


signature annual awards   
2014



*2014 Signature Annual Awards*

*10 October 2014*





# Welcome

Welcome to the sixth Signature Annual Awards ceremony.

We are here at Durham Cathedral to celebrate the dedication and determination of people and organisations, who share in our passion for excellence in communication with deaf and deafblind people. In particular, we will recognise those who we all consider to be outstanding. They are leading the way in making sure deaf and deafblind people have the access to society they need.

Every year, we receive more nominations. The stories are truly inspiring and we are grateful to everyone who took the time to write to us. Every single nominee is a worthy winner in his or her own right.

I am proud to be part of such an event. It really is one of my favourite tasks as chair of Signature.



So on behalf of Signature, congratulations to all our nominees. I wish you the best of luck tonight and in all of your future endeavours.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Lewis".

Nick Lewis  
Chair, Board of Trustees



# *Evening Proceedings*

*7.00pm*      *Presentation of certificates*

*8.00pm*      *Drinks and canapés*

*9.00pm*      *Presentation of awards:*  
*Young Learner of the Year*  
*Teacher of the Year*  
*Communication Professional of the Year*  
*Learner of the Year*  
*Organisational Achievement*  
*Centre of the Year*  
*Community Spirit*

*10.00pm*      *Close*

## *Young Learner of the Year*

### *Quaid Cleland, Catholic Institute for Deaf People*

Quaid, nine years old, was introduced to Irish Sign Language by his mum. He immediately took to it and adores signing. His fellow learners see how well he communicates with Deaf people and they are inspired. From as young as six, Quaid has been carrying out a one boy crusade with his Get Ireland Signing campaign. His teacher says that he will stop at nothing to raise awareness.

### *James Galt, Fylde Coast BSL Centre*

James, 13 years old, was born Deaf. He attends a mainstream school where they have supported him in achieving his Signature Level 1 and 2 qualifications. He has also received the head teacher's Commendation Award in recognition of him achieving a qualification equivalent to a GCSE. Learning British Sign Language has improved his confidence and friendships.

### *Bethany Goodshew, NHDCS*

Bethany, 15 years old, is studying the Level 2 Certificate in British Sign Language. Bethany volunteers at North Hampshire Deaf Children's Society (NHDCS). She enjoys volunteering at all their events and on evenings volunteers her time by accompanying a young Deaf girl to Brownies. She finds exams stressful, however she practises a lot and tries to overcome her fear.

### *Robyn Rowlands, Genie Networks*

Robyn, 12 years old, is studying the Level 1 Award in British Sign Language. Robyn has lost a lot of her hearing so the whole family decided to learn British Sign Language. Robyn was shy and reserved when she first started to learn but her natural ability has given her confidence. Robyn is encouraged to visit Deaf events in the local area and she enjoys learning new signs.

### *Ruby Rowlands, Genie Networks*

Ruby, ten years old, is studying the Level 1 Award in British Sign Language alongside her sister, Robyn. Ruby's sister has a hearing loss so the whole family were encouraged to learn British Sign Language to improve communication within the family and beyond. Ruby is a quiet girl but she comes alive during her sign language lessons and enjoys every moment.

# *Teacher of the Year*

*Elizabeth Bojas, Reflect BSL*

Elizabeth is warm and kind, putting students at ease using her wonderful sense of humour. She is determined that the communication barriers faced by deaf people should be removed and services should be more accessible to them. As part of Deaf Awareness Week 2014, she provided free training in Deaf Awareness and British Sign Language to charities and local authorities.

*Emma Caswell, Heathlands School*

Emma is passionate about British Sign Language and Deaf culture. She works tirelessly to support her students. She encourages them to meet outside of class, attending signed theatre performances and events. Emma takes her professional development seriously. She regularly attends courses in teaching and management and supports her fellow teachers.

*Janice Crossland-Jones, The Fylde Coast BSL Centre*

Janice teaches British Sign Language up to Level 6 and Deaf Awareness at her own centre. She is highly regarded by her students and goes above and beyond to support their learning. Janice involves her students in theatre trips to see interpreted performances and runs a sign club where they can practise. She is an assessor and committee member of Deaf Planet in Liverpool.

