

ASLIA NATIONAL CONFERENCE, BRISBANE 2010

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FUND

'Supporting interpreters around the world'



**The Creating Opportunities Fund (COF) was established by ASLIA National for our –
“... colleagues from the income-poor countries of our region, who have much to gain”.**

Liz Scott-Gibson, World Association of Signed Language Interpreters, PRESIDENT

This fund provides ASLIA members, supporters, other individuals and organisations with the opportunity to assist signed language interpreting colleagues in countries less developed than ours.

Assistance in this context means providing funds that will allow colleagues from income poor countries to attend the Australian Sign Language Interpreters' Association National Conference in 2010, and to support them to:

- *Develop a network of contacts that can offer training, support, information and advice;*
- *Advocate and participate in discussions that affect their work;*
- *Contribute in discussions that affect our profession;*
- *Share experiences and exchange information.*

We are proud to be sponsoring seven sign language interpreters this year, from Fiji, PNG, India, Nepal, Serbia and Samoa. You will read their stories and we are sure that they will touch your heart. We know you will understand that they have written their stories themselves and that English is, in some cases, their fourth or fifth language.

For more information and their personal stories, please read on!!

The 2010 Creating Opportunities Fund

All donations to the COF 2010 will be used to support the 7 interpreters to attend ANC 2010.

What will be funded: The COF will cover costs for the interpreters to attend the ASLIA National Conference & Interpreter Trainers' Workshop. This includes travel costs, Visa costs, and accommodation and conference fees.

Requirements of funded individuals: The sponsored interpreters will share their insights with local interpreters & Deaf communities on their return, and will provide ASLIA with feedback on how the event was of benefit in their country.

DONATIONS CLOSE Monday 16 AUGUST 2010

*** All Donations are tax deductible ***

ASLIA National has arranged a partnership with the NSW Deaf Society, which enables all donations to be tax deductible. Receipts will be sent to your email address from 'NSW Deaf Society' by September 2010.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FUND

'Supporting interpreters around the world'

HERE ARE SOME WAYS THAT YOU OR YOUR ORGANISATION CAN SUPPORT TO THE
'CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FUND' FOR THE ANC 2010:

◇ **GIVE A DAY'S PAY OR . . . A HALF DAY'S PAY IN JULY & AUGUST 2010**

Participation is voluntary . . . there is no compulsion or obligation on anyone

Donation forms are available now!

◇ **ORGANISATIONS AND/OR INDIVIDUALS MAY WISH TO MAKE A SINGLE DONATION.**

Donation forms are available now!

◇ **AND THEN THERE'S 'PROSPERITY', OUR PIGGY BANK.**

Contact Susan Emerson/ASLIA to purchase - You can take her home for \$10.00 . . .and . . .donate her savings too

She's available now!



You will see her at all of our ASLIA meetings & events

'Prosperity' came to her name because in a number of cultures the pig is a symbol of good luck, wealth and prosperity.
(Hong-key Yoon. (2006)*The culture of fengshui in Korea: an exploration of East Asian geomancy.* Lexington)

You can donate to the COF by:

Mail, direct bank transfer or bank deposit. You'll find the details below

◇ **Cheque/Money Order to be mailed to:**

COF Donation - Deaf Society of NSW

PO Box 1060

Parramatta, NSW 2124

Cheques and money orders made payable to:

Deaf Society of NSW

(please include your email or postal address for receipts)

◇ **Direct Bank Transfer OR cash deposit at Bank Branch***

Account Name: Deaf Society of NSW

Reference: (Your Name) & COF

BSB Number: 062 227

Account No: 10094666

***Payment Reference**

If paying directly into our bank account (either at a branch or via online banking), it is important that you include the following reference: YOUR **SURNAME + INITIAL + STATE (e.g. SMITH J NSW) + COF** to appear on our bank statement. If we cannot verify your payment, your donation cannot be recorded or acknowledged.

When you have sent or deposited your donation PLEASE email slemerson87@hotmail.com so your donation can be reconciled with monies received.

Sabina Kore

Papua New Guinea



Hello! My name is Ms Sabina Kore. I work as a signed language interpreter and sign language teacher for deaf children at the Cheshire Home (Disability Services). I first got involved with the interpreting work in July, 2007. The interpretation work and sign language was learnt through a friend who knows the sign language and interpretation. I learnt most of the skills through reading and studying the Melanesian Sign Language book.

