ave. W.  
St. Paul, MN 55104

### Saturday, October 13

“I Wish I Knew Then  
What I Know Now”:  
Students & Parents  
Share Insights

**10:00 am-12:00 pm**

546 5th Ave NE,  
Melrose, MN

### Saturday, October 13

“Deaf, DeafBlind and  
Hard of Hearing  
Student Transition Fair  
(For students ages 14+)”

**10:30 am to 2:30 pm**

Saint Paul College,  
St. Paul, MN

### Saturday, October 27

Topic TBD

**1:00 pm to 3:00 pm**

Paul Bunyon Land,  
Brainard, MN

### Saturday, December 8

Topic TBD

**1:00 pm to 3:00 pm**

Apollo High School  
1000 44th Ave. N.  
St. Cloud, MN

To register for an event go to  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/minnesota-hands-amp-voices-at-lifetrack-9882223703>

## Save the Dates

### Cue Meet-Ups!

Saturday, September 22, 10:00 to 11:00 am

Saturday, October 27, 10:00 to 11:00 am

Saturday, November 17, 10:00 to 11:00 am

Barnes & Nobles Starbucks  
1921 Promenade Place  
Eagan, MN

This is a chance for parents, family members, students, teachers, professionals transliterators, and anyone interested in practicing their cueing skills, meeting others who cue, and learning more about Cued Speech. All skills levels are welcome to join in and at least one person who is a knowledgeable cuer will be on hand to answer any questions. Fine tune your skills with practice while playing cueing games and gathering with other cuers.

Cue Meet-Ups is sponsored by the Cued Speech Association of Minnesota. If you have any questions please contact Carina by phone at 651-354-0247 or by email at [c.rina.fig@gmail.com](mailto:c.rina.fig@gmail.com).

## Customized Toys with Hearing Devices

### Hear Like Me on Etsy

Inclusive gift ideas for children who are dhh available through Etsy from Hear Like Me. Find figurines, dolls, action figures, and more fashioned with hearing devices of all different shapes, sizes, and colors. There is something for girls and boys from every ethnicity, as well as colorful hand-crafted bracelets and charms relating to topics of interest to individuals who are dhh or work in the community.

Etsy is a global online marketplace, where people from all over the country come together to make, sell, buy, and collect unique items.

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/HearLikeMe?ref=seller-platform-mcnav>



Mary McMenemy (right), from Woodbury Baptist Church, donated handmade blankets and handmade bears to be used to help welcome our newest MNH&V families. Thank you, Mary McMenemy, for your adorable and thoughtful donation.

## Thanks for your contribution!

We rely on your generous support to build better lives for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Make a tax-deductible donation today.

[DONATE](#)



## Resource-Packed Bimonthly Email and Website Offered by Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss

### Parent to Parent **POINTERS**

Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss (SSCHL) was created by Karen Anderson, PhD, as a resource meant for dhh educators with the idea of making practical information readily available. However, many of the topics, materials, and resources are relevant to anyone on your child's IEP team including (and especially) parents.

The mission of SSCHL is to provide information in order to improve the futures of children who are dhh. SSCHL maintains an online bank of free current information and resources. They publish high-quality, reasonably priced materials, webcasts, and products to support the success of students. SSCHL offers biennial conferences and professional presentations to improve teacher knowledge and instruction. They work to strengthen advocacy skills through information about student's rights in order to improve student communication access and appropriate levels of specialized instruction for students who are dhh. Their goal is for students who are dhh to have every opportunity to achieve at the level of their peers who are hearing.

Anyone is welcome to sign up, free of charge, for SSCHL bimonthly email updates which are packed with new and easy-to-read resource articles, current trends and statistics in dhh education.

In the SSCHL bimonthly email, materials, products, and website you will find more information on topics such as:

- Amplification
- Language & Speech Development Issues
- Legal Issues in Serving Children with Hearing Loss
- Listening (Auditory Skills) Development
- Self-Advocacy Skills for Students who are DHH
- Self-Concept: How the Child who is DHH Sees Himself
- Social Skills
- Speech Perception & Learning

Find out more about Karen Anderson, PhD, and the resources available through Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss at <https://successforkidswithhearingloss.com>

Sign up for Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss bimonthly email updates at <https://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/subscribe-for-email-alerts/>

## 2018 R. Orin Cornett Scholarship Recipient from Minnesota, Jhenna Becker

National Cued Speech Association (NCSA) announced that Jhenna Becker of Bloomington, MN is the recipient of the 2018 R. Orin Cornett Scholarship, an award worth \$1,000.

