

# Archived Information

## Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (CFDA No. 84. 128)

### I. Legislation

The Helen Keller National Center Act as amended by P.L. 99-506, (29 U.S.C. 1901-1907) (expires September 30, 1997).

### II. Funding History

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>	<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>
1972	\$ 600,000	1988	\$4,800,000
1975	2,000,000	1989	4,900,000
1980	2,500,000	1990	4,938,000
1981	3,200,000	1991	5,367,000
1982	3,137,000	1992	5,867,000
1983	3,500,000	1993	6,057,000
1984	4,000,000	1994	6,741,000
1985	4,200,000	1995	6,936,000
1986	4,115,000	1996	7,144,000
1987	4,600,000		

### III. Analysis of Program Performance

#### A. Goals and Objectives

The goal of the Helen Keller National Center is to enhance opportunities for individuals with deaf-blindness to live as independently as possible in their home communities. Each person's need for support is assessed and assistance is provided or arranged as necessary to help the individual become independent. The objectives of the program are to provide clients with meaningful contact with the environment, effective means of communication, constructive participation in the home and community, initial or enhanced employability, and other development pertinent to their rehabilitation. The Helen Keller National Center is current-funded on a noncompetitive basis.

#### B. Strategies to Achieve the Goals

##### Services Supported

HKNC offers training and consultation to other programs through a national training team. Training is provided on-site nationwide as requested, with the requesting agency covering the travel costs for the team. In addition, nine week-long seminars at HKNC headquarters are conducted during the year. Participants in these seminars are nominated and sponsored by their own agencies. Training topics include communication methods, mobility, counseling, home management, vocational training, job placement, and services available in the field. HKNC also maintains a registry of youths and adults with deaf-blindness and encourages and assists public and private agencies to develop in their local communities services for individuals who are deaf-blind.

The center employs representatives in each of the 10 federal regions. These representatives provide a variety of services, including staff training, technical assistance, and specific planning of direct services for deaf-blind clients in conjunction with state vocational rehabilitation counselors, mental health workers, and special education programs. These staff members also provide counseling, information, and referral for individuals who are deaf-blind and their parents.

HKNC operates a number of special projects related to deaf-blindness, including a service project for elderly deaf-blind persons and a national parent and family services project. The center also operates an international internship program for professionals in the field of deaf-blindness. Participants are professionals, are financially supported by their sponsoring agencies during their stay, and are expected to initiate and complete at least one project while at HKNC.

### **Strategic Initiatives**

In the 1996 program year, the center merged the Case Management and Placement Departments to give clients more support and guidance in identifying vocational and residential goals.

During the program year, the center offered a two-week seminar during the summer to teens and young adults with an interest in exploring educational or employment opportunities upon graduation from high school.

In addition, a second community apartment was made available to enable clients to live in an off-campus apartment for a six-month period. Living off-campus helps participants build confidence and skills, and prepares them for living independently when they complete their training at HKNC.

### **C. Program Performance—Indicators of Impact and Effectiveness**

In the 1996<sup>1</sup> program year, the most recent year for which data are available, a total of 85 clients was served at the HKNC's rehabilitation training center. Of these, 47 had finished their training by the end of the program year. All 47 also had received services from the Placement Department. Twenty of those served by the Placement Department were placed in some type of employment setting. Eight persons returned home and are awaiting employment opportunities, and 5 persons returned to school after completing their training. All of the people served by the Placement Department were assisted in finding appropriate housing.

## **IV. Planned Studies**

The Helen Keller National Center Act requires that the Secretary of Education annually evaluate the HKNC's activities. The center uses special evaluation instruments developed under contract to the Department to help prepare the report that the Secretary annually transmits to the President and Congress.

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<sup>1</sup>Program year 1996 was July 1, 1995, to June 30, 1996. Activities during this year were supported by the FY 1995 appropriation for HKNC (\$6.936 million).

## **V. Sources of Information**

1. Evaluation of the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (Washington, DC: Associate Control, Research and Analysis Inc., August 1988).
2. Program 1995 Annual Report of the Helen Keller National Center.

## **VI. Contacts for Further Information**

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