The deaf community of Papua New Guinea has been denied of the basic services, e.g.: education and the deaf people themselves do not know their rights and privileges. These have to be deliberated through major education and awareness programs which I am responsible for.

As such, a lot of work is to be done in all aspects from the grass roots (people who do not have much) level to the top levels (politicians) in the attempts to give opportunities and chances to people who are deaf to be equally benefited and participate with the hearing people of Papua New Guinea.

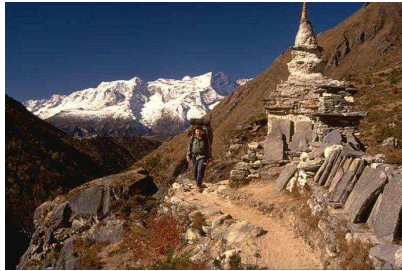
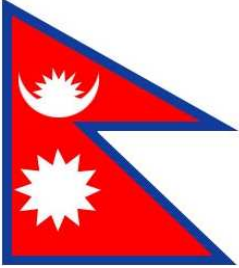
If I was afforded the great opportunity to attend the Australian Sign Language Interpreters' Association Conference in Brisbane later this year, I hope to learn, grasp bright ideas and skills from people who are well trained and skilled, and these are the Australian interpreters. They are well trained and skilled. I believe I would learn a lot from other colleagues who are from Australia and other neighboring countries.

Upon return from the conference, I would conduct mini training session/in-services to fellow workers so we can put impact to the deaf community back here at Cheshire Home (disability services and surrounding communities).



Laxmi Devkota

Nepal



My name is Laxmi Devkota. I live in Nepal. I am the first child of my family. We are six members in our family. All are hearing except for one of my younger sisters. She is deaf. When we were small we used "natural sign" to communicate with her. When my sister's friend (he is also Deaf) came to our home, he advised me to learn sign language for good communication with my sister. In 2004 I enrolled in a Nepali Sign Language (NSL) class for better communication with my sister. After having NSL training, I felt easy to understand my sister. At that time I did not have any idea to become an interpreter. After four months of NSL training, Mr. Raghav Bir Joshi, former President of Nepal National Federation of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, currently he is a member of constituent Assembly and raising voices for legal provisions of rights of deaf people. Mr. Joshi encouraged me to take an interpreting job, and I have been interpreting since then. Now I work at the Nepal National Federation of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NFDH). I am very happy to be working with Deaf people on a daily basis.

In Nepal the situation of the deaf is difficult due to the lack of awareness in society about Deaf people. Hearing People don't understand what it means to be a Deaf. Hearing people think that Deaf cannot speak because they have no tongue, some people think that people are born deaf because their sinned work in a previous life.

Deaf people are among the most marginalized and there is very little educational service to them. There are a few schools for the deaf and also some classes for the deaf are in hearing schools. Some teachers sign well but many sign very poor. Also there are many deaf children whose families are poor and they can't afford to send their children to a deaf school and schools are far from their home. Only limited deaf adults have found jobs. We do have deaf leaders and they are working very hard to improve the situation for the deaf. Deaf movement in Nepal is primitive stage. Sign language Interpreters have vital role for the promotion of deaf people's movement.

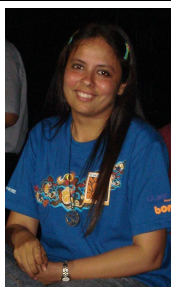
I love interpreting because I can help to bridge the communication gap between deaf and hearing people, and help deaf people advocate for themselves. But our jobs are very difficult in the context of Nepal. We do not have any special training for interpreters. We take a Nepali Sign Language class for four months and then we must learn while doing the job." It is like putting a chicken in a pond to learn how to swim". Also there are limited numbers of interpreters in Nepal. We must perform interpretation in many different situations.

I have interpreted at constituent Assembly, conferences, workshops, hospitals, government offices, job interviews, and for deaf students at +2 hearing schools. Once I had to interpret in court for a deaf person who did not know Nepali Sign Language, so I used "natural sign," another time I was called to the police station to solve a problem between two deaf people. Sometimes if a deaf person has a conflict with hearing family members, I interpret. But we do not have a formal interpreter association, so people must arrange for interpreters through the deaf organization or on their own. In emergencies they will contact me directly, even at night. Also deaf people cannot afford to pay for interpreters, so we work for no payment.

