



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE September 21, 2020

Contact: Lisa Kovacs 303-492- 6283

FL3@handsandvoices.org

Hands & Voices FL3 Center adds Consultant to Support Diversity and Inclusion Innovations

Hands & Voices Family Leadership in Language and Learning Center (FL3) is pleased to announce a new position to support the work of the Center to identify, establish, and implement a Plan for Diversity and Inclusion that addresses the inclusion of underrepresented populations. This position will assist Hands & Voices with an increased focus on diversity with specific supports in the FL3's delivery of technical assistance, training, and education. Infusing supports to underrepresented populations is the goal for the FL3 Center in our resource development and dissemination, education and training, quality improvement methodology, evidence-based best practices, policy initiatives, and program partnerships. The Consultant hired for this position is Rosabel Agbayani.

Rosabel Agbayani (a child of Retired Navy Chief) lives in San Diego, California with her husband Mike and three children. Her son was identified as deaf at the age of 3. Rosabel's passion for working with families began in 2002 (long before she knew she would be a mother of a DHH Child) as she worked for a non-profit organization, Supportive Parents Information Network (SPIN) San Diego. Working with low-income families and at-risk youth from a variety of cultural backgrounds, she learned to understand the importance of family engagement and empowerment by building community capacity through education and advocacy. Her career in Healthcare Administration helped branch her knowledge and expertise in Quality Risk Management and Clinical Research. It was a natural shift, applying her life experiences both professionally and personally committing her time to understanding the unique needs of families raising a Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing child. Her educational background includes a Bachelor of Arts in Human Development, Bachelor of Science in Communicative Disorders & Deaf Education, and a master's in public health Specializing in Health Promotion. Rosabel has committed her time working with California Hands & Voices since 2013. She currently serves as the President of California Hands & Voices, and the Chair of the Special Education Community Advisory Committee for Poway Unified School District. She works for Rady Children's Hospital San Diego as the Lead Clinical Research Coordinator for the Department of Rheumatology. Rosabel's diverse and extensive background, experience and education, and her dedication to diversity and inclusion make her extremely well-suited to excel in and contribute to this position.

Hands & Voices Executive Director Janet DesGeorges is thrilled to be adding this expertise to the Center. "The FL3 Center has a vision for innovating support to underrepresented populations, so that all families have access to, and a system that works for, their individual needs. It's an honor to be working with Rosabel as a part of this project. Hands & Voices is committed to ensuring that all families and children are served according to their individual needs in an equitable manner, and that families receive the best possible resources and support to help them achieve their goals."

About Hands & Voices

Hands & Voices began in 1996 to join families and professionals in the discovery of *“What works for your child is what makes the choice right.”*tm The parent-led, non-profit organization is dedicated to supporting families with children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing without bias around communication modes or methodology. Their model has been replicated nationwide and globally in 47 chapters. Programs include Guide By Your Side (parent-to-parent support and DHH Adult-to-parent support); O.U.R. Project (children’s safety); ASTra (educational advocacy); Leadership-to-Leadership (parent leadership training); Deafed.net; leadership conferences, workshops, chapter support, and a clearinghouse of information and resources.

“This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number UJ1MC30748-04-00 for Family Leadership in Language And Learning. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.”