*Terry Edwards, Signamic*

Terry is an inspirational teacher delivering the highest educational standards up to Level 6. He treats learners with respect and has a gentle humour that puts them at ease and builds their confidence. He is a marvellous mentor to fellow teachers and he regularly attends workshops. Terry is a keen actor, director and producer, signing over 200 programmes for the BBC.

*Charles Hampton II, Sign Language Studies Centre*

Charles has a vision where everyone has the opportunity to learn British Sign Language. He offers time with students who are falling behind or have missed a lesson. He has developed a range of materials to support students and also arranges trips to theatres where students are encouraged to sign throughout. He organises an annual awards evening to celebrate students' success.

*Shirley Hay, Sandwell Deaf Community Association*

Shirley works hard planning her lessons and has introduced many innovative learning resources. She has an amazing skill of being able to adapt her teaching style according to the needs of the learners. Shirley inspires students to continue their studies and find fulfilling work in the Deaf community. She takes the time to discuss with them Deaf culture and career opportunities.

*Matt Jenkins, Signite/Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education*

Matt is full of energy and loves to teach British Sign Language, inspiring his learners by making lessons enjoyable and fun. He has transformed the teaching methods at the centres where he works. During the summer, Matt volunteers as an Art Leader with NDCS. Matt is also focused on his own personal development, gaining a PGCE and training to become an assessor.

*Debbie Jervis, Hands On*

Debbie always makes her students smile. She campaigns for improved deaf awareness throughout Northumberland. She holds signed coffee mornings, open days to showcase her classes, and held a free fingerspelling and British Sign Language session in her local shopping centre to raise awareness. Debbie instils into her students how important it is to practise.



*Robert Lupton-Le Masurier, Highlands College*

Robert is a gifted teacher and a superb role model for his students. He works with children, adults and those with special needs, and is able to adapt his teaching style accordingly. Robert is approachable and makes himself available outside the classroom when needed. Robert's students describe him as funny, warm hearted and dedicated to his teaching.

*Mary Platts, Action Deafness*

Mary is the British Sign Language teacher for the Leicestershire Police Link Officers for Deaf (PLOD) people. Mary actively works to build cohesion between the hearing and Deaf communities. She is an excellent teacher and her approach makes classes very enjoyable. She encourages students to get involved in Deaf events to help with practice and understand Deaf culture.

*Helena Saunders, Catholic Institute for Deaf People*

Helena teaches Irish Sign Language at the Catholic Institute for Deaf People. With more than 25 years' teaching experience, Helena has a warm, mothering quality which makes her students feel relaxed. She encourages students to progress through the different levels in order to achieve their goals, whether they are learning for fun or wish to work with Deaf people.

*Julie Wixey, Sign Lingual UK (CIC)*

Julie is described as a great inspiration to everyone she teaches. Her natural charisma and zest for life comes across. Julie is a valued member of the team at Sign Lingual UK. She works tirelessly to shape the courses and ensure they are current. She promotes the benefits of learning British Sign Language and encourages hearing people to get involved in the Deaf community.



# *Communication Professional of the Year*

## *Lisa Cordaro, STTR*

Lisa is a Speech to Text Reporter (STTR). Lisa is always professional and courteous and her priority is always the person she is supporting. Along with two fellow STTRs, Lisa started her own company, STTRs Direct. The agency has an excellent reputation and offers a speech to text reporting service to organisations such as the Bank of England. Lisa has provided consistent, accurate STTR support for many clients.

## *Olivia Retter, RSLI*

Olivia has worked as a Registered Sign Language Interpreter (RSLI) for six years. She knew from the moment that she became involved with the Deaf community that working with Deaf people was what she was born to do. Olivia has worked in the Deaf community since 1987, having started out as a voice over in the theatre and as a communication support worker. She is a professional and always interprets without opinion or judgement.

## *Darren Townsend-Handscomb, RSLI*

Darren is a Registered Sign Language Interpreter (RSLI) and has worked in assorted community settings including legal and medical. He also interprets in professional settings such as conferences and training events. Budget cuts to the Access to Work scheme were preventing Deaf people from having equal access in the workplace. As a result he has created his own website in support and has been active in the campaign for change.

