PHILIPPINE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE MIRIAM SANTIAGO’S REMARKS ARE INTERPRETED FOR DEAF VIEWERS DURING A DEBATE ON APRIL 24.
Sign language and Deaf culture recently received tremendous national visibility in the United States when Nyle DiMarco won “Dancing with the Stars,” building on his success as the Season 22 winner of “America’s Next Top Model.” Nyle has consistently shared a core message about the importance of language acquisition for Deaf children. The Nyle DiMarco Foundation points to critical statistics from the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) and other sources that identify the unacceptable language deprivation of Deaf children. We congratulate Nyle DiMarco on his success and his fearless leadership in promoting sign language throughout the world.

Like DiMarco, DDW envisions a global community of sign language users who can acquire education, pursue careers, and live lives comparable to their non-Deaf peers. We staunchly support the United Nations Convention on People with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which calls for the recognition and promotion of sign language as a human right.

Our belief in the principles outlined by the UNCRPD and WFD is reinforced by seeing those who benefit from our approach. During trainings, it is priceless to see participants’ expressions when they grasp and embrace new concepts in their language. Each Deaf person appreciates not only the powerful knowledge gained, but even more importantly, the emotional connection with the DDW trainer.

DDW continues to make incredible strides in pursuit of our goals, thanks to our dedicated board and volunteers. We recently bid farewell to four amazing people whose contributions shaped DDW’s foundation and upward trajectory: Bryan Hensel, Stacey Miller, Madan Vasishtha, and Donalda Ammons. I have had the incredible privilege of serving alongside each of them, who are leaders within their respective communities. Thank you, Bryan, Stacey, Madan, and Donalda, for your service to the international Deaf community.

Our search for talented board members to fill their shoes led us to Sophie Betts, Melissa Malzkuhn, Steve Titlebaum, Tommie Sarchet, and Roz Rosen. They will ensure that we continue to carry the beacon of hope for a future where Deaf people, regardless of social or economic background, are perceived as people who possess the capacity to succeed.

Continued on page 11
Deaf Filipinos Achieve Access to Elections

By Carolyn B. Dagnai
President, Philippine Federation of the Deaf

The Philippine general elections held on May 9 were very important for Deaf Filipinos. The Philippine Federation of the Deaf (PFD) worked with other disability groups to include Deaf people in the 2016 election, providing disability sensitivity materials for the first time. There were several Deaf voter education campaigns led by Deaf people. Deaf people learned about the candidates’ platforms and goals when four of the five televised presidential and vice presidential debates had sign language interpreter TV insets. On election day, there were Deaf volunteer poll monitors.

It all started in November 2015, when disability group leaders met at Bay Leaf Hotel in Manila to discuss election accessibility issues and how to present them to the Commission on Elections (COMELEC). The COMELEC enforces all laws and regulations on elections in the Philippines. Participants included me, Marilou Agbay and Jesdelton Romo of PFD, Hazel Bual of National Anti-Poverty Council, and Patrick Bolanos and Jerryll Reyes of Fully Abled Nation (FAN). FAN is run by the Asia Foundation with support from the Australian Embassy, and aims to increase the participation of people with disabilities in elections and governance.

The group went to Palacio de Gobernador in Intramuros to meet with COMELEC Chairman Andres Bautista and his staff; the press was also there. I asked if there would be sign language interpreters at accessible polling places in local malls; registered voters with disabilities can vote early in those locations. Bautista answered that COMELEC would pay for the interpreters. A local TV station shared this on Twitter and it spread within a few minutes.

On Jan. 4, PFD Youth Section President Raymond J. Manding and I attended a meeting regarding materials and sensitivity to people with disabilities. The old videos and guides only focused on people who were blind or wheelchair users, had cerebral palsy, or were senior citizens. We requested that information about Deaf voters be included in the guide, and that the video be captioned. With the support of the Asia Foundation and the Australian Embassy, the updated version included important tips on how to accommodate Deaf voters. After the meeting, the group went to Palacio de Gobernador to meet with COMELEC representatives. I reminded COMELEC about providing interpreting services during the election debates and at polling places. Bautista gave me a thumbs-up in front of the audience, which included the media.

In early February, I learned that the first presidential debate was scheduled on Feb. 21 in Cagayan de Oro, Mindanao. PFD emailed COMELEC requesting a sign language interpreter be shown on TV. We did not receive a reply, and the debate was not interpreted.
On Feb. 29, FAN had another meeting to review the sensitivity materials. I spoke with COMELEC staff and Bolanos, sharing that Bautista had not responded to our request. The COMELEC staff explained that Bautista had been busy and apologized; Bolanos offered to help PFD for the next debate, in partnership with ABS-CBN, the biggest media company in the Philippines.

