



Hear For You

inspiring young
deaf people

ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13





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david.brady@hearforyou.com.au.

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HEAR FOR YOU IS THE ONLY ORGANISATION IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND OFFERING AN AWARD WINNING MENTORING PROGRAM FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING.

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HIGHLIGHTS / YEAR IN REVIEW

Hear For You has achieved some significant milestones in its second year of operation. Highlights of the 2012/13 Financial Year include.

- Hear For You nominated for a National Disability Award 2013
- New Board appointments – Zoë Black, Tanya Nelson-Carnegie, Kate Obermayer, Olivia Andersen
- Commenced first government grant supported program – Victorian Government
- First Hear For You Auslan Program launched in Victoria
- First Hear For You Oral Program launched in Queensland
- New Chief Executive Officer appointed – David Brady
- Appointment of part time co-ordinators in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney
- New Strategic Plan 2013 to 2016 launched
- Over 150 deaf teenagers mentored in one financial year, highest number recorded to date
- Continuation of support from the Australian Communication Exchange



ABOUT US

VISION

For all young people who are deaf to reach their potential in life.

MISSION

Mentor and inspire young people who are deaf through evidence based programs and services that are accessible to all.

VALUES

- Professionalism
- Inclusiveness
- Enthusiasm
- Ethical
- Experience
- Progressive



WHO WE SERVE

Hear For You is designed for young people aged 12 – 18 years who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

HISTORY

Hear For You was established in 2007 by Olivia Andersen (nee Gemmell) who has had profound hearing loss from birth. This was in response to her personal and professional awareness of the issues affecting teenagers who are deaf and hard of hearing during their high school years. Her desire was to help young deaf people develop the confidence and faith to achieve their dreams.

Since 2007, Hear For You operated in:

- Sydney from 2007
- Melbourne from 2012
- Auckland from 2010
- Brisbane from 2013
- Perth from 2010 to 2011

Since 2007, Hear For You has reached out to more than 500 deaf or hard of hearing Australians between 12 and 18 years. Since its inception in 2011 our licenced partners in New Zealand had similar success reaching the 150 mentee milestone this year. Its success is measured not by the number of mentees who attend each

Hear For You program, but from the positive feedback from parents and the graduate mentees themselves on how Hear For You had inspired their confidence to pursue their personal goals.

The program's success is due to the volunteer contributions from more than 40 mentors, who are themselves deaf or hard of hearing, and come from a wide spectrum of Australian and New Zealand society. Volunteer mentors include doctors, lawyers, shop owners, animators, sports managers, school teachers, builders, Deaflympians, parents, and community leaders. They all have a unique experience of being deaf or hard of hearing, and in their own eyes are successful and want to share. Their inspiration led to many of our early year mentees following similar paths as their mentors.

Over the course of its short history, Hear For You has provided high level support for the programs on minimum resources provided by private individual and organisational donations. It was as recent as this year that the first government financial support was given to the programs. Donations have enabled Hear For You to meet the demand for its programs throughout Australia and recently be delivered in Auslan, the language of the Australian Deaf community. Hear For You has truly grown into an organisation that has been established by deaf people, run by deaf people, for deaf people.

HISTORICAL MILESTONES

Since 2007

Successful establishment of Hear For You as a charitable business entity in preparation for the delivery of core business activities within 12 months of business registration.

Generous support from seed funding partners which established the infrastructure of Hear For You and program delivery to commence.

Delivery of 50 workshops in Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, Sydney and Auckland. To date, the program has reached more than 500 teenagers.

More than 60 presentations, guest speaking engagements and seminars delivered to a variety of organisations including deaf organisations, universities, medical groups, radio, TV and magazines.

Licensed The Hearing House in New Zealand to utilise Hear For You programs and structure. First series of workshops held in NZ in 2011.

Appointed high profile Hear For You patrons – former Prime Minister The Hon John Howard AC in Australia and Mr Lance Cairns in New Zealand.

Winner of the national 2010 AAMI / NEIS (New Enterprise Incentive Scheme) Small Business Award community category.

Nominated for 2013 National Disability Awards (Australia) for Excellence in Improving Personal and Community Support.



OUR PERFORMANCE THIS FINANCIAL YEAR

MENTEES

- 70 per cent across all programs found new confidence in themselves, their identity, and their future
- 55 per cent said Hear For You provided a fun and safe environment and they established new friendships with other mentees
- 40 per cent have renewed or found focus or a sense of purpose in where they want to go in their life, career, or school
- 85 per cent would recommend Hear For You to other mentees
- 100 per cent said their Mentor was inspiring and appreciated them sharing their experiences and listening to them

PARENTS

- 95 per cent of parents across all programs noticed the following in their children after participation in a Hear For You program:
 - Increased confidence
 - Improved focus on school and future directions (career and life plans)
 - Growth in positive attitudes in themselves, towards their families, friends and others
- 100 per cent said the programs:
 - Were inspirational and enjoyed listening to mentors, guest speakers, and learning about what their children had experienced
 - Provided a positive outlook for parents about their deaf or hard of hearing child's future
 - Benefited them through the sharing of experiences with other parents of mentees attending the Hear For You program
- 98 per cent would recommend the Hear For You workshops to parents of other teenage Deaf or Hard of Hearing children.
- 100 per cent said that the Hear For You Mentors definitely contributed to their child's education and mental well-being.



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

It has been almost six years since the inception of Hear For You. I am amazed at how much it has grown since the early years when we ran only one program of four workshops in Sydney. This year we have grown to operate five programs of four workshops, reaching out to over 150 mentees who were mentored by forty deaf or hard of hearing volunteer mentors.

When I look at the amount of work that has been done to achieve this, I am amazed at how far Hear For You has come. I am pleased to share with you our success in providing the first Hear For You Auslan program.

Our mission is to empower young deaf and hard of hearing Australians and New Zealanders, and to reduce the social stigma associated with deafness. At our workshops, stories have been shared with the young people from our great team of mentors I have seen discussions on areas such as careers, relationships, conflict management, and watched the joy of mentees and mentors experiencing drama. It is pleasing to see that they really can do anything – nothing is impossible, even with a hearing loss, no matter how mild or profound.

Our programs have reached a level where it does not matter if young people have cochlear implants and/or hearing aids, or use Auslan or speak, to communicate. We aim to help build the capacity of participants to follow their individual dreams, and contribute to society through work and community initiatives. This, in turn, provides a greater sense of belonging for young deaf and hard of hearing youth giving them a sense of greater wider community connectedness.