## *Ray Williams, RSLI*

Ray serves the Deaf community in Liverpool with passion and dedication. As well as being a Registered Sign Language Interpreter (RSLI), Ray is Director of CODA (Child of Deaf Adults) UK and Ireland and is a CODA International board member. Ray wouldn't hesitate to cross the globe to benefit Deaf people. His professional interpreting skills are exemplary. He is not only an inspiration to his fellow colleagues, but has a huge amount of energy.

## *Learner of the Year*

### *Sally Ann Bingham, Deaf Matters*

An incredibly focused person, Sally has a passion for being the best she can be. She decided to become a qualified Communication Support Worker and recognised the importance of gaining a formal qualification, so studied Level 3 Certificate in Communication Support for Deaf Learners. Sally prides herself on continuously working to her usual high standard.

### *Derval Cleland, Deaf Village Ireland*

Derval is studying the Signature Level 3 Certificate in Irish Sign Language at Deaf Village Ireland. She is dedicated to her learning and wants to make a real difference, with hopes of becoming a teacher of deaf and hearing children. Derval encourages her peers when they are struggling and is always willing to give up her time. She has also introduced her son to Irish Sign Language.

### *Ashley Farrelly, Deaf Active*

When Ashley was 15 years old, she took part in an innovative youth project which included deaf and hearing young people and it sparked her interest in British Sign Language. Ashley has used her positive attitude working with a team that has taught 14,000 primary school children basic sign language. Ashley is described as having a natural flair for British Sign Language.

### *Alison Hardy, Communication Plus*

Alison recently completed the Level 6 NVQ Certificate in British Sign Language. She is described as determined, very positive and a great team player. When her fellow students are lacking in confidence she tells them to believe in themselves. Alison is an advocate for the equal rights of deaf people and she is currently training to become a Teacher of the Deaf.

## *Oliver Hawley, BSL Courses*

At only 17 years old, Oliver is studying towards the Level 6 NVQ Certificate in British Sign Language. His attitude and commitment is very impressive. Being home schooled, Oliver wanted to learn British Sign Language. His whole family has now learned to sign in support of him, setting such a good example to others. In the future he hopes to become a BSL/English interpreter.

## *Rachel Higginson, Signamic*

Rachel is passionate about equality for deaf and deafblind people. For many years she has supported people with dual sensory loss and pursued formal qualifications, studying Level 6 NVQ Diploma in Sign Language Interpreting. She is determined to break down the barriers faced by deaf and deafblind people. She is very determined and dedicated to her studies.

## *Elizabeth May Hill, Sign Language Studies Centre*

Elizabeth has many Deaf friends and wanted to know more about British Sign Language. She has done an excellent job of juggling her learning commitment with her role as a single mother. Elizabeth has continued her studies through to Level 6 and is currently enrolled on an NRCPD approved interpreter training programme and works as a Trainee Sign Language Interpreter.

## *Barry Pullen MBE, Signing Bee*

Learning British Sign Language has been invaluable to Barry as he has a Deaf grandson. Despite initially lacking confidence in his own signing, he is an inspiration to fellow students and a constant source of encouragement and support. Through learning, Barry has become a respected figure in the local Deaf community and he plans to continue with his voluntary work.

## *Sharon Reid, Signite*

Sharon began to learn British Sign Language after suffering a stroke which left her unable to speak. She has enjoyed learning and loves socialising with the local Deaf community. She volunteers at Deaf events and helps at the local Deaf centre. Sharon is now preparing to study the Level 6 NVQ Certificate in British Sign Language and hopes to work with the Deaf community.



## *Organisational Achievement*

### *BSL and Deaf Studies UCLan*

One of the most successful aspects of UCLan's work has been in the training of BSL/English interpreters, with more than 60% of interpreters working in the UK having been taught at UCLan. Their work has influenced policy and practice in areas such as education, curriculum development and support for Deaf students on national and international levels. The last two years has seen 100% of their graduates employed or engaged in further study.

