

2024 Annual Report



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Dear Friends of DeafCAN! —

On behalf of our Church Council, we would like to share our 2024 Annual Report with you: our donors, consumers, and supporters. 2024 was a busy year for us as we worked hard to build and strengthen our structural foundation.

We were able to build a completely new website, logo, slogan, letterhead, and business cards. This resulted in many more contacts and referrals from the community while allowing us to share what we are doing in our different service programs. You can check us out at www.deafcanpa.org.

To help us handle the many office tasks, we hired a full-time Office/Finance Manager, Connie Wallace, to keep things running while consumers are being served. This included a new office number and email which you see on this letterhead. A new videophone kiosk was added to the lobby for use by consumers working with case managers.

At the same time, we have expanded our Council to add Atiya Mostardi as Secretary while Glenn Sparr and Roseann Hazirci will begin in January 2025. This also necessitates Board training to understand roles and responsibilities and learn to work together as a team.

We were pleased to be promised a \$30,000 grant from the West Chester Lions as we seek to build a hybrid classroom to accommodate expanding classes with students from different areas, states, and needs. Thank you, Lions!

We appreciate the generosity of our donors, and the 2024 Fall Appeal was heartwarming! You are our angels!! However, 2025, our 15th year, will be a challenge as the new federal administration promises to cut critical funding and benefits which will require extra hard work to close the gaps on services. Thank you for staying with us on the journey!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rev. Beth Lockard".

Rev. Beth Lockard, M.Ed.
Pastor and Executive Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Theresa Marple".

Theresa Marple
Council President

DeafCAN! Mission Statement

To provide a range of community supports to Deaf, hard of hearing, DeafBlind, and late-deafened people in need, especially the most vulnerable, who are often reluctant to go to others for help because of communication barriers.

Impact:

In 2024 we served 213 unduplicated individuals and their families with a wide variety of different services. This included deaf individuals who

- were assisted to find temporary or permanent housing, often with our own staff!
- were provided transportation, interpreting, and/or case management support.
- are DeafBlind from six counties, who were provided Support Service Provider (SSP) services at their homes and within their communities.
- were in the criminal justice system and were visited, advocated for, and provided literacy and decision-making sessions.
- were refugees/immigrants from 30+ countries who were provided sign language instruction, ESL, orientation, integration, and citizenship training.

Many others attended American Sign Language classes and/or were provided general information, referral, and advocacy.

New Slogan in 2024:

DeafCAN! reaches out and supports those most isolated and vulnerable with CARE and healing.

DeafCAN! utilizes different COMMUNICATION modes to enhance understanding so that individuals can develop a better quality of life.

DeafCAN! works hard to enable each person to CONNECT with others in family, work, medical, legal, and daily life experiences. We partner, collaborate, educate, and advocate to make those connections work.

By caring, communicating, and connecting, we empower each individual to reach their potential, meet others, develop relationships, and give back to their COMMUNITY.



Personal Snapshots:

CARE... For 23 years, we visited a Deaf man with intellectual disabilities (and many others) in state prison. He was released in 2022 and spent another two years at a halfway house in Philadelphia. We continued to visit and support him and the halfway house staff weekly with his healthcare needs, survival benefits, getting him a videophone, and helped him to adjust to the outside world until finally in 2024 he was transferred closer to his former home and family across the state. We **continue to stay in touch** by VP and Facetime. Help is often not once and done since communication barriers confront those we serve at literally every turn.

COMMUNICATE... A Deaf man with a challenging past was evicted from his apartment and we were called to assist. He was living in his car when several of his health conditions quickly and severely worsened and he was hospitalized. Upon discharge one of our staff families took him in for several months, while also assisting with healthcare appointments, food, clothing, employment, finances, family, and even legal support. Each step required **communicating and advocating** for his needs and expectations. After teaming with several other agencies, his health improved, other housing was found, and he continues to recover.

CONNECT... A young new Deaf citizen became pregnant with her first child. We helped to **connect her with an ASL interpreter** who was also a certified midwife. This “angel” also spoke to our women’s immigrant support group about women’s health issues and the American health system. The young parents are now happily and confidently expecting their baby in 2025.