The impact of our mentors cannot be underestimated. Often I have people telling me that they have enjoyed hearing them speak about their own hearing loss and struggles, and they are inspired by their honesty and courage. Our Chief Executive Officer and his team of co-ordinators are all deaf or hard of hearing. What is even more remarkable is that they are located, not in one office in one city, but spread over four capital cities in Australia.

As our recent pre-program survey results have shown, the issues that most deaf and hard of hearing adolescents face include:

- The need to develop confidence to advocate and speak up for themselves
- Knowing what hearing people talk about so they can initiate a topic for everyday discussion
- Wanting to express their own opinion with confidence
- How to use assistive technology and interpreters effectively for their communication access
- Dealing with bullying i.e. nasty/sarcastic comments about the deaf person's speech
- Conflicting morals and peer pressure
- Wanting to be part of the "in crowd"
- The need to meet someone who has been through similar situations and can empathise without sympathising



Friendships at school are a big deal – the explanations, the acceptance and the feelings involved with not wanting to be different. One mentee told me that if the hearing students could just understand how hard it is for him to join in group discussions, and changed their ways to include him, then all would be right in his world. Another student has made the following comment: "If someone helps me feel that I'm not alone in my feelings of being deaf, it will be a great help."

These sentiments demonstrate how arduous the struggles can be. I am very proud of what our past graduates have achieved following their participation in our mentoring program. Some success stories have included being elected as School Prefects, living in University College, attending international events, securing their first jobs, travelling the world, meeting with the now Prime Minister Mr Tony Abbott, appearing on a current affairs television program to advocate for fellow deaf people regarding captioning in cinemas and lastly gaining work experience at one of the mentors' workplace. It is also very rewarding for us to see our past mentees becoming firm friends after joining a program.

Over the past year, Hear For You saw the departure of the hard working General Manager Nick Doyle and Fundraising Co-ordinator Eva Galvin in November. We were sad to see them leave as they had made an enormous contribution to Hear For You. I wish them the best in their future endeavours. I am pleased that we have recruited Sophie Li and Meg Aumann in Victoria, and Rebecca Driscoll in Queensland for the programs in these states. We have also recruited our first CEO for Hear For You, David Brady who came on board in April 2013. Later in June 2013, John Lui came on board for the New South Wales program. It is an exciting team.

We have entered a partnership with the University of Melbourne for the unique "Hear Me Out!" program which is a trial online program to see if the internet can be used to provide mentoring. A huge thank you to Geraldine Cook from the University of Melbourne, and to Hear For You Sophie Li, along with VIC Oral Mentors Alice Brennan and Jessica Moody for their time to make this project happen.

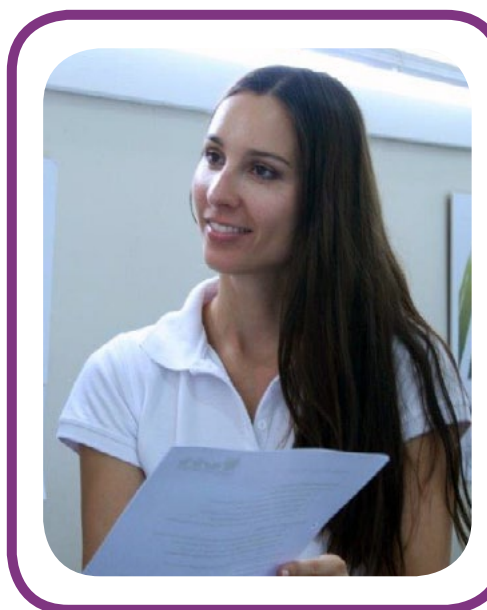
I would like to pay tribute to, and sincerely thank, all our staff, mentors and volunteers who have done such a wonderful job in the past year. Without the passion and dedication of all our mentors and volunteers, we would not have achieved the results.

Finally, a giant thank you to all our partners and supporters including Tanya and Mark Carnegie from The Carnegie Foundation, Australian Communication Exchange, Cochlear Foundation, and our first government funder, the Victorian Government through the Victorian Deaf Education Institute and Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for believing in Hear For You and for their financial support. Without their support, Hear For You would not have been able to achieve what it has done and may even not exist.

Our future depends very much on recurrent funding and we will continue to work hard to secure funding. We also wish to express our warmest thanks to the Honourable John Howard AC and Mr Lance Cairns, our Australian and New Zealand patrons respectively, and the Hear For You Board members, Zoë Black, Kate Obermayer, and Tanya Nelson Carnegie, for their continued input, dedication and insight.

We look forward to many wonderful years to come.

Olivia Andersen
Founder and Chair



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

I commenced my role as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in April 2013, having been a volunteer mentor and trainer for Hear For You since 2007.

It was a privilege to join the organisation in a formal role to focus my belief and passion – it is a rare opportunity for a volunteer to move into a position of employee for an organisation they love and believe in, especially in the not for profit sector.

My transition into the role of CEO was made smooth by the great work of our founder and former Managing Director and now Chairperson Olivia Andersen; the previous General Manager Nick Doyle; the co-ordinators Sophie Li, Meg Aumann, Rebecca Driscoll, and Elena Keith who co-ordinates the New Zealand program under a special licence agreement.

Since 2007 Hear For You has provided mentoring to more than 500 deaf or hard of hearing teenagers in Australia and New Zealand. Financial results for the 2012 to 2013 year showed a surplus of \$77,309.64 which provides Hear For You with the security for expanding its programs in the coming years.

It will also be remembered as the year the program was delivered in another language in Victoria - Auslan, the language of the Australian Deaf community. Meg Aumann recruited a great team of Auslan using mentors to deliver a successful program with the support of the Victorian Deaf Education Institute and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

With the support of the St George Foundation Hear For You ventured into Brisbane opening the state's first Oral Mentoring Program. Co-ordinator Rebecca Driscoll's work in finding a great team of mentors, securing three exciting venues, and providing a well-implemented program ensured its success and showed that Hear For You has a future in Queensland. Plans are underway to add an Auslan program in addition to the Oral program next year.



After a year's sabbatical, the New South Wales Oral Program returned with a new venue, the Hearing Hub at Macquarie University with support from the Carnegie Foundation and the Cochlear Foundation. It was the sterling work of Olivia Andersen, our new co-ordinator John Lui and the team of five mentors that ensured the New South Wales program attained the high standards set in previous years.

