

**THE HEARING AND
SPEECH AGENCY**

The Hearing and Speech Agency (HASA) is a private, nonprofit organization established in 1926 that provides hearing and speech services, special education and sign-language and oral interpretation.

HASA's THREE DIVISIONS

Gateway School

A nonpublic school for children ages 3 to 12 with hearing loss, speech and language disorders and developmental delays including autism.

Clinical Services

Offers adult and pediatric audiology, speech-language evaluations and therapy as well as occupational and physical therapy.

Centralized Interpreter Referral Service (CIRS)

Provides American Sign Language and oral interpretation services throughout Maryland for employers, schools, government and businesses.

For information or to make an appointment, please contact us at 410-318-6780 or www.hasa.org.



The Extra Mile

Two years ago, Sergio Rios, a top student at Coppin Academy High School in West Baltimore, developed an infection called sarcoidosis that led to temporary blindness and progressive hearing loss. At first, Sergio lost hearing in his right ear, which couldn't be corrected with a hearing aid. But he retained some hearing in his left, so his mother brought him to The Hearing and Speech Agency for a left-side hearing aid.

A few months later, they returned saying that the hearing aid did not seem to be working properly. Sun Young Lee, HASA's pediatric audiologist, examined the hearing aid and determined that it worked fine. A hearing test showed that Sergio's hearing had declined. In fact, he had become almost completely deaf.

Sergio was a candidate for cochlear implant surgery. A cochlear implant is a surgically implanted electronic device that provides a sense of sound to patients who are profoundly deaf or hard-of-hearing. But there was one problem: Sergio and his family had no insurance.

"Here was a young person, who had been hearing until age 15, so he didn't miss out on language development," explains Sun Young Lee. "I knew that the cochlear implant was going to have a huge impact on his future—and not getting one would close so many doors for this very bright teenager."

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Sun Young was determined to help. She found a program that would donate the cochlear implant device, but Sergio's family would have to pay for the surgery and associated services out of pocket, which was impossible. She contacted professionals both at HASA and in the community for ideas and discovered that Children's Medical Services might be able to help him. Sun Young put Sergio and his mother in touch with someone at Children's Medical Services who walked them through the application process.

"We were so grateful that Sun Young Lee cared so much about our situation," says Sergio's mother, Susanna Rios. "When she explained to us how critical the cochlear implant would be to Sergio's future, it was like we all became a team to help him."

Last week, The Hearing and Speech Agency got word that Sergio's application for medical services was accepted and that plans for the surgery can proceed.

For information about audiology services at The Hearing and Speech Agency please call 410-318-6780.

50-by-50

Help us Complete our New Playground in Time for our 50th Anniversary Celebration in 2010

We're building a new playground and tricycle path for our Gateway students! The Hearing and Speech Agency is hoping to raise \$50,000 to finish the playground in time for Gateway School's 50th Anniversary in April, 2010. With your help, we can reach our goal.



slide that children with cochlear implants can use without damage to their hearing device from static electricity.

Thankfully, HASA has received a generous challenge grant from the France-Merrick Foundation for completion of the new

playground. Contributions given during our 50-by-50 challenge will be matched, dollar-for-dollar, by the France-Merrick Foundation.

"We are excited about building a new playground," says Executive Director Susan Glasgow. "A stimulating, safe playground will provide opportunities for Gateway children to improve their social skills, physical development and language abilities."

For information about donating to our 50-by-50 Campaign please call Helen Snyder at 410-318-6780.

HASA's Gateway School serves children ages 3 to 12 with communication disorders including hearing loss, autism-spectrum disorders and speech-language disorders. Our old playground has served us well, but we are raising money for one that is carefully planned for special-needs students. The surface will be safe and the equipment will be appropriate for all ages of children at Gateway. Plans include swings, a climber and a stainless-steel

WAYS TO GIVE

Your generosity is greatly appreciated by the 4,000 infants, children and adults served by The Hearing and Speech Agency each year. Please consider supporting the work of The Hearing and Speech Agency through:

- Check
- Credit Card
- Recurring Gifts
- Memorial/Honor Gifts
- Gifts-in-Kind
- Bequests
- Matching Gift Programs
- Named Endowments
- Wills
- Online Donations (www.hasa.org)

All contributions are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

For more information, contact Helen Snyder, Director of Development at 410-318-6780 or hsnyder@hasa.org.