COMMUNITY... In 1986, long before DeafCAN!, two of our key staff were contacted to help a Deaf refugee. Those staff members helped her with housing, socialization, food, clothing, starting her own family, and then beginning a job with Aramark at West Chester University. She is still working there, now owns her own condo and, for many years, has **given back to many others within our Deaf Community**.

2024 Highlights:

Throughout the year, we actively organize a diverse range of social and educational events aimed at providing support and fostering a sense of community for Deaf individuals and families. These include three levels of ASL classes, the annual Deaf Expo, monthly Family Nights, and activities for the DeafBlind Community.



Deaf Expo - Our 11th Annual Deaf Expo on April 27 came to West Chester on a chilly day but with many warm smiles! This highlights Deaf artisans, businesses, and organizations while gathering the community together for a fun day. This year we incorporated more information and discussion about DeafCAN!'s unique services with three workshops focused on our services with Deaf inmates and returning citizens, Deaf refugees, immigrants and asylees, and communicating with the DeafBlind Community.

Refugees/Immigrants/Asylees services

At right is Bill Lockard, our Program Manager with two young men from Brazil and Liberia. Arku, in the middle, became our newest American citizen in August. Benette, from Haiti, naturalized in June. We have worked with over 30 countries and assisted 13 individuals with US citizenship interviews. (All passed!)



Prison/Criminal Justice services

We continued regular visits to state (SCI Phoenix) and local jails for the first half of 2024, focused our time to reentry work the second half, while also planning how to reach more incarcerated Deaf at different prisons through remote visits and teaching. We began planning and fundraising for a customized hybrid classroom, while meeting with state and federal officials about how DeafCAN! could help them provide greater access and opportunity for their Deaf inmates. Without these classes in prison, Deaf inmates are much less prepared when they leave, and others choose to serve their maximum sentence to avoid misunderstanding parole/probation and being sent back for added sentences.



DeafBlind services

In addition to serving over 20 DeafBlind consumers in six counties with SSP services (navigation and communication support), we organized a summer picnic at Fort Washington State Park and our annual Holiday Social. Seen at left is one DB consumer, his SSP, and a deaf consumer with low vision.

Case Management Contracts with Chester and Delaware Counties

DeafCAN! has maintained contracts with both Chester and Delaware Counties for the last 15 years. After the closure of another agency in 2010, many Deaf individuals and their families were stranded and felt abandoned, so the Counties were eager to work with DeafCAN!, an organization that had long standing ties and a strong commitment to the Deaf Community.

In 2024, we worked together to develop an outcomes-based system to measure how our work was assisting those we serve to achieve their goals within 15 different social determinants of health. Those determinants are all affected by **COMMUNICATION**, which encompasses all those areas for those we serve.

**Our work is almost always assisting people to move
from isolation to community.**

2024: What Else is New?



Council Secretary - Atiya Mostardi



Office/Finance Manager - Connie Wallace

We are thrilled to have Atiya and Connie join us to strengthen our organization as we work to build and provide even more service.

New Website - We launched our new DeafCAN! website DEAFCANPA.ORG



New letterhead and logo -

DeafCAN! Staff

Executive Director: Beth Lockard; Office/Finance Manager: Connie Wallace; Program Director: Bill Lockard; Development: Bill Macdonald; SSP Coordinator: Scott Stoffel; Case Managers: Bobbi Caley, Kathie Gray-Plotkin, Beth & Bill Lockard; RIA Support: Bobbi Caley & Lockards; Prison Support: Bill Lockard; SSPs: Elaine Hockenbury, Bobbi Caley, Kathie Gray-Plotkin, Roxanne Lehr, Ellen Nunn, Amy Schoen, Debra Knerr, Ashley Shenk, and Bill Lockard; ASL Instructors: Bobbi Caley, Kathie Gray-Plotkin, & Beth Lockard; Interpreters: Debra Knerr & Bill Lockard.