Sophie Li took the role of Victoria Oral Programs Co-ordinator for Melbourne with delivering her first series of workshops from three new venues, attracting a mix of returning and new mentors, and a fresh group of mentees. Sophie also managed our Hear Me Out project in partnership with "Let it Out" and the University of Melbourne. This program



was innovative using the internet to provide visual online advice on key life topics to deaf and hard of hearing teenagers throughout Australia.

Being a Mentor for Hear For You is a tremendous commitment that the board and I wish to acknowledge. We estimate that the average contribution of volunteer time by each mentor in 2013 exceeded 44 hours. More than 40 mentors contributed a total of 1,760 hours – the equivalent of \$100,000 in human resources. Sharing their personal experience and knowledge were priceless for the hundreds of participating teenagers and their parents.

The financial support for Hear For You programs comes from donations and grants from individuals, organisations and government. In 2013, seventy percent of donations was from non-government organisations and approximately ten percent from individual donations. I would like to thank the Australian Communication Exchange, Carnegie Foundation, St George Foundation, Cochlear Foundation and the many individuals and organisations who believe in the work of Hear For You. No matter how large or small the donation, it makes a difference.

Only twenty percent of current resources and programs are funded by government. The Victorian state government is for the first time providing support for Hear For You programs. It is hoped that by expansion of programs in New South Wales, Queensland and the introduction of a Rural and Regional Australia program in 2014, Hear For You will be eligible for government grants in other states. We will build our case for funding on the clear demonstration that our mentoring program is focussed, addresses a real need and is making a difference to the future of young Australians. Greater government support will assist more Deaf and hard of hearing teenagers to reach for their personal goals by increasing their confidence and providing better opportunities to become active in their community's and Australia's economic and social future.

I would like to acknowledge the individuals who give such great support to our mentors and our staff. Thank you to our Chairperson Olivia Andersen, as well as Zoë Black, Tanya Nelson-Carnegie and Kate Obermayer. Their passion, experience and guidance are invaluable. I also like to thank the departed General Manager Nick Doyle, who was not only was a manager for Hear For You, but also as a fellow mentor since the early days, for providing me with a seamless transition into my role as Chief Executive Officer. The 2013 to 2016 Strategic Plan is an example of the collective value they bring to our organisation.

I would like to personally thank our staff, the mentors, the mentees and their parents for welcoming me to Hear For You and supporting me.

I am looking forward to a great 2014 for Hear For You. Together, we can make it happen.

Dave Brady
Chief Executive Officer



2013-2016 STRATEGIC PLAN

VISION:

For all young people who are deaf to reach their potential in life.

MISSION:

Mentor and inspire young people who are deaf through evidence based programs and services that are accessible to all.

VALUES:

Professionalism Inclusive Enthusiasm Ethical Experience Progressive

STRATEGIC GOAL:

Establish a leading not for profit charity with strong business practices and financial base to be able to provide mentoring for over 210 deaf teenagers per annum by 2016.

OBJECTIVES:

Key Results	Objective
1. Programs	Be the program that all deaf teenagers in Australia and New Zealand want to participate in
2. Business Processes	Achieve best practice in business systems, structure and processes
3. People	Build a strong network of key stakeholders including mentors, volunteers, mentees, supporters
4. Profile	High national profile and number 1 in social media for deaf teenagers by 2016
5. Financial	Set up innovative fundraising and establish long term government funding, to have a cash reserve of \$500,000 by 2016

KEY DIFFERENTIATOR:

Hear For You is an organisation that is **“founded by deaf people, run by deaf people, for deaf people”**.

OUR PEOPLE

OUR PATRONS

Australia – The Honourable John Howard AC
New Zealand – Mr Lance Cairns

THE BOARD

Founder and Chair – Olivia Andersen

Qualifications

- Bachelor of Design, UNSW
- Business Management, RMIT UNIVERSITY

Experience

- Managing Director of Hear For You 2007-2013

Director – Zoë Black

Qualifications

- BComm, University of Queensland
- MBA, University of Queensland

Experience

- Director of Strategy and Planning, Australian Communication Exchange
- Vice President, Business Communicators Queensland
- Member, Australian Institute of Management

Director – Tanya Nelson Carnegie

Qualifications

- BA (Hons), Human Sciences, St John's College, Oxford University
- MBA (Year 1), Sydney University

Experience

- Management consultant, McKinsey & Co Inc.
- Investment banking, JPMorgan Cazenove, Kleinwort Benson now Commerzbank
- Co-founder and Director of Matilda Rose Early Intervention Centre (now part of Royal Institute of Deaf and Blind Children)



Director – Kate Obermayer

Qualifications

- BAComm (Journalism), University of Technology Sydney

Experience

- Global Web Marketing Specialist, Cochlear Limited
- Director, Deafness Forum of Australia 2008 to 2011
- Director, Australian Communications Consumer Action Network 2009 to 2010

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Hear For You is proud to have the following volunteers with high level experience and expertise as members of its Advisory Council:

- Mark Carnegie
- Angus Gemmell
- Jack Heath
- Sophie McCarthy
- Cass O'Connor
- Harold Scruby

STAFF

Chief Executive Officer – David Brady

Mentor, Hear For You – six years as a Mentor since trials in 2007

Qualifications:

- Master of Science (MBA Sports), University Sheffield
- Bachelor Social Science and Policy, UNSW
- Graduate Diploma Project Mgt, UNE
- Level 2 Hockey Australia Coach & Umpire
- Level 1 Touch Football Australia Referee

Achievements

- Deaf Sports Australian Volunteer of the Year 2013
- Deaflympian 2005 (Water Polo) and 2013 (Tennis Manager)
- New College Council Collegian of the Year UNSW
- Sports Administrator of the Year 2002, Australian University Sport



Victorian Oral Program Co-ordinator – Sophie Li

Mentor, Hear For You (since 2011)

Qualifications

- Bachelor of Environments (BoE)

Achievements

- Professor Graeme Clark Cochlear Scholarship Recipient 2009
- VCE Top Achiever 2008
- 2007 Victorian Premier's Award

Victorian Auslan Program Co-ordinator – Meg Aumann

Mentor, Hear For You (since 2013)

Qualifications

- Bachelor of Business (Human Resources & Management), Swinburne University of Technology
- Bachelor of Education (LOTE), Latrobe University
- Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, Northern Metro Institute of Technology
- Diploma in Disability Studies, Jyväskylä Institute of Adult Education, Finland

Achievements

- Young Australian of the Year (VIC) Award - Semi-Finalist 2000
- Deaf Young Australian of the Year Award 2000
- Rotary Youth Leadership Award 2001
- Australian Most Valuable Player Award (netball), Australian Deaf Games 2008

