

HANDS & VOICES ANNUAL REPORT



HEADQUARTERS

2024



OUR MISSION

Hands & Voices is a parent-driven organization that supports families with children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing without a bias around communication modes or methodology.

OUR VISION

We envision a world where children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing have every opportunity to achieve their full potential.

OUR VALUES

- We envision an organization united by our mission in which each chapter exemplifies the Hands & Voices philosophy in its vision and culture. We all have a stake in each other's success. Hands & Voices will prosper only if each part is committed to the success of the other parts, and to the impact of our organization as a whole. We are a shared venture with vested ownership
- Organization is viewed as providing unbiased support for families & professionals through dissemination of information, outreach events, educational seminars, advocacy, lobbying efforts, & parent to parent networking
- Organization impacts professionals and systems
- Organization is financially viable
- Organization that supports informed family choices for their children who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing



GOVERNANCE

Emeritas Directors:

Christine Yoshinaga-Itano

Harold Johnson

Rick Hauan

Tony Ronco

Leeanne Seaver

More information about our Board [here](#).

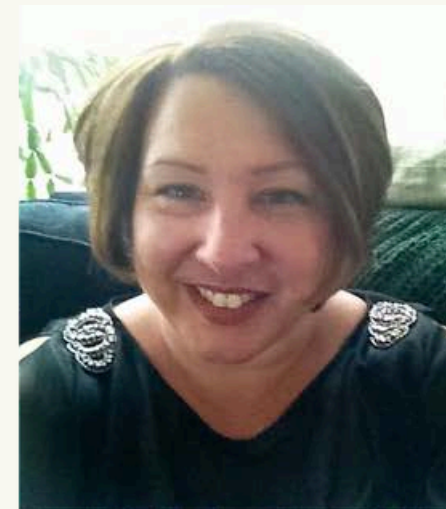


Janet DesGeorges,
Executive Director

MEET OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT HANDS & VOICES HEADQUARTERS



**Luisa Gasco-
Soboleski**



Tammy Breard



Rashaun Davis



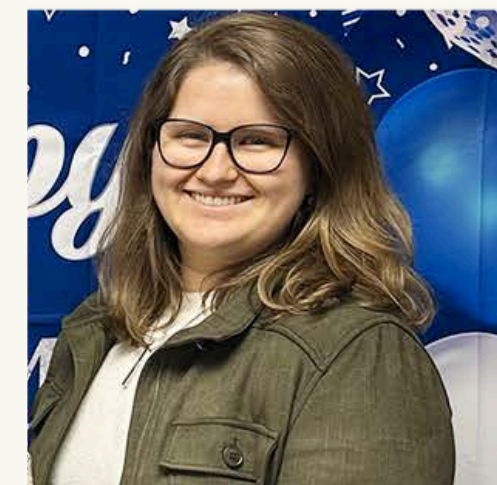
Anita Dowd



Karen Hopkins,
Board President



Cheryl Deconde Johnson



Lillian Diuble



Leslie Manjarrez

OUR CHAPTERS

OUR PARENT LEADERS ARE THE HEART AND SOUL OF OUR ORGANIZATION.



Hands & Voices has 45 Chapters in the U.S. and Canada. Our network of support through our chapters means families receive personalized, on the ground, local support, and resources to ensure success for their deaf/hard of hearing child.

“The chapter leaders continue to hold one another up. At one of our recent shop talk meetings, one member shared - ‘This is a group that lifts one another up and supports when any one of us may be struggling.’ Thank you friends.”

– Christine Griffin, Hands & Voices Regional Coordinator



H&V at a Glance

"What works for your child is what makes the choice right."™

Parent-Led Programs
Professionally Collaborative
Deaf/HH Infusion
Without a Bias around Communication
Modes or Methodology

Measures of Success:

- Improved quality of life for children who are deaf/hard of hearing and their families
- Improved educational outcomes for children who are D/HH through deaf education reform
- Improved Educational Advocacy efforts through parent/professional training
- Improved Educational Advocacy efforts through the question of which National movement which will once and for all get beyond the question of which communication philosophy is best for all D/HH individuals and will embrace the H&V value of "What works for your child is what makes the choice right."