In her recommendation letter, Ms. Becker's Pastor said, "Last summer, I took a group of high school students, including Jhenna, to Chicago for a trip focused on service and learning in the city. Our group learned about what it means to do justice that is relational and sustainable, and I saw Jhenna grow significantly in her understanding of systemic issues and what her role might be in addressing them. She humbly listened to the leaders at our ministry sites, and sought to bring her whole self to every experience. Jhenna has a clear heart to serve, and the emotional and intellectual capacity to engage thoughtfully in that service."

Jhenna writes, "Because my parents started learning Cued Speech right away, I was able to learn English without much language delay and have become a successful student. I am so thankful for the benefit that accessing English through Cued Speech has brought to my life."

*Taken from National Cued Speech Association email newsletter, August 24, 2018.*

### The View from Greater Minnesota

MNH&V Event SE Minnesota — Little People, Big Feelings: Fostering Emotional Expression in young DHH Children, Quarry Hill Nature Center, Saturday, June 23, 2018





**Save the Date****2018 Cochlear Implant Celebration Picnic**

Sunday, September 30, 2018, from 10:30 am to 2:00 pm, in the large park pavilion at the Brookview Community Center Golf Course & Park located in Golden Valley.

This picnic is for adults and children with cochlear implants, prospective recipients, family members, and anyone curious about cochlear implants. This is a fun, family friendly event with food and children's activities. Families are asked to bring a salad, appetizer, or dessert to share. Provided are hot dogs, hamburgers, buns, condiments, nachos, popcorn, cotton candy, snow cones, water, coffee, plates, napkins, and silverware.

10:30 am — Children's activities begin

10:30 am to 1:30 pm — Children's Tent includes carnival games with prizes, face paint, arts and crafts and more.

Also, a decorating station for headpiece and coil covers will be available. Some covers will be provided, but feel free to bring your own covers to decorate or bring extra unused covers to donate.

11:30 am — Lunch is served

Ramsey Lions is providing the grilling equipment and grillmasters.

10:30 am to 12:30 pm — Surprise characters arrive for photo opportunities.

The 2018 Cochlear Implant Celebration picnic is sponsored by the Lions Multiple District 5M Hearing Foundation, the University of Minnesota Health Cochlear Implant Program, and the Lions Children's Hearing and ENT Clinic.

RSVP by Friday, September 21, 2018, to let them know the number of adults and children in your party and if you would like an interpreter. Contact Maureen Stormont by email at [mstormo1@fairview.org](mailto:mstormo1@fairview.org) or call 612-365-8312.

**Hands & Voices Website Download the IEP Meeting Planner and Find Other Useful Tools**

MNH&V families can find a wealth of information on many topics relevant to raising a child who is dhh at the Hands & Voices (H&V) website.

The "Hands & Voices IEP Meeting Planner" is a tool that was developed by Lisa Kovacs, (H&V HQ and H&V IN) to help families prepare and participate more effectively at their child's IEP meetings. It is an adaptation from the original "IEP Meeting Planner" developed by the National Center for Learning Disabilities, Inc., which gave H&V permission to use for this adaptation.

The planner is set up into three sections, and is useful for organizing your thoughts and paperwork to help prepare you to participate as an equal IEP member. For example the planner lists how to prepare

and what to do before, during, and after your child's IEP meeting.

**Before the meeting:**

- Reviewing your child's records and information sent from the school
- Networking with others
- Review procedural safeguards
- Learn the IEP form
- Request any draft IEP forms and developing your own parent report.

**During the meeting:**

- Arrive early
- Request to review your parent report
- Work as part of the IEP team to develop all required components of the IEP

**After the meeting:**

- Reviewing the IEP and the meeting purpose with your child
- Monitor progress of IEP implementation
- Communicate regularly with your child's IEP team

H&V provides information, training, advocacy support, parent-to-parent networking, a quarterly newspaper, The Communicator, website, special events and other activities designed to provide families with the information they need to make good choices for their children. They service both the local and national levels. Our chapters provide local and regional support consistent with the Hands & Voices non-biased philosophy and mission.

