



Innovation Project Application

Library: Bay County Public Library

Project Manager: Sarah M. Burris

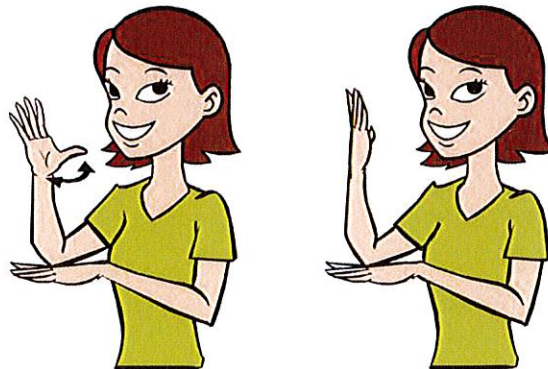
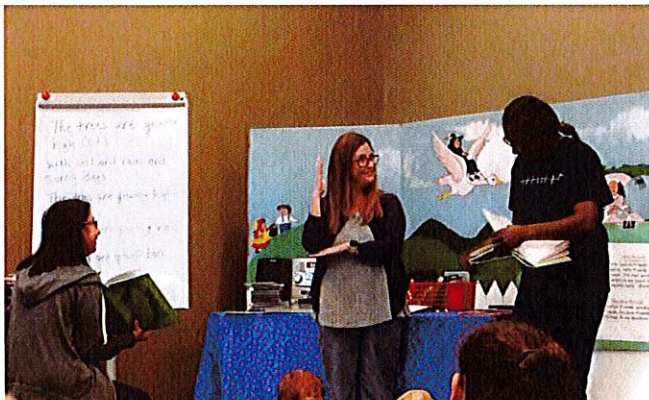
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Name of Project: Bridging the Deaf and Hearing Communities

Project Amount requested: \$1,800

Scope of the Project:

The scope of the "Bridging the Deaf and Hearing Communities" project is to provide American Sign Language (ASL) and Deaf Culture programs and improve our ASL resources available for circulation at the Bay County Public Library.



Rhonda Eernisse signing *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein. Tree in American Sign Language.

What need in the library/community will this project address?

The Bay County Public Library, which serves as the headquarters for the Northwest Regional Library System, has received requests from community members, both families with deaf children and the general public, to provide American Sign Language classes. The library has partnered with Rhonda Eernisse and Mary Therese Garcia to lead two American Sign Language programs this past summer. Both women are deaf and this has further highlighted the need to increase deaf awareness and resources. "Bridging the Deaf and Hearing Communities" project would help strengthen relationships between both communities in Bay County.

The "Bridging the Deaf and Hearing Communities" project would provide funding for presenters fees, scheduling interpreters, as well as DVDs and book resources focused on American Sign Language and

Deaf Culture for the circulating Northwest Regional Library System collection. The library hopes to offer a minimum of 6 programs to teach American Sign Language and/or introduce Deaf Culture. This will allow us to begin fostering a better relationship between the hearing and deaf communities, and recognize what needs are being unmet. Rhonda and Mary Therese would like to continue their partnership. The library has additional partners and presenters in mind to help facilitate the project's goal. Any programs that include an interpreter would be advertised as such to increase overall accessibility in programming.

American Sign Language is the third most commonly used language in the United States. American Sign Language classes and resources would help decrease the communication gap. In examining our library collection, many of our circulating items for learning American Sign Language are older and could be replaced with more current materials. DVDs are a great way to learn American Sign Language since video can incorporate movement, placement and facial expressions. Adding more titles in the collection that are written by deaf authors would also increase awareness and inclusivity.

Resources required and budget (NOTE: for items whose unit price exceeds \$500, 3 quotes are required or an indication that the vendor is sole source.):

DVDs, Books, and resources that teach American Sign Language or about Deaf Culture: estimate **\$600**

- *SigningTime* DVDs: \$20 per DVD.
- Titles for our eBook collection
- *Baby Sign Language Basics: Early Communication for Hearing Babies and Toddlers*, 3rd Edition By Monta Briant (2018) \$15.43
- *Baby Sign Language Flash Cards: A Deck of 50 American Sign Language (ASL) Cards* by Monta Briant (\$20 per deck) for the ASL/Baby Sign Language classes.

Program Presenters and Interpreter fees: estimate **\$1200**

Goal will be to be able to host a minimum of 6 programs at the Bay County Public Library.

- Program ASL instructor fees for 1 hour classes – All ages ASL (afternoon/evening class) and Baby Sign Language programs (morning class, caretaker and 0 – 5 years).
- Interpreters from the Disability Resource Center are a minimum of \$100 for a 1 – 2 hour program. <https://www.drcpc.org/> If we partner with Mary Therese and Rhonda, they require an interpreter to be able to teach classes to deaf and hearing patrons.
- Deaf Culture evening program with interpreter provided. One idea would be a screening of *Born this Way: Deaf Out Loud* (A&E) with guest speaker and interpreters. This program would be designed to introduce Deaf Culture.

Activities/Timeline (include estimated completion date):

- Purchase ASL materials for the library collection – estimated order by March 2020.
- Design timeline for Spring ASL classes and Baby Sign Language classes – Starting March 2020 and finishing by May 2020.
- Summer “Deaf Night at the Library” program.
- “Bridging the Deaf and Hearing Communities” programming to be completed by July 2020.

How will the library sustain this project?

The Northwest Regional Library System hopes to better serve patrons with disabilities by creating an inviting environment for all patrons. The long-term plan is to continually reassess what can benefit the library’s underserved populations, and help make the library accessible for all.

Library Director’s signature: Robin Sladen Date: 10/14/19

Amy R Cooper Date: 10/16/19
Signature of agent, office, or board to whom the Director reports

For PLAN use only:

Approved _____ Not Approved _____

PLAN Executive Director _____