

# Thank you

At CCHD, we are very fortunate to have many skilled and caring staff members who really love what they do. As we celebrate the Center's 85th anniversary, we would like to recognize those staff members who have been with the agency for 5 or more years, and we thank them for their unwavering commitment to the Center's mission and their dedication to providing the highest quality service to children, adults, and families in our community.

## 15+ Years of Service



**DEB KRAVIT**, *Director of Programs*

Deb has been instrumental in the development of many CCHD programs and has clinical experience working with individuals of all ages who are deaf or hard of hearing, and their families. Deb oversees all Speech-Language Therapy and Auditory-Verbal Therapy services at CCHD and provides direct speech-language therapy services to children and adults at the Center. She specializes in pre- and post-cochlear implant therapy, adult aural rehabilitation, therapy to clients with unique hearing conditions and program development for individuals with hearing loss of all ages.



**NANCY BLAZEK**, *Child & Family Teacher/Birth to 3 Service Coordinator*

Nancy has been an integral part of the Center's Child and Family Program for many years, and has also worked as an interpreter for the Deaf, in a vocational rehabilitation program for deaf/hard of hearing adults, and as a teacher in another early childhood program. Nancy says that the best part of her job is "watching the children and their families grow in so many ways during their time with us." But she also loves the fact that her job often seems more like playing than working, as she helps toddlers develop language skills through fun activities that keep them fully engaged in the learning process. Nancy's enthusiasm for her work is contagious, and she says that one of the most unexpected job skills she's developed over the years is "contorting my body so I can fit through child-size tunnels and ride child-sized vehicles." Having fun and changing the lives of children and their families? All in a day's work.



**KELLY REHBECK**, *General Manager of UniversalLink*

Kelly began her career in the regional office of what was then called the WI Office for the Hearing Impaired, and in 1997, she joined the staff of the Center to provide assistive technology consultations in the new UniversalLink hearing products store. She has been the backbone of UniversalLink ever since. One of Kelly's earliest memories in Ulink was teaching a late-deafened woman how to use a Voice Carry Over phone. "She hadn't spoken on the phone for 20 years and had become dependent on others to make calls for her. It was such an emotional experience when she made her first call to her husband. She was so delighted!" Helping to improve the lives of others and giving them their independence back is what keeps Kelly motivated, and she loves being able to use the expertise gained from her own hearing loss, as well as her 20+ years of professional experience, to brainstorm creative technology solutions for customers.

## 10+ Years of Service

**DOROTHY KERR**, *Executive Director*

Dorothy served as Interim Executive Director for six months prior to her appointment in September of 1999. She previously held positions in marketing and management for both for-profit and non-profit organizations. One of her favorite sayings, "The only constant is change," she says is particularly appropriate at CCHD, "whether it is changes in technology, funding, or the faces of those we serve, our only reason for being."

**LOIS SCHLEICHER**, *Scheduling Manager of CommunicationLink Interpreting Services*

After years as a fulltime homemaker, Lois decided to go back to school and ultimately chose to complete the MATC Interpreter Training Program. One of her instructors suggested that she might enjoy doing interpreter scheduling and administrative work, and it turned out she did. "As a scheduler for CommunicationLink, my job is like putting together a puzzle every day. When I have all the pieces in place, I know I have had a good day." Ironically, Lois says that one of the best pieces of advice she has ever been given is to NOT give people advice. "Instead of advice, offer suggestions. The decisions people make should be their own."

**LAUREL KUPPERMAN**, *Director of Finance*

When Laurel was looking for a change from doing public and corporate accounting work, the opportunity to join the Center seemed like a perfect fit. She liked the idea of working at a non-profit, and being married to an Audiologist, she had a close connection to hearing loss. In addition to handling the Center's finances, Laurel also has many human resources responsibilities, and staff always know that they can come to her with any questions or problems they might have. She says that enjoys her job because she gets to work with "wonderful, caring people." But she also loves that her office is so close to the Toddler Communication Group room. "The joy of seeing the kids every day – I still can't get enough of that!"

### **RUTA MURPHY, Executive Assistant/Volunteer Coordinator**

Before joining the Center, Ruta was in the non-profit field for about 10 years, including working at a trade association where she had the opportunity to travel nationally and internationally, representing member companies at trade shows. Here at CCHD, Ruta loves the diversity of her responsibilities, which ranges from administrative support to coordinating all of the Center's information technology, to managing the Center's volunteer activities. Although she has developed an uncanny ability to fix random office equipment during her time at the Center, her real passion is horses, and if she could choose any career, she would like to be a professional dressage equestrian and horse trainer.