Queensland Oral Program Co-ordinator – Rebecca Driscoll

Mentor, Hear For You (since 2013)

Qualifications

- Bachelor of Arts (Communications), University of Sunshine Coast
- Bachelor of Business (Tourism Management), University of Sunshine Coast

New South Wales Oral Program Co-ordinator – John Lui

Mentor, Hear For You (since 2013)

Qualifications

- Bachelor of Social Sciences and Law, Macquarie University
- Qualified Junior Development coach, Tennis Australia
- Qualified Club Professional coach, Tennis Australia

Achievements

- Deaflympian 2005, 2009, 2013 (Tennis)
- Sir Garfield Barwick Award for Highest UAI 2002, RIDBC
- New South Wales and Australian Deaf Tennis representative since 2003
- Ranked as high as number seven in World Deaf Tennis

New Zealand (under licence) – Elena Keith

Qualifications and experience

- Graduate Diploma Not for Profit Management
- Qualified Personal Trainer
- Starship Foundation Fundraiser
- Bay Audiology Spokesperson
- Pindrop Foundation Communications and Fundraising Manager
- Dangerous Decibels Educator
- National Noise Induced Hearing Loss Steering Committee Member
- Hearing House Special Events Manager
- Loud Shirt Day NZ Project Manager

Achievements

- Max Foundation 2013 Recipient
- Yealands Wine Raise A Glass To Success Finalist 2013



OUR MENTORS – A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Hear For You acknowledges all of the listed individual mentors for volunteering more than an average of fifty hours throughout the year to providing and sharing their experiences with over 150 mentees per annum at the Hear For You workshops. The whole basis of Hear For You operates on the generous time donated by each of these deaf or hard of hearing mentors, without them there would be no Hear For You. Thank you.

NEW SOUTH WALES ORAL MENTORS

David Carter
Heather Cook
Rania Ajaka
John Lui
David Brady
Kate Obermayer

QLD ORAL MENTORS

Simon Scott
Aleks Petrusevic
Jennifer Borowsky
Jillian Ash
Julian Scharf
Kylie Sheedy
Fai Tin
Annette Gilmore-Scott
Rebecca Driscoll

VICTORIA AUSLAN MENTORS

Alice Ewing
Edan Chapman
John Bennett
Vinnie Pezzimenti
Hillary Morton
Meg Aumann

NEW ZEALAND ORAL MENTORS

Elena Keith
Joshua McLean
Michael Allen
Anna McNab
Natasha Barnes
Joshua Foreman
Eva Bergler
Hayden Nash
Sam Taylor

VICTORIA ORAL MENTORS

Alice Brennan
Jessica Moody
Philip Melville
Patrick Lane
Sophie Li
Stephen Swann
Andrew Selby Smith
Ashleigh Wallach
Ben Chambers

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

The integrity of Hear For You comes from the real life experiences of our staff and mentors, all sharing in the vision set by its founder Olivia Andersen. Here are some of their stories.

DAVID BRADY

David Brady was born in Armidale, New England, with a severe to profound hearing loss in both ears. His mother had contracted Rubella during her pregnancy. David was diagnosed at one and half years old after several attempts to clarify the diagnosis. He was fitted with hearing aids in both ears to assist him to learn to hear and speak. He was a first born child and his young parents who have recently moved to Armidale in country New South Wales were told that the best option was to move to Sydney for David's early childhood upbringing. But both parents were determined to teach David to communicate with speech and to keep the family in Armidale. At the time there was a small support group for the deaf. David's family engaged with the group throughout his childhood years. It was this ad-hoc parent's support group which used both Auslan and oral communications that gave David's parents the support they needed to ensure access to education in mainstream schools in Armidale, which fortunately had Deaf support teachers in those early stages of his schooling. When David entered High School, the unit remained for year 7, until year 8 when David became the only deaf child in Armidale High and any other high school in New England, New South Wales at the time. David's family travelled to the United Kingdom many times during his schooling years, and at two times during his life, David attended school in Hull and Longford Schools.

A mainstream education was not without its challenges; however it was these experiences and challenges endured during these teenager years that enabled David to share the lessons as a Mentor in the Hear For You Program. High school was not easy for David; there were incidences of fights resulting from frustration of missing out on typical teenager experiences and from counter-bullying which was prevalent at the time. He found it difficult to form solid friendships.

It was sport that provided the outlet for David to overcome his frustrations and to engage in community life. He played hockey, rugby league, cricket, soccer, swimming, athletics and basketball, becoming a hockey umpire in his later teenage years.

Year 11 was a new experience for David and for Armidale High School, when he became the first deaf student in the New England region. The first day of year 11 was met with a wall of shock from David's fellow students and some teachers. There was an assumption that deaf students in Armidale would leave in year 10 to pursue trade skills. For the first time, David had access to an FM set but this did not always guarantee that all the information was received. To pass the Higher School Certificate and qualify for university, David's family paid for additional tuition so he would understand all the information that was being given in the classroom.



By the time year 12 began, David and his family successfully secured permission from the New South Wales HSC board to allow him extra time and access to a thesaurus during school examinations to put him on a level playing field with other students. This was met by protests from other students, claiming David had an unfair advantage. The protests were overruled by the school's Principal, who had a gradual hearing loss and could appreciate the challenges David was facing. This support went a long way to ensuring that David was rewarded for his hard work and he gained enough marks to secure a place at, his first choice of university, the University of New South Wales. In fact, his results marks and determination secured him a place at the prestigious New College.

Tertiary education delivered a whole new set of challenges, including living away from home in a residential college where he shared accommodation with people who have never in their lives met a deaf person. The system of lectures and tutorials demanded his resilience to benefit from the educational opportunities. It was fortunate that the university's disability support unit was there to provide him with note takers, an FM set and a special allowance at the university library. Taking the sound advice of his father, David got involved in college and university life in activities and sport.

Post-university, David moved to the United Kingdom and lived there for six years, where he gained his Master's degree, and the beginning of his career in the sports industry, leading his appointment as Hear For You's chief executive in April 2013.

These experiences are the basis of his passion and commitment to the Hear For You Mentoring program.

SOPHIE LI

Sophie Li was born in Houston, Texas in the USA, the child of two world acclaimed ballet dancers. Diagnosed at the age of 18 months, her parents can still remember when the doctor walked into the room and said, "Your daughter is profoundly deaf." Their world shattered. Their daughter would not be able to share the joy of dance and music. Sophie's mother decided to make the most heartbreaking decision of her life: to give up her beloved ballet career to help Sophie learn to speak.