On March 17, Bolanos contacted me about meeting with ABS-CBN. We discussed plans for the third presidential debate scheduled for April 24 in Dagupan. Meanwhile, there was difficulty in finding interpreters for the second debate on March 20 in Cebu. I quickly contacted PFD board member Marilou Agbay, who recommended names of interpreters in Cebu. I texted the names to Jerryll Reyes, who flew to Cebu to arrange for interpreters.

Later, I learned that while Philippine Accessible Deaf Services worked with the local station, Deaf people were not consulted about the on-screen display of interpreters. The Filipino Deaf community shared negative feedback on Facebook about the size of the interpreter on screen; the inset display made it difficult to follow the interpreter. On March 30, I went to the FAN/TAF office to meet with Bolanos and Reyes. FAN wanted to help Deaf voters exercise their right to vote, and offered to sponsor the venue and meals for a workshop.

Bolanos and Reyes asked about what strategies and activities to include in the workshop. I suggested that when presenting to Deaf voters, to use basic terminology for clear understanding, more visual aids, and sample ballot forms so they know where to write when voting.

There were 30 participants in the Deaf Voters Education workshop held on April 23 at Oakwood Premier in Ortigas. Bolanos asked COMELEC to bring in a vote counting machine to show the participants, many of who were seeing the machine for the first time. FAN sponsored the venue, meals, speakers, and FSL interpreters. The participants received copies of Right to Vote Election 2013, and PFD received 500 copies of a training guide for distribution.

Meanwhile, De La Salle-College of St. Benilde (DLS-CSB) School of Deaf Education and Applied Studies people held Deaf voter education workshops in Metropolitan Manila. They also produced a video for Deaf people, showing how to choose a candidate for the presidential debate! It was very challenging, since some of the candidates spoke very fast. Others spoke in Tagalog so the interpreter had to translate from Tagalog to English to Filipino Sign Language.

The feedback on the first vice presidential debate was very positive. This was the first time CNN Philippines provided an interpreter onscreen. In fact, World CNN and CNN USA only provide captions. Our work with CNN became the model for the next presidential and vice presidential debates.

On April 10, PFD Secretary Henry Perey and I went to CNN LIVE News studio accompanied by three experienced interpreters, Tess Buenaventura, Jojo Esposa, and Jun Celada, to observe the TV broadcast production. Bolanos met us there. Romo and I were consulted about the name signs for the vice presidential candidates, and verified the display size for the interpreters, along with background color and interpreter attire.

We checked the set up and were satisfied. The interpreters did an outstanding job interpreting the live vice presidential debate! It was very challenging, since some of the candidates spoke very fast. Others spoke in Tagalog so the interpreter had to translate from Tagalog to English to Filipino Sign Language.

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The second vice presidential debate took place on April 17 in Dagupan, Luzon, and the third was also held in Dagupan, on April 24. Both were successful. ABS-CBN made a promotional video (available at www.goo.gl/3CWpRf) encouraging Deaf people to watch the debate. PFD will continue to work with FAN to make sure that Deaf Filipinos fully participate in the election process. We are grateful to Patrick Bolanos and CNN Philippines for this opportunity to collaborate.

On May 5, Aldrin Calimlim of CNN Philippines Life interviewed Bolanos and me about interpreters shown on-screen for the presidential and vice presidential debates; more is at www.goo.gl/NNl6FP

In the past, most Deaf Filipinos depended on family members to help them on election day. This time, with the help of AKAP (a cross-disability organization), Deaf monitors were assigned to every city of the national capitol region. I served as a monitor coordinator for the Deaf group with six Deaf monitor volunteers from Deaf Association of Caloocan City, Deaf Manila Association, Pinoy Deaf Rainbow and Quezon City Association of the Deaf. Most of the volunteers worked a few hours on May 9, while I worked until the close of the polls.

PFD plans to write a letter to CNN Philippines asking for continued access so Deaf Filipinos can access the news on a regular basis. PFD will also continue to advocate for daily equality.

I want to thank DDW for showing us the way. All of these successes would not be possible without the DDW training and workshops my fellow Deaf leaders and I received. The workshops gave me courage and confidence in my work with PFD, Deaf Filipinos, and the hearing community.

My heart is full, and I am smiling widely.

Check the PFD Facebook page for more posts and pictures about the 2016 Philippines election at www.facebook.com/PFDpage.

Special thanks to DDW Board Secretary Men-cie Hairston for her support with this article.
Welcome, New DDW Board Members!