### *Buckinghamshire County Council*

Buckinghamshire County Council is setting a shining example to other authorities on how to improve services for deaf people. They realised better access was needed for their deaf customers dealing with its contact centre. They immediately implemented a series of measures that changed the culture of the centre and improved the service to deaf customers. The Council pro-actively reviews measures, introduces new training and technologies.

### *Create*

Create uses the power of the creative arts to transform the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable people. A core strand of Create's work is provision for disabled children and adults. Since it began in 2003, they have reached more than 6,500 disabled individuals. Participant-led collaborative activities in these projects allow new friendships and relationships. Create's programme shows the importance of giving equal access to deafblind people.

### *Zebra Access*

Zebra Access is a Deaf-led charity dedicated to ensuring that deaf people, both adults and children, enjoy equal participation and access without any communication barriers. The founders extensive knowledge of working in the media and own personal experiences as Deaf people have improved the rights and equality of many Deaf people. Zebra Access has received awards including the Black Country Consortium Award.

# *Centre of the Year*

## *BSL First*

BSL First offer 16 training programmes in British Sign Language, Deaf Awareness and more. They hold a membership of Social Enterprise UK meaning that at least 50% of profits are reinvested back into the business to provide a consistently improving service and learning experiences. Learners are at the heart of all of the centre's activities. They actively encourage teachers to attend training courses and to help develop teaching resources.

## *Lyme Bay BSL*

Lyme Bay BSL has been offering Signature qualifications in British Sign Language since 2008. The centre supports all learners equally and encourages them to progress and build their confidence. They endeavour to lend extra support to students who have personal or financial difficulties. They encourage students to visit local Deaf clubs to learn more about the Deaf community. Though the centre is relatively small, they offer a personal touch.

## *Sarona Training and Consultancy Ltd*

Sarona Training and Consultancy is a growing company that is specifically focused on delivering high quality training and assessments in British Sign Language and Deaf Awareness. Owners Sarah Smith and Fiona Nicholson have over 25 years' experience and go the extra mile for all of their students, both in teaching and financially. Sarona's aim is to inspire and provide quality training and assessments in a fun and professional manner.

## *Signamic*

Signamic has become a leading British Sign Language interpreting training and assessment centre, with students from across the UK, and as far a field as Europe and the US. They have a reputation for delivering excellence - providing a relaxed and friendly learning environment. On finding a shortage of trained British Sign Language teachers in the South West, Signamic introduced teaching and assessing qualifications aimed at Deaf people.

## *Community Spirit*

### *Asif Iqbal MBE, Harrow United Deaf Club*

Harrow United Deaf Club was formed in 2009 by its now President, Asif Iqbal MBE. It has grown to become one of most popular Deaf clubs in the region. Children of Deaf adults enjoy a range of activities including arts, drama and games. The older generation are encouraged to be involved in the club reducing feelings of social isolation. The Deaf club also lobbies to ensure Deaf people can access local and national services.

### *Café 55, Sense*

Café 55 is a charity and community café ran by deafblind and disabled volunteers. Their aim is to offer the opportunity to people with both sight and hearing loss, and other disabilities to gain work experience in catering. The café aims to help their volunteers gain vital skills and knowledge that may open up opportunities to employment, and also to raise awareness of deafblindness in the local community.

### *Sheila and John Cheetham*

Shelia and John Cheetham have made a positive impact across the Deaf community for more than three decades, supporting Deaf people and their families. Sheila has been Deaf for 30 years; she has used her own experience to support others both personally and through raising funds for charity. She has inspired her husband John to equally devote his time. They have raised hundreds of thousands of pounds for charities.

### *Shipley and Saltaire Wellness Centre*

Shipley & Saltaire Wellness Centre is a family run centre which was set up to promote a healthy, active lifestyle in the local community. Staff became aware of the inequalities facing Deaf people, so they decided to introduce classes with British Sign Language interpretation so Deaf people could take part. The centre also runs interpreted workshops on emotional eating. Visitors comment on the lovely sense of community spirit the centre has.



*Thank you*

*Signature Annual Awards speakers and presenters*

*Durham Cathedral*

*Ingram Sounds*

*Alan Clarke Photography*

*Crushed Chilli Gallery*

*Karol Marketing*

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