### **KERRY MALAK, Associate Executive Director & Communications Director**

Kerry is responsible for our website and marketing programs but also is active on many professional committees and has expanded the CCHD outreach and community education programs.

## **5+ Years of Service**

### **CHRIS KOMETER, Program Director, Kellogg Child & Family Program**

After working as a Teacher for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the classroom, a statewide consultant for Deaf Education in Missouri, and working at a University to set up their Birth to Three Program, Chris was a natural fit to become Director of the Center's Child & Family Program in 2002. "One visit to meet with the staff, and that was it – I knew that CCHD was the place for me!" She has since guided the program through its largest growth spurt in the agency's history. And while she loves working with children and their families, it's the professional camaraderie that she says makes her job so special. "It's so fulfilling to work with other people who have the rich background knowledge and skillset needed for this work, and the passion and creativity to make things happen!"

### **CHERI LAMPE, Interpreter**

Cheri decided to become a sign language interpreter after years of doing bookkeeping, bill collection and working as a retail assistant manager. When she first came to CCHD as a scheduling assistant in CommunicationLink, she says that she knew it was meant to be. "It felt like Lois [Schleicher] and I were meant to work together – it was pure harmony." As an interpreter, Cheri's favorite part of the job is meeting so many different people and getting to experience so many different situations throughout the day. And if she weren't an interpreter? Cheri would probably choose to be involved in local or state politics.

### **RUTH STUHR, Coordinator, Community Rehabilitation Program/Child & Family Teacher**

Although many of the staff at CCHD are multi-talented, Ruth really gets to show off her skills as both a teacher in the Child & Family Program and as the Coordinator of the Center's Community Rehabilitation Program, which teaches daily living and communication skills to deaf adults who have developmental disabilities. Ruth especially enjoys this aspect of her job, and finds it rewarding to be able to help her adult clients learn new skills to increase their independence. Ruth is also behind many of the music activities that take place at the Center and is a certified Kindermusik Educator. The best advice she has ever heard? "Smile – it means the same in any language and it's when your true inner beauty shines through."

### **KATE BLOCK, Interpreter**

After being a radio producer and on-air talent, Kate decided to change directions in her career and become a sign language interpreter. She officially joined CCHD in 2005 after completing her Interpreter Training Program internship with CommunicationLink. Kate says that she enjoys the fact that, as an interpreter, she helps "provide open communication access to all Deaf and hard of hearing people no matter their mode of communication."

### **KELLI KOEHNEN, Speech-Language Pathologist**

Growing up with a friend who is Deaf, Kelli had a longstanding dream to work in this field. "During college I sought out experiences to work with children with hearing loss and found out about the Center. I started here while still a student, and have stayed ever since." She says that she enjoys the privilege of supporting parents to help their children develop language and communication skills, and especially loves seeing the reaction of the parent as well as the child's sense of pride when they learn a new skill and everything suddenly "clicks." Although Kelli never expected to do as much singing in her job as she does every day during Toddler Communication Groups and therapy sessions, she says that "there is no other career for me. I'm doing what I've always wanted to do."

### **ROSE ADDO, Scheduling Assistant in CommunicationLink Interpreting Services**

### **AMY LALIOS, Certified Auditory-Verbal Therapist/Coordinator A-V Therapy Services**

Amy joined the CCHD staff in 2005 as the first Certified Auditory-Verbal Therapist in Wisconsin. Prior to becoming a Certified A-V Therapist, Amy practiced as an Audiologist in various settings including Hearing and Speech Centers and a large University-based hospital. Amy coordinates Auditory-Verbal services at CCHD and provides direct Auditory-Verbal Therapy to toddlers and school-aged children. She is also a mentor for other professionals providing Auditory-Verbal Therapy at CCHD and through AG Bell's First Years Program.

### **CAMILLE MORNARD, Communication Technology Counselor in UniversaLink**

Before joining CCHD, Camille spent several years at a disability services agency in Manitowoc where she held a similar position working with Deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Her love for American Sign Language and Deaf culture started when she became a foster parent for Deaf children many years ago, and she's been actively involved with the Deaf and hard of hearing community ever since. Camille is notorious in the office for her sense of humor, and each day puts smiles on the faces of co-workers and customers alike.