Sophie Betts holds a bachelor’s degree in religious studies and master’s degree in Deaf studies. She has worked abroad in the Philippines through the Center of Global Education at Gallaudet University. She also studied and worked abroad at the Ål Folkehøyskole og Kurssenter for Døve in Norway, and provided administrative support for the World Federation of the Deaf in 2011. Sophie was born in Cambodia and is a first-generation American raised in the South. She currently resides in New York City.

Melissa Malzkuhn is a storyteller, digital strategist, and creative director fascinated by languages, word play, and interactive technologies. The creative director of Motion Light Lab, she directs the development of research-based products, including award-winning bilingual storybook apps designed for early language acquisition for Deaf children. She received her MFA in visual narrative from the School of Visual Arts, and her master’s degree in Deaf studies from Gallaudet University. Her thesis on the advocacy and community organizing of deaf youth in America led to the establishment of Deaf Youth USA in 2008. She served on the World Federation of the Deaf Youth Section board from 2007 until 2011, and has helped organize national and international camps, given presentations and workshops on differing generations, Deaf culture and history, and the global movement of deaf youth. She is also the founder of Ink & Salt, a creative productions company, and a lead developer of the ASL App.

Roslyn “Roz” Rosen, Ph.D., is wearing a new hat as a retiree. She was previously the director of the National Center on Deafness at California State University, Northridge, and the principal investigator for the Postsecondary Education Network (PN2). Before that, she was a faculty member, dean and vice president of academic affairs at Gallaudet University. Roz’s leadership and community service include serving as a board member and/or officer with the National Association of the Deaf, the World Federation of the Deaf, and the American Society of Deaf Children. She is on the core team of the national LEAD-K advocacy coalition, an expert consultant on education for NAD and WFD, and a board member of the West Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind, as well as a lifetime honorary WFD board member. She has authored articles and is active as a presenter, trainer, and activist.

Thomastine A. Sarchet is a research associate professor at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). Currently pursuing her doctorate in teaching and curriculum at the University of Rochester, her research focuses on international partnerships for deaf education development projects. Tommie is the associate director of the Pre-College Education Network, an international grant project funded by the Nippon Foundation of Japan. She coordinates operations and activities between partner organizations. She also has significant experience in leading project development and implementation, conducting workshops and courses to teachers. She is also responsible for recruiting and supervising other consultants to lead specialized trainings in each country. In addition, she teaches undergraduate and graduate courses, and mentors graduate students for their capstone projects.

Steven Titlebaum is a nonprofit management professional with over 20 years of experience, including 15 years of direct fundraising experience. Most recently, he worked at Gallaudet University, as its director of development. Previously, he was the director of resource development for Capital Caring. He also led the Development Department for the Center for Science in the Public Interest. During his first stint at Gallaudet, he was the associate director of major and planned gifts.

Steven serves on the board of DAWN, formerly Deaf Abused Women’s Network. He also has served on the board of the Association of Fundraising Professionals D.C. Chapter. He has a master’s degree in human services administration from Spertus College, and is a Certified Fundraising Executive.
By Jamie Munro

On April 15, DDW successfully hosted its Sixth Annual Benefit, again at the Harro East Ballroom in Rochester. Due to the incredible generosity of key sponsors and over 320 guests, DDW exceeded expectations by raising over $39,000. The Rochester community continues to show its support in full force year after year by extending a warm welcome for all out-of-town visitors and by continuing to embrace DDW’s mission of advancing signing communities around the globe.

The evening featured presentations by key speakers and honored guests. Delicious appetizers, hearty spirits, and lively conversations were enjoyed by all. Performing troupe Illuminair Entertainment from Toronto headlined the evening with a spectacular show of death-defying and dazzling aerial acts from towering heights.

Executive Director Davin Searls and International Programs Director David Justice shared examples of the impact of DDW’s capacity-building efforts in the Philippines. Today, as a result of DDW’s efforts, the PFD team is developing future Deaf advocates, ensuring that the organization remains strong and sustainable with a succession of capable leaders. Board President Shane Feldman recognized Scot Atkins, Ph.D., with the Service Provider of the Year award for his invaluable organizational development consulting work with DDW. Monroe County Executive Cheryl Dinolfo shared inspirational words about the incredible passion that the DDW leadership, board, and volunteers have demonstrated.

The event was made possible by sponsors and local businesses. DDW extends its deepest appreciation to key sponsors: RIT/NTID, Center on Access Technology at NTID, Justice Property Services, NY Relay Services, Nixon Peabody, Wegmans, and Phillips Lytle, LLP. Over 70 local businesses and individuals collectively contributed over $5,000 in door prizes and silent auction items.

