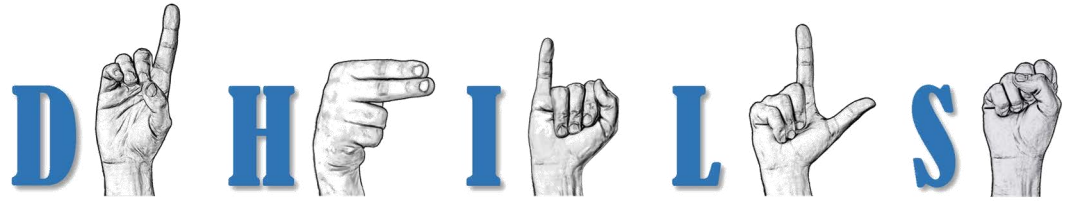


February 2026



Empowering Independence

CENTER FOR LIVING & WORKING, INC. WHAT'S UP?



Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Services

## Get Ready for 2026 Tax Filing Season

### Gather and organize records

Organized tax records make filing a complete and accurate tax return easier. Some examples of tax records can include:



- [Forms W-2](#) from your employer(s)
- Forms 1099 from banks, issuing agencies and other payers including [unemployment compensation](#), [dividends](#), [pension](#), [annuity or retirement plan distributions](#)
- [Form 1099-K](#), [1099-MISC](#), W-2 or other income statement.
- [Form 1099-INT](#) if you were paid [interest](#)
- Other income documents and records of [digital asset](#) [EX: Bitcoin] transactions

### Use direct deposit

The IRS is phasing out paper tax refund checks, under the executive order Modernizing Payments To and From America's Bank Account. The IRS encourages taxpayers who don't have a bank account to open one so they can receive refunds by direct deposit.

## Black History Month

Every February, people in the United States celebrate the achievements and history of African Americans as part of Black History Month.



Black History Month was created to focus attention on the contributions of African Americans to the U.S. It honors all Black people from all periods of U.S. history, from the enslaved people first brought over from Africa in the early 17th century to African Americans living in the U.S. today.

Among the notable figures is **Andrew Jackson Foster**, who was the first Black Deaf person to graduate from *Gallaudet University*, earning his bachelor's degree in 1954. Known as the "Father of Deaf Education in Africa," he overcame segregation to establish 32 schools for the deaf across 13 African countries.



Andrew Jackson Foster

(Continued on page 2)

# Black History Month (*continued*)

(Continued from page 1)

Today Black History Month continues the discussion of Black people and their contributions through activities such as museum exhibits and film screenings, and by encouraging the study of achievements by African Americans year-round. **Claudia Gordon** is the first deaf African American female attorney in the United States. She became deaf at age eight in Jamaica before moving to the U.S., later graduating from American University's Washington College of Law in 2004. She is a prominent disability rights advocate and worked in the White House.



Claudia Gordon

**ICE & SNOW,  
TAKE IT SLOW**

Each year in the U.S., there are over **1,000 deaths** and **100,000 injuries** due to vehicle crashes during winter weather.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

- Clean off your vehicle before driving.**  
Flying snow from cars causes accidents.
- Keep it slow, and don't use cruise control.**  
Roads can be slick even if they just look wet.
- Leave extra distance between vehicles.**  
Stay especially far from snow plows.

weather.gov



## Introducing DHILS Interns

Hi! My name is **Mia Campellone** and I am a resident of Rhode Island. I hold a bachelor's degree in social work and was introduced to American Sign Language and Deaf Culture when I began an internship at Perspectives Corporation during my undergraduate studies. What began as curiosity quickly turned into a genuine passion for the language and culture, leading me to pursue interpreting at Northern Essex Community College (NECC). I am now in my final semester of the ASL Interpreting Certificate Program, and I am excited to continue building my skills as an intern at CLW as I prepare to enter the field.



Hi! My name is **Becky Boyd**, and I am a student at Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) working toward my associate's degree in Deaf Studies. I am on track to graduate this spring and am very excited to see what the next chapter of my education in ASL and involvement in the Deaf community will bring.

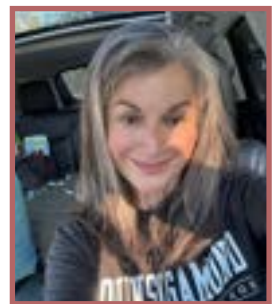
I enrolled in the Deaf Studies program in January 2024, more than 20 years after graduating high school. Prior to returning to school, I worked as a Branch Manager for a local credit union. After the birth of my second child in 2020, I chose not to return to that role. With the changes brought on by COVID, I was grateful for the opportunity to stay home with my two young children during that time.

I continue to work alongside my husband by managing the office operations for his landscape business. Although returning to school after such a long break was nerve-wracking, I have always been intrigued by sign language and felt strongly motivated to finally pursue this passion and deepen my understanding of ASL and the Deaf community.

When I am not working or attending classes, my family and I love spending time outdoors and traveling. We especially enjoy warm weather, and our favorite home away from home is St. John, USVI. I am excited to begin at CLW and grateful for the opportunity!