Fitted with two hearing aids, Sophie went to many speech therapy lessons at a local hearing and speech centre in Houston. It was a lost cause as Sophie's deafness was too profound. At the age of four Sophie's parents learned about the cochlear implant and Sophie heard her first sound.

When Sophie was six years of age her family moved to Melbourne. Sophie went to speech therapy and had lessons in ballet, jazz, tap and even learnt how to play the cello and piano. However, it was a tough journey, at age nine, her language skills were of a three year old.

Sophie remembers her high school years as a difficult and depressing time. She attended mainstream schools because her parents believed it would help Sophie develop resilience, confidence and leadership in the face of the challenges that came hand in hand with deafness.

Being socially involved was a struggle. There were no SMS, social media, live captioning or National Relay Service. Sophie found it frustrating and embarrassing when she would have to call friends through her mother. There would be no chance to chat about boys, skipping school, and sneaking out to parties. Sophie is now proactive in finding new technology and services that



are useful for deaf and hard of hearing people and she loves the captioned telephone. She wishes today's technology was available during her early years.

Sophie was also often exasperated with being unaware of the music and topics broadcast on radio and television. Her school friends would gush about a new song, singing the lyrics. Sophie would be too embarrassed to ask a friend to write them down so she could be part of the discussion. She has since developed effective strategies to manage these undesirable situations and communicate her needs.

Sophie was determined to stay focussed on attaining a good education. With the completion of her bachelor's degree, Sophie learnt Auslan and now mixes with both deaf and hearing friends. She said she has the best of both worlds, a message she brings to Hear For You Mentees.

MEG AUMANN

Meg Aumann was born profoundly deaf. It may have been due to Rubella, despite her mother having the usual vaccines. Meg's parents discovered her deafness when a door slammed shut during a storm and baby Meg was undisturbed, from there at six months of age. She was diagnosed with a severe to profound hearing loss and was provided hearing aids.

Meg had a happy childhood, growing up on a cherry farm. She felt fully accepted by her family and they were able to communicate with ease using Cued Speech or lip-reading. She attended a mainstream school with a deaf faculty where she had deaf friends in her classes. She developed many close friendships for life. Being good at sports helped her fit in with her hearing peers at school. She even had a hearing 'boyfriend'!

Hearing aids did not work for Meg, so she had a cochlear implant operation when she was eight years old. Meg could now hear better, but she wasn't all that interested in hearing. She was happy with the way she was and would find excuses to not replace the implant's batteries. Her parents eventually agreed that she could stop using the cochlear implant. Meg has never looked back. For her personally, the quality of life was better without hearing.

During her teenage years at school, she had no interpreter or adequate note taking support. But she did have supportive teachers of the deaf and many good memories from those years. She did not like receiving "special support" and resisted efforts to support her learning. Later on, Meg decided to change schools to be closer to home. At her new school, she was the only deaf female student. This was when she truly experienced loneliness and became depressed. She realised the true value of having deaf peers at school. If she could turn back time, she would have stayed at her original school and completed Victorian Certificate of Education with her deaf peers.



Meg remembers thinking that her future was bleak because she had not met deaf adults while at school. She wasn't told that deaf people could be successful at school and in later life. When she was 16, she finally mixed with deaf adults and realised that many of them had qualifications and real jobs. Meg knew she had a future. This is why Meg strongly believes in having positive role models for deaf children and teenagers.

Meg tried a few sports and eventually found her true passion, netball. She won awards at various clubs and competition levels.

Netball was where she first experienced blatant discrimination. She had thrived under the care of her first coach, but was then moved into an older age group with a different coach. This coach

was reluctant to communicate with her and didn't seem to know what to do with her. Her mum attempted to educate the coach on how to communicate with Meg but without success. Meg's coach demoted her to a different position. The discrimination became more evident when she won the Most Valuable Player Award at the association level despite her team being the bottom of the ladder. Meg changed clubs. To her horror, the previous coach also moved to the same new club. The discrimination continued. It was obvious to her teammates who argued that Meg should play in better positions. Meg was disillusioned, quit netball and did not play again for seven years. She wished she had the tools and confidence to advocate for herself. But she was no quitter. She came back to the game and competed at the national deaf netball championships and represented Victoria at Australian Deaf Games in 2008 and 2012.

Using Auslan interpreters for the first time, Meg excelled at university, but it was not smooth sailing. Meg's interpreter wasn't a good match, so this was the first time she advocated for herself. She asked the university to give her a new interpreter. The request was turned down. Meg would refuse to attend lectures – this got their attention. It took an investigation to discover the interpreter was not qualified. The problem appeared to be resolved however Meg continued to experience difficulties with access and attitudes of some Disability Liaison Officers. But she was able to advocate for a better deal.

Meg's experiences in the workforce began as a young person working in her parents' cherry farm and fruit shop businesses. Her father encouraged Meg to work as a cashier at the fruit shop from the age of 14, dealing directly with customers. It gave her confidence in a hearing world, but she remembers one lady customer who would not trust her with counting the items. Meg would roll her eyes and have a discrete chuckle. There were occasions when her workmates would deliberately disappear from the shop, leaving the lady no choice but to be served by Meg. She loved working in the fruit shop and still drops by to see staff and regular customers.

At 22, Meg embarked on her first overseas trip and caught the travelling bug. She lived and worked in Finland for four years where she learnt Finnish and Finnish Sign Language. She worked with deaf people with disabilities and completed a diploma in disability studies in the process. Returning to Australia, she worked as a personal assistant to CEO and Human Resources Officer at Vicdeaf. She also worked in deaf sports and deaf netball at state and national levels including the organising committee for the 2012 Australian Deaf Games.

REBECCA DRISCOLL

Rebecca Driscoll was aged two when she contracted meningitis. She was hospitalised for six weeks. Rebecca's parents noticed she was not responding to environmental noises and their voices so they went to the doctors to get her hearing tested. She was diagnosed with a profound hearing loss in both ears. Her parents first sought help from Australian Hearing to provide Rebecca with suitable hearing devices. She tried hearing aids and a tactaid but both were unsuccessful. They looked at various program options for early intervention and chose Taralye in Blackburn, Victoria, which had a program that included home visits.