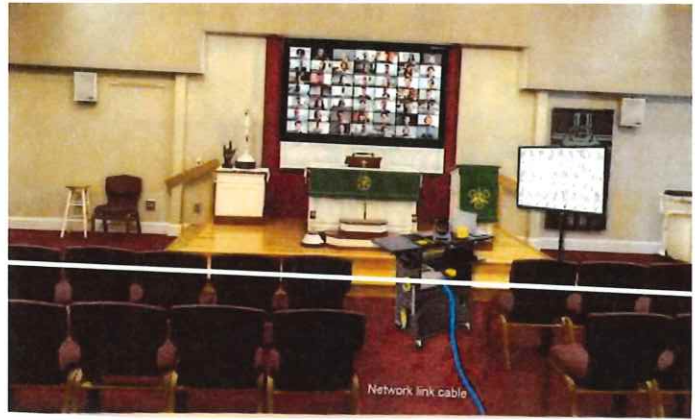
2024 Council

Theresa Marple, president
Evy Williams, treasurer
Atiya Mostardi, secretary
Annette Lin Ralph, Kathie Gray-Plotkin,
Leslie Wildermuth, & Rev. Beth Lockard



Looking Ahead...

Hybrid Classroom – We are at the design stage of ‘building’ a hybrid classroom complete with cameras and multi screens so that individuals who are unable to travel to our various classes can participate remotely. We hope to finish in Spring 2025. An additional goal for this classroom is to reach out to teach/train more health, human service, education, and criminal justice workers to be more prepared and effective when encountering Deaf, hard of hearing, and DeafBlind consumers.

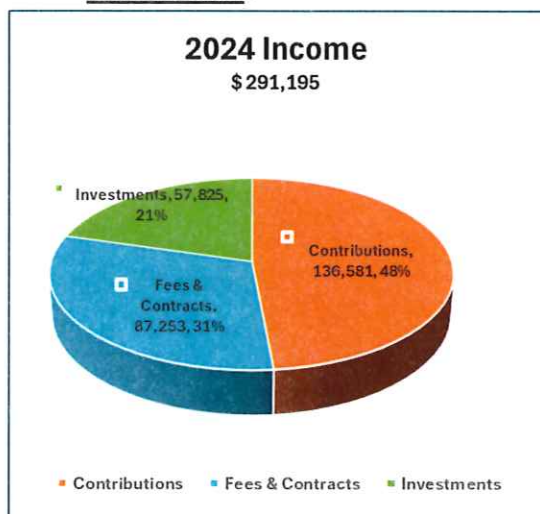


Housing - We have faced challenges in establishing transitional housing for Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals who are experiencing homelessness, exiting prison, escaping domestic violence, or affected by circumstances beyond their control. We have successfully provided housing ourselves for several individuals and are still pursuing committed accommodations.

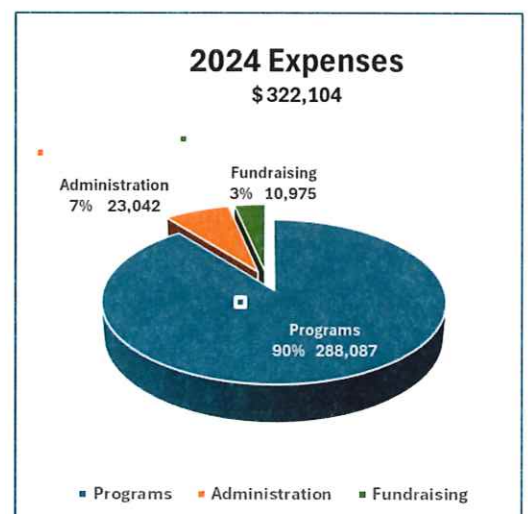
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Our Project 2025 for Good! - Next year DeafCAN! is excited to mark 15 years of supporting the Deaf Community. When you include our efforts at CHAD, that totals 30 years! A significant 50% of our funding is sourced from grants and the kindness of donors like you. We continue to be the sole organization in PA offering specialized services for deaf immigrants/refugees and inmates/returning citizens. Your referrals and financial contributions will enable us to reach our Project 2025 for Good! A heartfelt thank you from the DeafCAN! team!!