51% of Chapter Board Members are parents

100% of Guide By Your Side and Advocacy Coordinators are parents

Deaf/Hard of Hearing Infusion is expected of Chapter Boards and Programs

Hands & Voices Chapters

For info on a new chapter and how to become a chapter leader, please contact: parentadvocate@handsandvoices.org

Innovative Programs

Guide By Your Side (GBYS)

- Evidence-based parent-to-parent support through specially trained Parent Guides and Deaf Guides
- Timely information dissemination & systems navigation for families
- Effective modeling from Parent Guides with lived experience parenting a child who is D/HH

Advocacy Support & Training (ASTra)

- Educational Advocacy Program for parents and professionals addressing the unique needs of students who are D/HH
- Belief that empowered families can learn to advocate effectively and independently
- Uncompromised commitment and unbiased support from trained ASTra Advocates to families according to their unique needs, priorities, and values

Leadership 2 Leadership (L2L)

- Year-long training for parents
- Learning domains include: Personal Leadership, Leading Others, and System Leadership
- Program design includes a variety of learning opportunities: Peer-to-Peer, Mentoring, and Reflective Learning
- Builds capacity and sustainability of parent leaders within the systems that serve children who are D/HH

Impact & Reach

Change Agents

Thought Leadership

H&V Projects: O.U.R. Children's Safety Project, Latino Council, Military Project, Deaf/HH Plus Group, EHDI P2P Committee, Fostering Joy

Collaborations: National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), The Radiant Middle, Hearing First, University of Colorado and more...

Resources Shared

Just-in-Time

E-blasts, Videos, Parent Handouts, Blog, Discussion Groups, Chapter & One-on-One Support, Resource Guides, Website, Social Media

Technical Support

Closing the Gaps

Office Hours, Strategic Planning, Content Expertise, Group Learning, Quality Improvement, Data Analysis, Nonprofit Support

F3 "Where love, learning, and language thrive"

Deaf/HH Involvement

- Dyett Guidelines for Deaf/Hard of Hearing Mentor/Guide/Role Model Programs
- Resources to inform the Parent Journey: Articles, Videos, Deaf/HH Infusion
- Tips for Meaningful Participation by Parents and Adults in EHDI

Partners and Collaborators

Family-Based Organizations: The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), The Cerebral Palsy Foundation, The Cerebral Palsy Foundation, The Cerebral Palsy Foundation

Professional Organizations: The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), The Cerebral Palsy Foundation, The Cerebral Palsy Foundation

Government Agencies: National Center on Hearing and Vision (NCHV), Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH) and more...

Language & Literacy Research and Resources

- Social-Emotional Development
- Language Development
- Early Literacy Development
- Parent Tip Sheets

Family to Family Support

- Checklist for Unbiased Support for Families
- Support, Information and Modeling
- Parent Event Guide

Parent Leadership

- Leadership Moments Videos
- Webinars:
 - Family Engagement in Systems Leadership
 - Building Confidence in Leadership & Public Speaking
 - Understanding your Leadership Style and the Value of Mentoring...and more to come.
- Parent Guide to D/HH Early Intervention Recommendations