DDW continues to depend on its incredible vast network of volunteers, who came together to demonstrate an amazing spirit of teamwork, making sure that everyone was treated like a rock star during the event. As Atkins eloquently shared in his acceptance speech, DDW volunteers are allowing “their inner light to glow and to be the mirror for other individuals and organizations, encouraging them to share their gifts with others.” DDW graciously thanks all its volunteers for their contributions.

DDW looks forward to seeing everyone again in 2017!

To view photos from this event, visit www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10153577101606724.1073741843.39157771723&type=3.
“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more do more and become more, YOU ARE A LEADER.” – John Quincy Adams

The National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID) at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), enrolls an average of over 30 international Deaf students each year. Currently, there are Deaf students from Tanzania, Jordan, India, the Philippines, Myanmar, Jamaica, Nigeria, Nepal, Malaysia, Trinidad, and Tobago, Ghana, and more. Upon graduation, many of these students will return home as one of only a few Deaf people in their countries with a college degree. Often, they are thrown into leadership positions with expectations and responsibilities far beyond those of the typical college graduate.

They may be asked to serve as officers for their national associations, to meet with and advise their governments on accessibility issues in the education system and bills related to sign language use and its recognition in their country, to teach other Deaf people in their cities and provinces who never otherwise would receive an education, to serve as role models and cultural facilitators between the Deaf and hearing worlds, and to advocate for Deaf people’s human, cultural, and linguistic rights. The list goes on and on.

All too often, Deaf people are pushed aside, left in isolation, and restricted from participating in the decisions that impact their lives. These international students have come to NTID because they believe they can make a difference and prove what Deaf people truly are capable of. Education is a powerful tool for breaking down barriers of ignorance and showing the true potential that every person in our society can contribute to and benefit our collective society.

For the next 10 months, with support from the Nippon Foundation under the NTID Sasakawa-DeCaro Scholarship, NTID’s International Educational Outreach, along with DDW’s Executive Director, Davin Searls, and DDW’s International Programs Director, David Justice, will launch the Global Readiness Leadership (GRL) program. The objective of this pilot program is to prepare international Deaf students at NTID to serve as leaders who are committed to the betterment of their home communities and Deaf people around the world in collaboration with local and international Deaf advocacy organizations.

Through the GRL program, these students will participate in several two-day intensive sessions focused on needs assessments, goal prioritization, strategic planning, and action planning. In addition, they will receive direct training on disability law and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, leadership and advocacy, government lobbying, and organizational development. All direct training topics will be selected based on the results of the initial goal prioritization activity with students facilitated by Searls and Justice of DDW.

We look forward to working with these ambitious students, whose actions have already inspired us to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more!

For more information, please contact David Justice at djustice@discoveringdeafworlds.org.
City of Rochester Mayor Lovely Warren, recognizing that Rochester, N.Y., hosts one of the largest Deaf communities in the country, has been seeking input from the local Deaf community to discuss how the city can better serve, include, and celebrate the Deaf community.

On April 20, DDW staff members met with Donald Starver, Deputy Director for the City of Rochester Bureau of Communications, and Tiana Stephens, Associate Communications Assistant, to discuss Deaf-related events and Deaf Awareness Week in September. They also delivered feedback on access and interpreting services for events at City Hall and throughout the community. Another topic discussed was the need for job development, job placement, and early intervention programs for Deaf people.

It is refreshing to see how Mayor Warren and the City of Rochester are taking the initiative to both improve access and highlight the unique culture and talents of Rochester’s Deaf community — an example for cities and governments worldwide. DDW is proud to call Rochester home!

H3 Network Media Alliance has released a new “Travel with Dawn” series exploring the country of Turkey on the H3 World TV website. This Internet series is presented in International Sign with English subtitles.

Dawn Jani Birley hosts this 22-part series exploring tourist landmarks and introduces Deaf residents in Turkey who share their culture and occupations. Viewers are also introduced to Turkish cuisine, art and crafts, history, beauty, religion, myths and archaeology.

A new episode is shown every two weeks. “Travel with Dawn: Turkey” was produced in collaboration with Anatolian Deaf Foundation and the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Filming took place over six weeks in Istanbul, Ephesus, Bodrum and the South Aegean, Antalya and the Turquoise Coast, Ankara and Central Anatolia, Black Sea Coast and Cappadocia.

For more, visit www.H3world.tv.

Far away there in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not reach them, but I can look up and see their beauty, believe in them, and try to follow where they lead.