Free download of the "Hands & Voices IEP Meeting Planner" can be found at <http://www.handsandvoices.org/IEPmeetingplanner/iepmeetingplanner.pdf>

Hands & Voices website can be found at [www.handsandvoices.org/index.htm](http://www.handsandvoices.org/index.htm)


**The View from Greater Minnesota**


*New family from Central Minnesota, welcome to our MNH&V family.*



## More about Sheri Cook, the National Speaker at a MNH&V Event and The Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Student Transition Event in October



Sheri Cook, Director of Gallaudet University Regional Center for the Midwest

Sheri Cook will be the guest speaker on the topic of, “The Importance of Family Involvement” on Thursday, October 11, 6:00 to 8:00 pm at Lifetrack in St. Paul, MN, and the keynote speaker at the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Student Transition Event on Saturday, October 13th, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm at St. Paul College, St. Paul, MN.

Sheri Cook is a deaf woman who received her Bachelor’s degree in Deaf Education and a Master’s degree in Applied Linguistics. She taught children who

are dhh at the Wisconsin School for the Deaf and in Southern Illinois. Sheri was a consultant and trainer for the Illinois School for the Deaf Outreach Program and taught American Sign Language and Deaf Studies courses at John A. Logan College in Carterville, Illinois and at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois.

In the fall of 2010, Sheri became the new director of Gallaudet University Regional Center for the Midwest at John A. Logan College. She is currently serving 14 Midwest states and collaborates with many schools and programs to promote their connection with Gallaudet and the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center.

At another MNH&V event last May Sheri Cook presented on the topic, “Students who are DHH in Mainstream Schools”. MNH&V received the following feedback for parents and families who attended:

“Sheri – wonderful presentation – lively, humorous, meaningful content, etc.”

“This was a wonderful class. Even for people with older children or adult children. Well done!”

“The speaker was a rock star. So great to learn from. Held my attention and the

attention of my 10 year old.”

“I love Sheri’s presentation. She is super funny and realistic. I love the way she shared her experience as DHH student. LOVE her!”

The Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Student Transition Event is geared toward families with students ages 14 to 21. In addition to national speakers this event will have the National Deaf Center facilitate a Skype discussion, and a panel of young adults who are dhh will present on a variety of topics related to transition from high school to post-secondary options. There will be vendors and community partners on hand to share information and help explore the various services and accommodations available to support whatever next steps students choose.

Schedule a one-on-one meeting with a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. If you plan to meet with a Counselor contact Elise Knopf at [Elise.Knopf@state.mn.us](mailto:Elise.Knopf@state.mn.us)

If you have any questions please contact Anne Barlow, MNH&V Event Coordinator, at 651-265-2400 or by email at [MNHV@Lifetrack-mn.org](mailto:MNHV@Lifetrack-mn.org)

*More information about the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Student Transition Event found on page 8.*



MNH&V Family Event Metro — Keeping your Kids Safe Online: A Parent’s Guide, Lifetrack office in St. Paul, MN, Saturday, June 23, 2018



# 2018 Minnesota Hands & Voices Metro Family Picnic Photo Highlights







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709 University Ave. W.  
St. Paul, MN 55104

# FOCUS

NEWSLETTER

Minnesota Hands & Voices FOCUS Newsletter

September-October 2018

## DEAF, DEAFBLIND & HARD OF HEARING STUDENT TRANSITION EVENT

### FREE FOR FAMILIES

### AT THIS EVENT

- National speakers and a panel of individuals who are Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing
- Vendors and community partners who have resources for students who are Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing.
- Refreshments Provided

In collaboration with Minnesota Employment Center, MN  
Commission of Deaf, DeafBlind, & Hard of Hearing Minnesotans

*More information about the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Student Transition Event found on page 6.*

**WHEN:** Saturday, October 13th, 2018

**TIME:** 10:30 am to 2:30 pm

**WHERE:** St. Paul College, St. Paul, MN

### Questions?

Contact Anne Barlow, MNH&V Event  
Coordinator, at [MNHV@lifetrack-mn.org](mailto:MNHV@lifetrack-mn.org) or  
651-265-2400 or your preferred relay provider

### RSVP

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/deaf-deafblind-and-hard-of-hearing-student-transition-event-ages-14-tickets-45293161064>

**Supporting families with children who are deaf & hard of hearing**