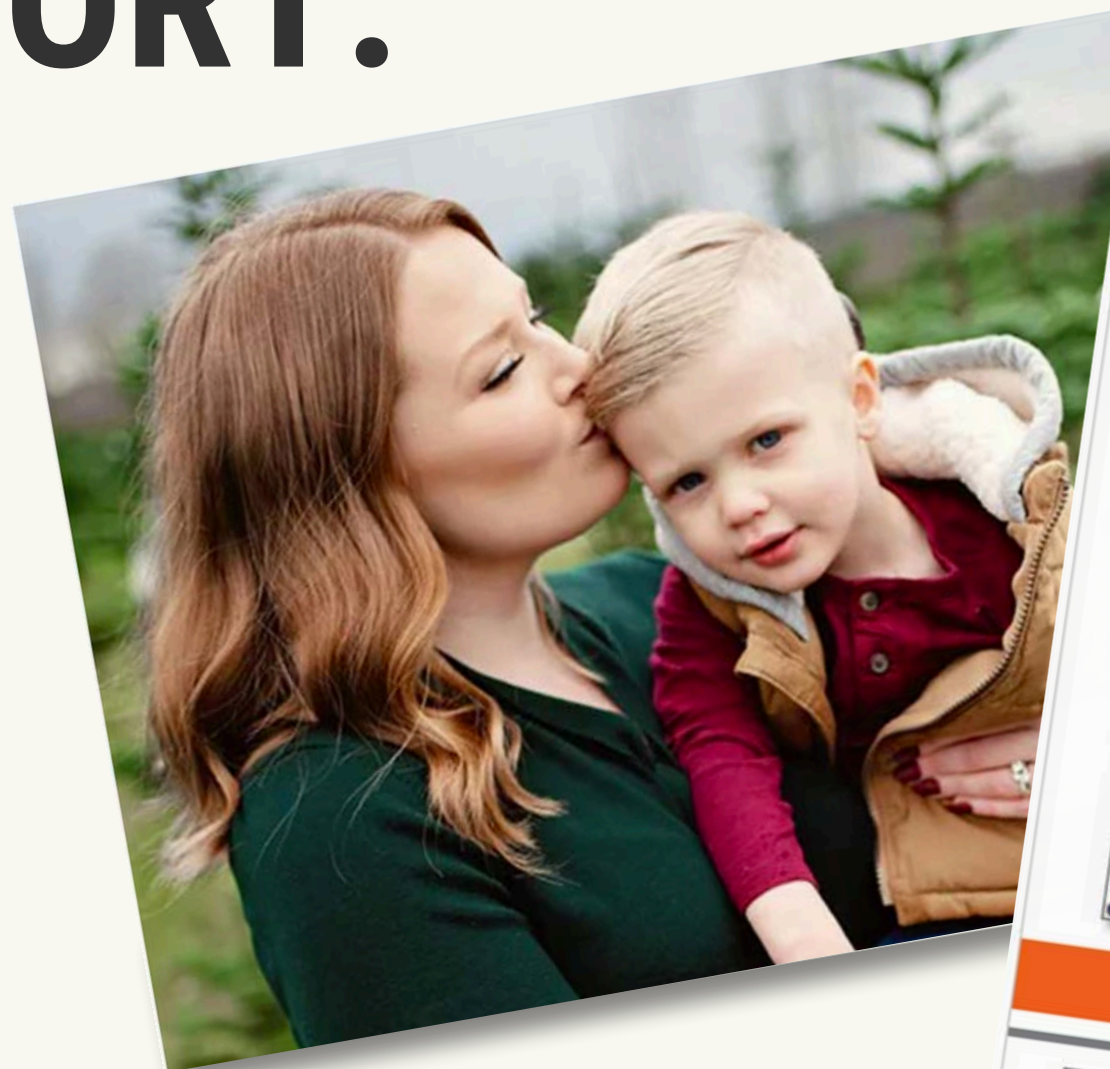
Join the movement. parentadvocate@handsandvoices.org www.handsandvoices.org

CHAPTER SUPPORT:

Programs:
L2L
GBYS
ASTra

Projects:
Latino Council
Fostering Joy
O.U.R. Project
Military Project

FL3 Center:
Innovation
Technical Assistance
National Partnerships
Training and Education
Communication and Dissemination



FL3 CENTER AT A GLANCE

"Where love, learning, and language thrive."

The purpose of the Family Leadership in Language and Learning (FL3) Center is to **provide technical support** to national, state and territory, and local Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) systems of care in order to **increase family engagement and leadership**, and to strengthen family support for families, parents, and caregivers with newborns, infants, and children up to 3 years of age who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH).

FL3 CENTER FOCUS

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT "FOR THEIR OWN CHILD"

- Language, Literacy & Social Development Tip Sheets
- Family Activity Plan
- Language Research Summaries
- Developmental Milestones
- How to find Family-to-Family and DHH Adult-to-Family Support
- Virtual Waiting Room
- 8 Reasons to Say Yes to EI

FAMILY LEADERSHIP "IN THE SYSTEM"

- 60 Second Leadership Tip Videos
- Leadership Book Club
- FL3 Office Hours
- Resources and Strategies
- Spotlight on Success - Promising Practices
- Partnership Continuum
- EHDI System Self-Assessment Tool
- LEAD Online Curriculum

FAMILY SUPPORT "FOR ONE ANOTHER"

- Family-to-Family Support / DHH Adult-to-Family Support Guidelines
- Checklist for Program Implementation of Unbiased Support
- A Case for Direct Referrals
- Parent Event Guide
- Learning Communities and Findings
- Family EHDI Data Project (FEHDI)
- Impact of Family Support and Engagement (IFSE)

And Much More

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

WEBINARS

DIVERSE FAMILY LEADERS: MAKING PROGRESS AND SHOWING YOU HOW!