– Louisa May Alcott
I’ve noticed something about people who make a difference in the world: They hold the unshakable conviction that individuals are extremely important and that every life matters. They get excited over one smile. They are willing to feed one stomach, educate one mind, and treat one wound. They aren’t determined to revolutionize the world all at once; they’re satisfied with small changes. Over time, though, the small changes add up. Sometimes they even transform cities, nations, and yes, the world.

– Beth Clark
Continued from page 2

The DDW board recently came together on April 16 to focus on DDW’s short-term future and to celebrate the successful completion of the USAID EX-PAND grant in the Philippines. This grant exceeded expectations and plotted the course for DDW’s future. Watch for exciting news regarding new opportunities, grants, and partnerships from DDW soon. DDW’s future is bright!

I also want to give a shout out to the incredible Rochester community, which once again came together to demonstrate their support for our cause at the April benefit gala. We will continue the tradition of bringing the DDW Gala to Washington, D.C., a city that brings together key leaders in the international development and Deaf communities. If you want to support DDW and connect with leaders investing in the welfare of the Deaf community, please save the date of the gala: Saturday, Nov. 5, 2016. Watch DDW’s social media channels and website for more details.

In light of the heightened visibility that sign language and the Deaf community have received through Nyle DiMarco and so many other remarkable breakthroughs by Deaf people who continue to defy expectations, we must take to heart what one of my heroes, Nelson Mandela, shared: “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Thank you to each person who has contributed toward this noble goal, and for your support for DDW in our pursuit of this goal. Together, we shall change the world.

DDW’s Davin Searls Selected to WFD Expert Group on Human Rights

DDW Executive Director Davin Searls was officially selected on April 25 to serve as an expert member of the World Federation of the Deaf Expert Group on Human Rights. Searls and other group members will be asked to provide technical aid and advice to the WFD Secretariat and WFD Ordinary Members, as well as represent WFD at various meetings, seminars, and conferences. Congratulations, Davin!

The WFD is an international non-governmental federation of deaf organizations from 132 nations. Its mission is to promote the human rights of deaf people and full, quality and equal access to all spheres of life, including self-determination, sign language, education, employment, and community life. WFD has a consultative status in the United Nations and is a member of International Disability Alliance.

More information is at www.wfdeaf.org.

/DDW’s Davin Searls Selected to WFD Expert Group on Human Rights

We have it in our power to begin the world over again.

– Thomas Paine
Joni Henderson, Christopher Soukup, David McCloskey, Richard Smith, Lynn and Ken Finton, Aaryn Adams, LiXuan He, Shane Feldman, Brian Plath, Martin and Suzi Oppenheimer, John and Sheila Justice, Daniel and Suzan Bugosh: Your generous support has had an outstanding impact on DDW’s work and expansion. Thank you for believing in us!

Erin Moriarty Harrelson and Paul Harrelson: Thank you for opening up your home and your hearts, giving your friends in Washington, D.C., an opportunity to learn about DDW. You are most gracious and generous hosts!

Frank Kruppenbacher: Thanks for sharing your genius eye and talent as our annual benefit photographer. We appreciate your capture of groundbreaking moments!

Aaryn Adams, Jim Brown, Lauren Dearman, Matthew Disch, Sam Gibson, Colleen Grabenstetter, Chris Kelley, Kim Kelstone, Miriam Lerner, Campbell McDermid, Christine McQuaid, Aliza Meyer, Patrick Michael, and Peter Reeb: We are blessed to have your support. Thank you for your excellent services to provide equal access at our events and meetings. You are appreciated!

Jamie Munro: You are a rock star. Thank you for your amazing leadership and coordination of the show at our annual benefit. And thank you to our amazing volunteer committee: Miko Aruyata, Nay Aung, Katie Brown, Shannon Connell, Wendy Dannels, Tate DeCaro, Erin Finton, Sarah Gordon, Chris MacMaster, Clara Therese Marasigm, Brian Milburn, Adam Nadolski, Jeff Neable, Maria Nikolaou, Yuliya Novosad, Susan Rizzo, Rick Rizzo, Kim Siebert, Adrianna Smart, Dani Stoskopf, and Sheena Stuart. This event would not be possible without your help!

Cheryl Dinolfo: Thank you for making the time to join us at our benefit and for your encouraging words and support to our guests. It is an honor to have Monroe County’s support behind our efforts.

Illuminair Entertainment: How kind of you to trek all the way to Rochester from Toronto to perform at our benefit. Thank you for your dazzling aerial performance!

Mary Kay Hargather and the Harro East Staff: Another fantastic year! Thank you for all that you do to host our event — you have been a pure joy to work with year after year.