Join us Online!

This issue of "HearSay" is our last paper version. From the next issue onward, you will receive our eNewsletter. But we need your e-mail address!

Please join our family of e-mail subscribers. Visit our website at www.hasa.org and scroll down to the **Sign Up for HASAeNews** box.

While you're on our home page, please click on the "Take our Survey" link. We would love to hear from you.

One Donor's Vision

A Generation Impacted

In January 2004, through the vision and support of Mrs. Ann Bosworth, The Hearing and Speech Agency (HASA) opened the Baltimore area's only auditory/oral preschool program to prepare children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing to succeed in mainstream elementary schools.

Mrs. Bosworth grew up with three deaf family members. All of them attended Clarke School for the Deaf in Northampton, MA, where the auditory/oral method is used to teach children how to communicate through spoken language rather than with sign language or lip reading. Mrs. Bosworth's strong belief in the value of this teaching method for children with hearing loss made her determined to establish a program in Baltimore.

They have been given an excellent foundation that will serve them well as they continue to live and learn with their hearing peers.

"Our preschool program started with just two children," explains Mrs. Bosworth. "HASA hired an outstanding director, Heather Eisgrau, to build the program from the ground up." Heather, a certified Teacher of the Deaf, earned her Master's Degree at Smith College in Northampton, MA. Before joining The Hearing and Speech Agency, Heather trained and taught at the Clarke School for the Deaf.

"Many of the children who come to Gateway have been working with HASA experts since infancy," explains Heather. "Others have had no intervention and have heard very little spoken language. They arrive soon after their cochlear implant surgery or with brand new hearing aids. We're helping all of them make up for lost time."

Like a typical preschool, Gateway's Auditory/Oral Program has a cute tagline: "Little Ears, Big Voices."



Ann Bosworth contributed funds to establish The Hearing and Speech Agency's Auditory/Oral Center in 2004.

The classroom is bright and colorful and when teachers and children are together, the atmosphere is warm. But the academics are serious. Every story, game or song is an opportunity for teaching communication on several levels. Time spent playing with the doll house, for example, is also time spent learning to talk about items in categories, such as "living room furniture" or describing the sequence of daily activities.

This year, Gateway School's Auditory/Oral Preschool Program marks its five-year anniversary. Graduates have become capable students at mainstream elementary schools, often exceeding their hearing peers academically. In addition to this special curriculum for children, The Auditory/Oral Program at Gateway School provides a valuable training resource for oral/deaf educators and speech-language pathologists.

"The best reward," says Mrs. Bosworth, "is seeing a child graduate from the Gateway program speaking, listening, communicating and functioning happily in the hearing world. They have been given an excellent foundation that will serve them well as they continue to live and learn with their hearing peers."

For information about the Gateway School please call 410-318-6780.

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Every year, parents who are deaf call on The Hearing and Speech Agency to provide interpreters to aid communication during the birth of their children. Our Centralized Interpreter Referral Service (CIRS) is the largest provider of American Sign Language and Oral Interpretation in Maryland and the only one operated by a nonprofit. During the last fiscal year alone, CIRS served 1,562 individuals and families, helping them to communicate with healthcare professionals, understand and be understood in courts of law, succeed in classrooms and communicate during job interviews.

Workplace Giving

The Hearing and Speech Agency is a nonprofit organization that relies on its generous donors. Please consider designating us through workplace giving opportunities:

- United Way: #051
- Combined Federal Campaign: #67475
- Combined Charity Campaign: #8051



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