

Spring Party Recap

On April 6th, DHILS staff, our interns and community members came together for a Spring Party. After some socializing, intern Paula led the group in Chair Yoga showing different positions and breathing exercises.

After a potluck lunch, everyone learned about “Junk Journals” - a handmade book for your memories or ideas, filled with recycled and found materials, like old tickets, fabric scraps, and newspaper clippings. Many creative and fun things were made. Per consumers' request, we plan to host a future Junk Journal workshop and Chair Yoga classes.



See pictures on Page 3

MCDHH 40TH Anniversary

MCDHH celebrated it's 40th Anniversary on Thursday, April 30th during Deaf and Hard of Hearing Constituent's Day at the State House, and Saturday, May 2nd with an Anniversary celebration at Holyoke Community College [HCC]. Thursday's event included many different speakers including MCDHH Commissioner, Dr. Opeoluwa Sotonwa, MCDHH's first Commissioner, BJ Wood and several legislators. Inspirational speeches were also given



by the first Deaf Asian Female Pilot, Sheila Xu, and Elaine Ducharme of DBCAN [DeafBlind Community Access Network].

After DEAFinitely Performance Crew's amazing performance, MCDHH and the SAC [Statewide Advisory Council] presented awards. MCDHH awarded four individuals within the Deaf, hard of hearing, DeafBlind, late-deafened, and oral deaf communities for their positive impact and contributions in advocacy, leadership, public service, accessibility and inclusion. These included: The BJ Wood Trailblazer Award: Katie McCarthy; The CART Captioning Excellence Award: Stefanie Farrell; The Gail Sallop Interpreter Award: Alice Harrigan; and The Lifetime Achievement Award: Ed Varallo.

MCDHH 40th Continued...

SAC presented five awards, including: Outstanding Advocate of the Year: Andrea Kaneb; Outstanding Service Provider of the Year: Kim White (our own YAA DHILS Staff!); Legislator of the Year: Senator Adam Gómez; Outstanding Youth Advocate: Tia LaBrecque; and Outstanding Organization of the Year: Discovery Museum of Acton.

Saturday kicked off with welcoming remarks from Commissioner Ope and Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. BJ Wood also spoke about MCDHH's History and Reimagining the Future. A fun community interactive game of Trivia followed with a lunch break and a game of Bingo. A Panel Discussion wrapped up the day.

Both events were well attended and a great time was had by all. Congratulations to MCDHH on their 40 years!



Ellen Perkins



BJ Wood



L to R: Ellen Perkins, Kim White and Commissioner Ope



Meg Coffin, Benji Kemper, DHILS Staff and Consumers



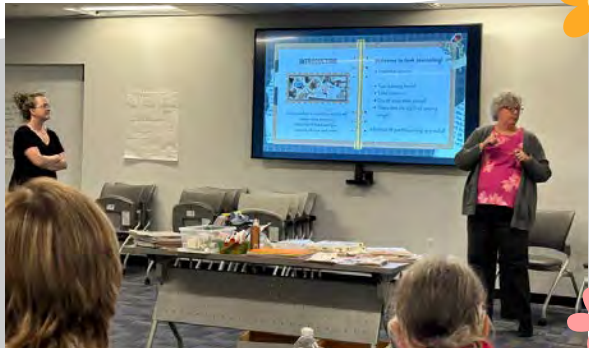
40th Anniversary Committee



Joan Philip, Ellen Perkins and Kim White

40th Anniversary

Spring Party Pictures



IL Education Day at the State House

Your Access Advocates staff, including DHILS, attended **Independent Living [IL] Education Day** on Thursday, April 23rd at the State House. There are 10 IL Centers throughout Massachusetts including YAA.

At the morning program, which included different speakers, DHILS staff led the crowd in a cheer of, "My care...my choice"!

Later on, DHILS visited legislator offices and advocated for support of bills and the budget.



DHILS Cheer: My Care...My Choice!



YAA Staff on the State House Grand Staircase

Tax Night Recap



We'd like to send a big thank you to our **AARP TaxAide** team for another great collaboration this year providing 48 Deaf consumers/Deaf Community members with tax filing assistance! Once again, our appointments booked quickly, and we hosted 3 Tax Nights in March and 1 in April. We're all so relieved we had no snow cancellations this year despite the snowy winter we had.

We're so grateful to our team of (6) very dedicated AARP TaxAide volunteers this year for all of their hard work before, during and after our tax appointments to ensure high quality tax assistance for our consumers and the Deaf Community. Thank you, AARP TaxAide team, DHILS Staff, interpreters and consumers/Deaf community members for making this another successful tax season!

MAY AWARENESS

MAY 1: SKIN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

- Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States. It's also one of the most preventable.
- Sun protection is important - seek shade, wear protective clothing, and use broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen.
- Most skin cancers are highly treatable!
- See a dermatologist and get your moles checked annually!



MAY 2: KENTUCKY DERBY

- First Saturday in May.
- Takes place at Churchill Downs in Louisville, Kentucky.
- The first race of the "Triple Crown" series.
- The first race was in 1875 and is famous for mint juleps (a kind of cocktail) and colorful hats.



MAY 13: APPLE PIE DAY

The first apple pie recipe was printed in England in 1381.



MAY 16: NATIONAL LOVE A TREE DAY

- Celebrates the joys of life provided by trees.
- Some trees live to be several thousand years old.
- The tallest known tree is 379 feet tall.



MAY 23: TAFFY DAY

- Salt water taffy was invented 1883 in Atlantic City, New Jersey.
- Taffy is made with boiled sugar and butter.
- The mixture is stretched and pulled until it's a chewy consistency that can be rolled and cut.





Worcester Parent Guide to Community Resources

[CLICK HERE FOR ENGLISH GUIDE](#)



Missed a Newsletter?
Past issues are on our website!
[CLICK HERE](#)

Updated Therapists for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Directory

[CLICK HERE](#)



Questions? Contact your Skills Trainer

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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
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www.youraccessadvocates.org



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DHILS Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/yaa.dhils/>