A case manager at Taralye suggested that Rebecca's parents have a chat with a representative from the cochlear implant clinic at the Royal Eye and Ear Hospital. Richard Dowell, an audiologist at the University of Melbourne, visited Taralye to talk to Rebecca's parents about implants and the possibility that Rebecca could be a suitable candidate. After various testings and consultations with other members of the cochlear implant team, her parents decided to proceed with the implant. Rebecca was fitted with a cochlear implant in her right ear in 1989.



Rebecca attended St Mary's School for Children with Impaired Hearing from Prep to Year 5. The school integrated deaf students with the mainstream school located on the campus. Rebecca remembers the years at Taralye and St Mary's very well as this was where she met oral deaf children like herself. She remains in contact with some of them. Rebecca's parents considered it essential that they socialised with families of deaf children. They became involved in the cochlear implant support group for parents which included social activities such as camps.

In 1997 when Rebecca was 11 years old, the family moved to Queensland. This was their long-term plan, put on hold until Rebecca had the confidence to attend a mainstream school. It was a big adjustment for Rebecca moving from comfortable surroundings where she had developed great friendships to a whole new world. She was enrolled in a primary school where she was the only deaf student. Though she made lots of great friends, there were a few students who made her school life unhappy. She told herself that it might be because they had never met a deaf person. It was a good learning experience.

Rebecca told her parents that she wanted to go to a mainstream high school with her hearing friends; a school that her older sister was attending. Her parents decided to enrol her in a different high school with support available for children with disability. Rebecca was very disappointed, but over time she realised the benefit of having support in her school environment.

Entering a new high school can be difficult for any young person who is trying to fit in and be like everyone else. For the first time since leaving Victoria, Rebecca met other deaf students. However, their primary communication mode was Signed English so Rebecca pushed on and learnt the language in order to communicate with them. Rebecca had a good rapport with case managers and teachers whom she could confide in. She had the support of a note taker and assistance with assignments. From Year 10, Rebecca started attending state-wide deaf camps where she met other deaf teenagers, both oral and signing. She loved meeting teenagers like herself and it brought back memories of the cochlear implant family camps in Victoria.

Rebecca went to university to undertake a double degree in Arts and Business. She chose a broad field of study because she did not have a particular career path in mind. Eventually, she chose to major in Communications, Public Relations and Tourism Management as she enjoys writing and being involved in events. During her five years at university, Rebecca had the assistance of Auslan interpreters and a note taker to ensure nothing was missed during lectures and tutorials. After graduating she worked in events and started working in the deafness sector. This is where she developed further appreciation for helping people with a hearing loss.

Every morning or evening Rebecca takes off her cochlear implant for a good few hours, much to the irritation of her parents when she was younger and her husband today. It is how she finds a peaceful retreat from the high levels of concentration in a hearing world demanded of a deaf person.

Looking back, Rebecca wishes she had a deaf role model during her schooling and university years or met more deaf teens who she could relate to. Because of this, she is a member of the Hear For You team. She wants to make sure young deaf people of today have as much access as possible to inspiring deaf role models and to meet other teens like themselves.

A great team of carefully selected, inspiring mentors led by Rebecca delivered the first oral Hear For You program in Queensland and it was a great success. Rebecca looks forward to continuing Hear For You's quest to inspire many more young deaf people with different communication methods, including Auslan.

JOHN LUI

John Lui was born with a profound hearing loss in both ears. The precise cause remains unknown but a possible theory concerns the pesticides sprayed over the forest next to the family home in Brunei, which led to his mother's illness during her pregnancy.

It wasn't until John was nearly one year old that his mother's suspicions were confirmed by doctors, despite their continual assurances otherwise, that John was deaf.

John's father was working as an expatriate for Shell. The family moved between Australia and overseas to countries such as Brunei and the Netherlands. His mother faced an uphill battle to find and secure the services of the necessary auditory-verbal experts to aid in John's developmental and communication skills. John wore hearing aids from the time of diagnosis to ten years of age when he was eligible for an implant as part of the Cochlear's international program.

John's formal education began in the deaf unit at Sydney's Chatswood Primary School in 1990. The next year he transferred to mainstream schooling at Beauty Point Public School. His father secured a job in Hong Kong in 1993 and the family was again uprooted. John began Year 4 at Discovery Bay International School. He moved into the mainstream high school system at Island School where he completed Year 10 in 2000.

At the international school in Hong Kong, John found group discussions and social situations to be awkward at times. He was often left out of the loop when not being able to lip-read, despite the best efforts of his teachers and classmates to include him. His strongest connections were made through individual communications and friendships.

The family decided to return to Australia. The school year in Hong Kong finished in July and Year 11 in Sydney did not start until February. His parents gave John the opportunity to attend the John Newcombe Tennis Academy in New Braunfels, Texas for six months so he could pursue his dream of becoming a professional tennis player.

John commenced Year 11 at North Sydney Boys High School. He had to re-adapt to the Australian accent and the way of selective school teaching. He was not able to listen with one ear to the teacher who was facing the blackboard while writing and chatting with his classmates, as so many of his gifted classmates could. Similar issues cropped up during his years at university but there were other ways of dealing with it that were not available at high school.

John changed schools again for Year 12, enrolling at St Andrews Cathedral School. The reason for the change at such a crucial time was largely because of the different styles of teaching and support services available between a selective government school and a private co-educational school. John found he learned best in a structured environment with strong itinerant support. He was welcomed and made to feel at ease quite quickly perhaps because St Andrews was co-ed at the time from Year 10 onwards, which meant that there were other students coming to the school for the first time in the same year.

At St Andrews, John formed strong friendships with those around him. Given that social cliques are very prominent in school years, it was not always easy to feel part of groups. Throughout his school years, with the exception of the deaf unit at Chatswood Primary, John was usually the only deaf student in the school. John's deafness exacerbated the usual identity issues that all young people go through.



John's love of tennis helped him through his teenage years in forming his sense of self-worth. He cultivated a dream of becoming a professional tennis player. When he was 17, John was the school tennis champion at St Andrews Cathedral School. He represented Macquarie University at the Australian University Games from 2003 to 2008. John regards it as a great privilege to continue his love of tennis through his professional coaching career and his status as one of the top Deaf tennis players in the world.



ACADEMIC RESEARCH SUPPORTED

Hear For You was pleased to have the services of Fulbright Scholar, Hannah Barrett, a PhD Candidate from the University of Massachusetts. Hannah conducted a project on the Hear For You workshops. Hannah was supervised by Professor Anthony Hogan and the report will be available soon on our website.