ONLINE ACADEMY

ANNUAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

H&V Annual Leadership Conference

SAVE THE DATE!

From Why to How: Dive In!

Grand Rapids, MI

Email: fl3@handsandvoices.org
Website: handsandvoices.org/fl3/request-ta.html

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

What We've Done

- Hands & Voices Leadership Conference held October 2024 with 200 participants and increased diverse participation.
- Our Guide by Your Side (GBYS) program is now authorized in 22 state/province chapters. Our GBYS program connected personally with over 2500 families in 2024.
- Our Advocacy Support and Training (ASTra) program is available in 13 chapters. We are excited to participate in trainings throughout the year.
- Latino Support Council has increased leadership, forums, and materials on website.
- H&V Regional Coordinators served 6 geographical regions of North America and Canada for H&V Chapter interaction.
- Dissemination of online, accessible webinars, Latino Forums, Leadership to Leadership (L2L) mentorship, and Zoom Classes for Board/Chapter development with Office Hours and continued support to other family-based organizations.
- H&V Representation on national/international boards and committees.
- Expanded the ASTra Program with new webinars open to all.

Who We've Reached

Social Media/Website presence:

- Facebook: 21,308 followers over three pages and three private groups with 45,670 followers reported at the Chapter level.
- Hands & Voices also disseminates information on Instagram, Twitter and TikTok.
- www.handsandvoices.org had over 237,000 page views
- H&V E-News published cutting edge news six times a year disseminated to up to 11,500 people per issue.
- H&V provided technical assistance to families, family-based organizations, professionals and system stakeholders 45 times each month on average.

New Resources

- Off to a Great Start
- The Hands & Voices Communicator distributed to over 5,500 four times a year and the new H&V Library was designed to archive past articles.
- The Research section of the website connected 1,000's of parents to research studies and surveys.

“I was hanging in a bit of a limbo zone. So, it was like we know there’s something here, we just don’t know exactly to what extent it is.... I was an emotional wreck every time I had an ABR appointment. And we had several to get the complete picture. They were really hard on me. It feels like you’re reaching into the darkness, and you don’t know what exists out there, what this is going to be like and you’re desperate to find a bridge to something that will help you to feel more anchored. Once I was connected to another parent, it kind of gave me something to hold on to, it gave me a sense of grounding and then anchoring within this new normal for our family.”

– Family with a newly identified child

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SUPPORT

HANDS & VOICES WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR FUNDING PARTNERS, DONORS, AND ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS THAT ENSURE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF OUR WORK OF SUPPORTING FAMILIES WHO HAVE CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF/HARD OF HEARING.

FUNDED PARTNERSHIPS

- University of Colorado
- University of Kentucky
- Western University
- National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM)
- Oberkotter
- REAL Project (AIDB/CLERC)

SPONSORSHIPS

- Regeneron
- Med-el
- Akouos
- Gallaudet University
- National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID)/Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT)

FEDERAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

The Family Leadership in Language and Learning funded from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Thank you to all of our individual donors who faithfully support the organization.





“Today was the day. As a mom of a deaf child, I always wondered how his future would be. At some point, we felt overwhelmed, sad, and very hopeless. We remember those days that we couldn’t see a clear future for him. Today he left from our nest and found his own wings. It was hard to let him go, but we knew he was ready. He is ready because we didn’t let anyone dictate our choices, he is ready because we never let him feel less capable of doing something, because we worked days and nights incessantly to make sure he developed a language. He is ready because he had people around him that truly cared: teachers, audiologists, professionals. He is ready because we encouraged him to make friends, those that last forever, because he took advantage of every moment. This is just a new beginning, there is still a lot more to do, only that this time he will do it by himself, he will advocate for himself, and he will become a man. We are very proud of our brave boy, he has come a long way! He has embraced life with such positivity and humbleness that is contagious, I think because he didn’t need good ears to hear, he hears with his heart and for us that is a miracle!”



WWW. HANDSANDVOICES.ORG



PARENTADVOCATE@HANDSANDVOICES.ORG

