

wide audience so far and to help promoting the “deaf cause” in our country.

In 2010, Deaf TV got a new modern visual image. Our web portal also enables interactivity: evaluation and recommendation of stories. From the beginning of 2012, our multimedia contents are also embellished by new introductions. At the professional level we strive for constant improvements, positive influence on Slovenian disability policy and extension of our program scheme - also in international sign.

Watch us at www.deaf-tv.si.

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EUROPE

On 15 March 2012, the European Platform on Deafness, Hard of Hearing, and Deafblindness met to discuss its future collaboration. The Platform formally agreed on the name and adopted the text of the agreement, which will be signed at the General Assembly of the European Disability Forum (EDF) in May.

The Platform is a co-operation between five European NGOs:

1. EURO-CIU: European Association of Cochlear Implant Users;
2. EDbN: European Deafblind Network;
3. EFHOH: European Federation of Hard of Hearing;
4. FEPEDA: European Federation of Parents of Hearing Impaired Children;
5. EUD: European Union of the Deaf

The Platform aims to meet regularly to defend the rights of d/Deaf (including sign language users), hard of hearing, deafened, and deafblind people and their families. It wants to send a strong message of collaboration to enhance the lobbying effects for all its members to ensure a barrier-free Europe. It follows the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and wants to influence the proposed European Accessibility Act to include the rights of all persons who are d/Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deafened, or deafblind, regardless of the assistive technologies they use, or whether they use sign language.

Source: European Union of the Deaf (EUD)

USA

In October of 2011 the Gallaudet University Museum opened an exhibition entitled Making a Difference: Deaf Peace Corps Volunteers. Development was on a tight schedule, mostly because we thought it would be a simple and small concept to present. Initially the exhibition idea was “Deaf people served in the Peace Corps too.” As Volunteers started to respond to the call for photographs and information, it became clear that their experience was far more complex and compelling than could fit on one wall.

The Peace Corps is a United States governmental agency founded in 1961 by former President John F. Kennedy. Its purpose is to increase cross-cultural understanding while providing skilled workers in areas of need. Deaf people first joined the Peace Corps in 1967. Of the 61 deaf volunteers who served their full two-year term in the Peace Corps, most worked in education, though their responsibilities also included health care, organizational planning and increasing employment opportunities. Many volunteers describe their time in the Peace Corps as a life-defining experience.

Thirty-four deaf volunteers flooded the Gallaudet Museum office with over 450 photographs and countless stories. They served in Kenya, Ghana, The Philippines, St. Lucia, Malaysia, Sierra Leone, Jamaica, St. Vincent, Ecuador, Nepal, Central African Republic, Benin, Zambia, and Guyana. Several Deaf “returned” Peace Corps Volunteers stepped forward to help. Norma Morán (Kenya) worked daily as Senior Advisor, participating in every step of the exhibition development. Julie Hochgesang (Kenya), Allen Neece III (Kenya, Zambia and Guyana), Donna Platt (The Philippines), Pauline Spanbauer (The Philippines) and Joshua Swiller (Zambia) joined the script advisory team. All of the 34 donors of photographs shared poignant and revealing tales of their Peace Corps experience.

Conceptually, the exhibition evolved from simply stating that deaf people also served to examining ways Peace Corps service of deaf volunteers aligns with and diverges from the experience of hearing Volunteers. Comments from deaf returned Peace Corps Volunteers reveal the challenging circumstances and resourceful solutions that most, if not all, deaf volunteers encounter. They also suggest that skills gained from a lifetime of being Deaf such as comfort with being seen as an outsider and acceptance of the spectacle of signing become tools that enhance international service.

One of the most critical contributions deaf volunteers expressed is that they embody proof that deaf children can learn and deaf adults can lead. On many occasions the Volunteers remarked that when they wrote to others it was seen as almost miraculous. Demonstrated literacy inspired families with deaf children. Volunteers despaired when youth arrived at school as teens or older with no language skills because it was assumed they were uneducable. This idea of “living proof” is most important where having a deaf child is seen as