Hear For You will be working with several tertiary institutions on research into the need for mentoring of deaf and hard of hearing teenagers in Australia and New Zealand. It is hoped that exciting new projects will be announced in 2014.



SUPPORT AND FUNDRAISING

Hear For You is a registered charity which relies solely on donations and support from the community in Australian and New Zealand. Without cash donations to employ the staff and provide resources to support the work of the volunteer mentors, it would be very difficult to ensure high quality programs delivered to the teenagers.

We are working towards improving our funding base by establishing a range of cost effective fundraising strategies.

The organisation's goal is to provide its services in all the major capital cities and in regional and rural Australia by 2020.



OUR PROGRAMS REPORTS

QUEENSLAND ORAL PROGRAM REPORT

A great team of carefully selected, inspiring mentors led by Rebecca Driscoll delivered the first oral Hear For You program in Queensland. It was a great success continuing Hear For You's quest to inspire many more young deaf people in Australia and New Zealand.

As Hear For You is about meeting and inspiring young deaf people to reach their full potential, this is what the Queensland team saw in front of their own eyes!

The program started with a meet and greet for mentees and their mentors. Four weeks later was the first workshop. Sergeant Derick Waterfield and his team from the Original Bootcamp provided a fun session in the morning to shake off the mentees' nerves and encourage teamwork. A qualified deaf lawyer talked with the teens from Year 9 to 12 about her experiences growing up with a hearing loss. She stressed the importance of dreaming big and finding a way no matter what!

The second workshop was held at Griffith University, a normally quiet place on weekends but it was well and truly alive with the university's annual Open Day. The workshop was all about careers and technology. Phil Harper, Community Liaison Manager from Australian Communication Exchange and Hear For You's very own Sophie Li demonstrated the latest technology and apps that teens can use in their everyday lives. The mentees rang Hear For You Chief Executive Officer David Brady for a chat using the National Relay Service.

The third and last workshop for the year brought the mentees together as a group for a drama workshop. It was facilitated by Anna Molnar, a freelance drama coach with experience working with young people with disabilities. During the parents' session, parents listened to mentors share their experiences of growing up with a hearing loss and guest speakers. One of the guest speakers included Dr Carlie Driscoll. She shared her personal experiences growing up with two deaf siblings and, being an academic herself, shared some interesting research findings on positive and negative impacts of having a deaf sibling. Parents absolutely loved this session as they came to the realisation they were not alone. To end the program, the mentees performed for their parents 'The Wonderful Wide World of People'.

All in all, the mentors saw 12 teens graduate from the program with much more confidence and smiles on their faces. One mentor said, "By the third workshop, my quietest mentee was the most 'out there'!" In hindsight, for its first year in Queensland, the Hear For You program was immensely successful.

The program would not have been such a great success without the energy of the participants and inspiring



mentors. Our Mentors' dedication and commitment to wanting to inspire young deaf people is beyond words. Every one of them is truly inspiring.

It is important to thank the St George Foundation and Australian Communication Exchange whose support enabled the program to come to Queensland. Thank you also to Visible Ink Valley and Griffith University for the use of their wonderful facilities for the workshops.

In 2014 we look forward to expanding the program in Queensland because of the demand from parents, teens and teachers.

Rebecca Driscoll

Queensland Oral Program Co-ordinator



VICTORIAN ORAL PROGRAM REPORT

The Oral Mentoring Program in Victoria was achieved through a fantastic partnership with the Victorian Deaf Education Institute and Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Hear For You appreciates all the support, advice and encouragement in the past year.

The program was delivered in two key ways, firstly the workshops with the young people were to be delivered over a four month period, including an initial Meet & Greet session, followed by three workshops. The second was to host an informative Parent information session.

The key themes for each of the three workshops, delivered in consecutive order, were Leadership and Teamwork, Careers, Communication and Technology, and developing self-esteem - in particular, the confidence to stand up and be more assertive as an individual.

The 2013 Victorian Oral Program recorded a total of 24 enrolments from deaf oral teenagers from Years 7 to 11, with seven of these being repeat enrolments from the 2012 program. There were at least 19 participants in each of the four sessions, with only two to three mentees unable to attend a workshop due to illness.

The first workshop, Leadership and Teamwork was held at the North Melbourne Football Club beginning with the teamwork boot camp which was held on the famous Arden St oval. After the boot camp, the mentees and mentors retired to the North Melbourne Football club to have informative discussions about leaderships and teamwork. The venue provided a great background for leadership discussions and it was one of the

most impressive venues used by the Hear For You program in Victoria to date. Thank you to North Melbourne Football club for supporting Hear For You.

The second workshop focused on Careers, Communications and Technology, and was held at ANZ Bank's International headquarters in the Docklands. Mentees toured with an ANZ employee, and were inspired by the diversity of ANZ's business operations and roles as well as how people with a disability were supported. Australian Communication Exchange (ACE) also allowed mentees to test out different types of assistive technologies that can help at home,



school and work such as the Captioned Telephony, Dragon Dictation, Silent Tweets and Open MiSuite, which is an app that provides captions and Auslan videos for galleries and zoos.

The final workshop held at the Victorian College of the Arts utilising the professional drama studio space that allowed mentees to develop their self-esteem and confidence to stand up and speak up which helped develop vital confidence skills. The speakers for the Parent Session included a hearing father sharing his experience living with his deaf wife and children, a deaf man elaborating his story about how he met his fiancé, and a mentor's hearing housemate showing insight into sharing a house with two deaf people. Parents then had the opportunity to participate in a discussion with the guest speakers.

The team of mentors for the Victoria Oral Program included five new mentors and three existing mentors who all thoroughly enjoyed their involvement in the 2013 program.

Sophie Li

Victorian Oral Program Co-ordinator



VICTORIAN AUSLAN PROGRAM REPORT

Hear For You marks another milestone by delivering its first sign language program – the Victorian Auslan Program – in Australia and New Zealand. It was held in Melbourne in 2013, helping the organisation achieve inclusiveness and bilingualism. However, this would not have been made possible without the strong partnership with the Victorian Institute of Deaf Education and Victorian Government Department of Education and Early Childhood.

The implementation of the first sign language program commenced in July 2012 and was completed in July 2013 with all 18 places filled. Meg Aumann was recruited as Program Coordinator to oversee this implementation. The program was based on the usual program format, modified to suit the signing teens and Deaf culture with a full team of six mentors who were native signers.

Of the 18 enrolled participants, 61 percent were female and 39 percent were male. The majority were in Years 9, 11 and 12 with no participants from Year 7. The participants came from three schools with deaf faculties including one in regional Victoria.