I want to attend the ASLIA National Conference to learn more about current developments in the interpreting field to help interpreters and deaf people here in Nepal. I hope to especially gain knowledge about how to be a better interpreter. For example, in a professional setting, how should interpreters and deaf people behave with each other? What rules and regulations should we have? As well as the chance of making good networks and increase international cooperation.

Monica Punjabi

India



About myself – I am 28 years old, luckily first certified interpreter of India (2004) from National Institute of the Hearing Handicapped (AYJNIHH) and Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI). Also had lucky chance and first exposure to see the interpreters' world at (GIS) Gallaudet University, USA when I was there on my internship in 2007. Am B.Com (commerce graduate) and a B.Ed (special educator of the hearing impaired).

My Parents – Dr. Usha Punjabi and Rajkumar Punjabi. Both my parents are Deaf and are the founder and run the association and school for the deaf for 36 years. This is one of the best schools in India having around 500 deaf students studying here from all over India. We have also started the college for the deaf two years back. Rest vocational and co curricular activities go on at a national level. This is the only school in India founded and run by the Deaf couple themselves. This is an NGO, and runs by the help of donations (for building, maintenance, infrastructure etc) and government grant (salary) to the staff.

I started working in the school at the age of 16 (initially part time) and now since past few years I am the coordinator of the ISL department and the cultural department where we produce interpreters and the ISL teacher trainers. While doing my ISL interpreters course from the first batch I learnt about the term interpreter and the term coda also the term Indian sign language. This entire world was very new for me. Still the millions of Indian deaf signing since their childhood do not know about their sign language as the full fledged language having grammar. Also the interpreter services thing is unknown to the deaf and hearing community in India. Since last few years some awareness has taken place but yet India is too backward than the other countries.

Status of interpreters – I am the first interpreter produced by Sibaji Sir. There are just a few certified interpreters in India (around 10) that too who have undergone (the available) maximum one year course of ISL interpreters training. There is no post/ jobs of interpreters, so the deaf community do not get any interpreter services at public, medical, academic or legal set ups.

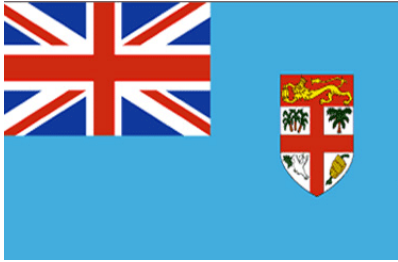
Many deaf go to the general school without any interpreter services, nor the teachers sign. The deaf going to the special schools get to learn to sign amongst the deaf but most of the schools in India are oral schools, who hate sign language.

We few certified interpreters get chance to do our jobs very rarely only in some national conferences etc. now we ask for payment so we get around 800 to 1000 rupees per day. No payment for the traveling hours (even in two+two days train journey). Such conferences take place only 3 or 4 times in a year. Since many years I and Gourav being codas have to stand for interpreting continuously for hours without any payment. And we still do it in daily life for free. Actually the interpreter profession is yet to come in India.



Tina Mareu

Fiji



Bula,

My name is Tina Mareu from Fiji. I became involved with the Deaf community in 1997 but was always interested with sign language at a very early age. After graduating at a Bible College and spending the internship year with Mrs Vivienne Harland, who was a missionary to the Deaf, I had the opportunity to continue assisting her in her 'home turned hostel.'

I learnt a great deal of the Deaf Culture from her and the deaf adults who frequented her house which was back then a point of contact for the Deaf community. I also learnt from two deaf missionary couples from Nigeria; Matthew Adedeji and Wale Alade and their wives.

I was exposed to different settings and places as the community at large became more and more fascinated with these two young intelligent deaf men from Nigeria, who went about vigorously advocating and creating awareness for the Deaf. My interpreting skills developed much to their credit and because they didn't have much choice back then. I am grateful to them for their patience as I was so very ignorant of the code of ethics.

I feel very privileged to have witnessed the establishment of a deaf school and hostels, the early beginnings of a Deaf Church, the launching of the Fiji Association for the Deaf and the Interpreters Association.

I taught at the Gospel School for the Deaf from 1999 to 2006. My husband and I became hostel parents from 2007 – 2009 and have since moved on to start our little family of three. The interpreting opportunities also included church meetings, seminars and workshops, visits to hospitals, schools, and police and in court cases, job and visa interviews, family functions, graduations etc...

There is still so much more to learn and also our interpreting committee has grown in its members and there's the need to keep ourselves up to par as to what is happening with other fellow interpreters and the Deaf Community around the world.

Thank you.