Financial:



For the 7th year in a row, our expenses were in line with our income although on the deficit side this year because of the one-time expense of launching a new website and hiring a new full-time employee. Overall we are on sound financial footing. **Total Assets = \$716,005 and Liabilities = \$6,804**



DeafCAN! 2024 Donors

Corporations, Trusts,

Foundations:

- ABHMS
- Anonymous
- Chester County Community Foundation
- Costco Wholesale
- James Herr Foundation
- Dolfinger – McMahon Foundation
- Google Inc.
- Independence Foundation
- Lindback, CR MF Foundation
- Employees of the Penn's Way Campaign
- Oberto Snacks, Inc.
- Scholler Foundation
- Speiser Foundation
- The Law Office of Douglas M. Watson

Organizations:

- Calvary Lutheran, West Chester
- SEPA Synod of ELCA
- HLAA of Chester County
- Lions Club of West Chester
- Lions Club of West Goshen
- Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville
- Word of Life Deaf Lutheran, Lancaster

\$1000 + Angels:

- Jis Ben
- William & Dona Greco
- James Herrick & Roxanne Lehr
- Annette Lin-Ralph
- Walton "Bud" Hill
- Lillian Hoshauer
- Lynne Israel
- Bill & Pr. Beth Lockard
- Jesse & Hillary Lockard
- Steve Lockard & Val Newpher-Lockard
- Dr. Christine McKee
- Todd & Christine Shelly
- Andrew Stender

- Scott Stoffel
- James & Barb Wakefield

\$500 + Sponsors:

- Dennis & Yvonne DePaul
- Bruce & Linda Firnhaber
- Cindy & Kurt Firnhaber
- Anthony & Dina Gentile
- Richard & Jane Hender
- John & Dr. Meg Lockard
- Randy & Cari Ronish
- Tyler Ronish
- Luke & Jessica Zubrod

\$300 + Partners:

- Karl & Dianne Buchholz
- Raymond & Bev Groff
- Bishop Peggy and Rev. Mary Johnson
- Donna Momorella
- Michael Mullin
- Cynthia Phillips

Other Friends:

- Carly Auchey
- Edward & Karen Bailey, Jr.
- Gail Bober
- Iris Boshes
- Heather Bubis
- Heather M. Cairo
- Kathleen Campbell
- William & Dorothy Campbell
- Eden Carlton
- Shelly Case & Gerry Geiss
- Ernest Crane
- Ruth Joy Darrell
- DeafBlind Community
- Mercy Doe
- Deborah Dubis
- Tommy Faix
- Katherine Gabry
- Kathie Gray-Plotkin
- Perry Plotkin
- Yvonne Gemerek
- Thomas Gibbs
- James & June Goodwin
- Roseann Hazirci
- Rick & Lisa Hellberg
- Patricia Hillkirk
- Elizabeth Hillman

- Margaret Huebner
- Joe/Mary Johnson
- Donald Jones
- Arku Jorgbor
- Doreen Kelley
- Rev. Gary & Debra Knerr
- Dennis Lalli
- Marie Lentz
- Alena Lockard
- Micah Lockard
- John Markowitz
- Suzanne Martin
- William Mau
- James & Elayne Mayrides
- Neil McDevitt
- Dave & Marge McHenry
- David Moyer Family
- Aileen Panzer
- Bill & Grace Pfeifer III
- Rachel Postovoit
- David Rink
- Donna Roppelt/Therese DeAngelis
- Tim & Barbara Sahr
- Gail Schrenk
- Fred Slack
- Nathan Smith
- Corky Sparr
- Conrad Strack
- Dick & Lucia Story
- Margaret Shu Teasdale
- Elliot Titcher
- Bob Tortora and Wojek
- David & Dartene Vlazny
- Ryan Vlazny
- Stefan & Connie Wallace
- Dennis & Eve West

In-Kind Interpreting:

- Corri Allison
- Elizabeth Hillman
- Doreen Kelley
- Debra Knerr
- Kate Nye
- Christine Shelly
- Ashi Siri

Others:

- Jacob LeVasseur
- BJ & Mary Reff

On behalf of our Council members, staff, and the families we serve, we extend our sincerest gratitude to all of you who helped make DeafCAN! possible. We have done our best to acknowledge everyone who contributed, and we sincerely apologize if we have inadvertently omitted anyone.