Hello! My name is **Paula Sheehan**, and I am a second-year student at Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) majoring in Deaf Studies. My interest in this program stems from my diagnosis of hearing loss, attributed to being a fitness instructor of several years surrounded by loud music. I am very grateful to have been selected as an intern at the Center for Living & Working, where I can learn more about the Deaf community and culture. This opportunity allows me to lend a hand in various capacities while expanding my ASL skills. I am also a Yoga teacher, which further enhances my ability to support others' well-being.



# FEBRUARY Awareness



2

## NATIONAL GROUNDHOG DAY

- If the groundhog sees his shadow, there will be six more weeks of winter.
- Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, has hosted the annual Groundhog day event.
- The day is celebrated each year in the United States and Canada.

6



## NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY | First Friday in February

- Raises awareness about heart disease in women.
- Talk with your doctor to learn how to lower your risk of heart attack and stroke.

10



## NATIONAL UMBRELLA DAY

- One of the world's most useful inventions, the umbrella!
- Keeps us dry from the rain, but also protects us from the heat of the sun.
- From the Latin word umbra, meaning shade or shadow.

14



## NATIONAL CREAM-FILLED CHOCOLATES DAY

- A way to celebrate Valentine's Day.
- Approximately 58 million pounds of chocolate will be bought.

17

## Chinese New Year

- 2026 is the Year of the Horse: the horse is considered a sign of energy, strength, and ambition.
- Also known as the Lunar New Year or Spring Festival.



28



## NATIONAL FLORAL DESIGN DAY

- Recognizes the art and history of floral design.
- It may be in a bouquet, painting, in textiles, a garden or a floral arrangement.

**ASL SPACE TGWS (THANK GOD WE'RE SOBER) MEETINGS LIST: updated January, 2026**

**\*ALL MEETINGS Eastern Standard Time (EST)\*  
 \* ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN (ANYONE IS WELCOME) \***

SUNDAYS	MONDAYS	WEDNESDAYS
7pm to 8:15pm RECOVERY DHARMA ID: 942 608 395 65 PW: 009060	1pm to 2pm ALL RECOVERY MEETING ID: 627 244 220 PW: 010149  7pm to 8pm DUAL RECOVERY ANOYMOUS ID: 951 0728 5190 PW: KL123	7pm to 8pm A.A. MEETING OPEN/DISCUSSION/TOPIC ID: 706 212 294 PW: 000556

FRIDAYS
1pm to 2pm ALL RECOVERY MEETING ID: 627 244 220 PW: 010149

TGWS /ASL ALL ROADS to RECOVERY RECONGIZE THAT THERE IS NOT JUST ONE PATHWAY TO RECOVERY. OUR COMMON PURPOSE IS TO CREATE A SAFE, AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL. FREEDOM FROM ADDICTION and CONNECTION.

For inquiries contact [Karran.Larson@mass.gov](mailto:Karran.Larson@mass.gov)

**WHAT'S A BLIZZARD?**

- BLOWING SNOW**
- 35+ MPH WINDS**
- ≤ 1/4 MI VISIBILITY**
- FOR 3+ HOURS**

**DID YOU KNOW THAT FALLING SNOW ISN'T NECESSARY FOR A BLIZZARD?**

A BLIZZARD THAT RESULTS FROM SNOW THAT HAS PREVIOUSLY FALLEN IS CALLED A GROUND BLIZZARD.

WEATHER.GOV/WINTER

# Worcester Parent Guide to Community Resources

[CLICK HERE FOR ENGLISH GUIDE](#)



## **UPDATED: Therapists for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Directory**

Click here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mRNQIKYYNjM4vYpRX7OECQkiW-PQlu62/view?usp=sharing>



### MISSED A *WHAT'S UP* NEWSLETTER?

*Past issues of newsletters are on our website!*

VISIT: [HTTPS://WWW.CENTERLW.ORG/2022/07/WHATS-UP-NEWSLETTER/](https://www.centerlw.org/2022/07/whats-up-newsletter/)

## Questions? Contact your Skills Trainer

Joan Philip	DHILS Director	508-762-1165 (VP)
Priscilla Langone	DHILS Administrative Assistant	508-556-1600 (VP)
Ellen Perkins	DHILS Asst. Manager/Hard of Hearing Skills Trainer	508-502-7576 (Voice); 508-762-1354 (VP)
Rosemary Moreira	Senior Deaf Skills Trainer (Full-time)	508-762-1166 (VP)
Denise Paro	Deaf Skills Trainer (Part-time)	508-762-1021 (VP)
Vacant	Deaf Skills Trainer (Full-time)	
Vacant	Deaf Skills Trainer (Part-time)	
Kim White	Staff Interpreter	508-755-1042 (Voice); 508-283-1036 (VP)

### Contact Us!

Center for Living & Working, Inc.

*Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Services Department*

Videophone: 508-762-1164

TTY: 508-755-1003

[www.CenterLW.org](http://www.CenterLW.org)



Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Services



CLW: [www.facebook.com/CenterForLivingAndWorking](https://www.facebook.com/CenterForLivingAndWorking)

DHILS Group: [www.facebook.com/groups/clw.dhils](https://www.facebook.com/groups/clw.dhils)