The first workshop focused on Leadership, Teamwork and Identity. There was a heavy focus on activities, getting to know each other and games, with outdoor activities held in Fitzroy Gardens opposite the workshop venue at Vicdeaf in East Melbourne. It was also a good opportunity for the mentors to develop a positive and relaxed relationship with their mentees, instead of a teacher-student type relationship. The mentees were



given an opportunity in this workshop to self-reflect, in particular regarding their values and identifying their strengths.

The second workshop touched on the themes of work, study, technology, human rights and international deaf youth activities. Colin Allen, President of the World Federation of Deaf was an inspiring speaker for the mentees. Colin talked about how deaf people are treated in some developing countries including instances where human rights are breached, such as when deaf children don't have access to education. A discussion on the United Nations Convention on Universal Rights of Persons with a Disability was held in which the mentees were particularly interested and engaged.

Phil Harper from the Australian Communication Exchange ran a workshop on technology, smart apps and relay services. Mentees were given an opportunity to interview Phil and some mentors about their careers and achievements. Mentees found Phil particularly inspiring, given he left school early but decided several years later to complete his education, finishing high school at the age of 25. The theme 'dream job' was consistently used throughout the work/study component of the day, to encourage the realisation that it is possible for mentees to achieve their dream job.

The final workshop focused on developing elements of self-esteem: confidence, self-expression and creativity through drama workshops and discussion sessions.

Three from the older age group performed at the graduation ceremony at the end of the day which exceeded everyone's expectations and left some parents in disbelief that their 'shy' child could perform so confidently in front of a large group. One mentee has since gone on to enroll in a drama camp, which is noteworthy given their shyness at the beginning of the program.

The older mentees who chose to participate in the discussion sessions were split into male and female groups. They had a mentor-facilitated casual discussion about topics including family, communicating with hearing peers, boyfriends and girlfriends, friendships, dealing with difficult friends, bullying, anger and stress, being assertive instead of aggressive, and being a self-advocate. Mentors shared their personal experiences as well. These very personal topics were purposefully reserved for the last workshop to allow an adequate relationship to be built between mentors and mentees. It was acknowledged by all that the required level of comfort and trust had really only just been developed, and a further workshop (at least) would be beneficial.

A parent session was held in the afternoon of the last workshop, separate to the youth workshops. Each mentor took turns to speak with them about their personal experience. Parents were also given the opportunity to ask questions and express concerns, if any, about their child's future.

100 percent of respondents to the post-event survey indicated they would recommend the program to other people, and the majority indicated they would like to be involved in 2014. A number of parents noted immediate positive changes in their child's development since completing the program.

"[She is] much more willing to take responsibility for self... more sensitive and showing empathy."

"[My] child was inspired and feels much more confident about her future options."

The Hear For You staff, mentors, Victorian participants and their families sincerely thank the Victorian Deaf Education Institute and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for their foresight and commitment to supporting deaf and hard of hearing teenagers in Victoria. We look forward to a working relationship with the Victorian Deaf Education Institute and Department of Education and Early Childhood to ensure more deaf and hard of hearing young people can be part of this life changing program.

Meg Aumann

Victorian Auslan Oral Program Co-ordinator



NEW SOUTH WALES ORAL PROGRAM REPORT

The New South Wales program enjoyed another successful year of mentoring workshops with some noticeable changes from previous years.

This was the first time the workshops were held in the Hearing Hub at Macquarie University in Sydney, which signalled a move away from the previous locations of the Inspire Foundation in Balmain and the Shepherd Centre in Darlington.

Olivia Andersen went on maternity leave shortly after the meet and greet session in April and passed on the responsibility to John Lui to coordinate the remaining workshops in her absence.

John was fortunate to have the support of an exceptional group of experienced mentors in David Brady, Kate Obermayer, Rania Ajaka, Dave Carter, and Heather Cook.

There were 18 mentees in the 2013 program with seven teenagers in both the Years 7 and 8, and 9 and 10 groups, and four teenagers in the Years 11 and 12 group. It was a great mix of boys and girls, all with their own unique personalities and experiences to share.

Over the course of the three workshops, we covered a wide range of topics and activities from boot camp to team-building activities and future careers. There were many interesting experiences shared by the mentees and mentors and a few new friends being made amongst the teenagers.

The most pleasing aspect of the program from the perspective of a mentor is to witness the transition of several mentees in the NSW program going from hesitant, quiet, shy, and unconfident teenagers when they walked in the first workshop. Then by the last workshop the transformation into happy and willing participants by the drama workshop was an invaluable experience for myself, fellow mentees, and the parents.

Even though the mentees themselves may not explicitly verbalise the positive changes in their attitude and behaviour, the parents come back to us with smiles and gratitude that their child is beginning to open up more to their families and mainstream school peers.

In the Parents Session involved a robust question and answer session with the mentors, parents, and the guest speakers with many burning questions they have not been able to ask before. If the parents feel more comfortable knowing that they are not alone and are more empowered to handle the challenges ahead, then the future is looking brighter for their child as they return to a nurturing and welcoming environment at home.

We hope to see new mentees and the return of our 2013 mentees in 2014 and to continue empowering them to grow and succeed as individuals, regardless of their hearing levels.

John Lui

New South Wales Oral Program
Co-ordinator



NEW ZEALAND ORAL PROGRAM REPORT

The Hearing House launched the NZ Hear For You pilot programme in Auckland in March 2011. Nine mentors were recruited from around New Zealand and a Mentor training workshop was held in February 2011 and a series of three mentoring workshops were held from March till June at the University of Auckland Business School in the city.

In 2012, twelve teenagers from all over the North Island took part in three Hear For You workshops held in June, July and August.

In 2013, 18 teenagers have been taking part in Hear For You with the final workshop scheduled on the 15th of June.

The mentees are grouped according to their year at school and the mentors deliver age relevant workshop material. The final workshop brings all of the teens together to take part in a play, which they perform, for their parents and family at the Parent session. Survey forms are then issued to the mentees and the parents and some of their responses are presented in this application.

Parents have remarked on their child's increased confidence, improved outlook on life and career and a more accepting attitude towards their hearing loss. The teenagers have come from all over the North Island and we have noticed an increase in interest from parents from around the country for the 2014 programme.

The NZ Hear For You Mentors come from all over NZ and bring with them commitment, passion and a high degree of professionalism. They are truly inspirational and are genuinely concerned with improving the lives of hard of hearing teenagers. All of the mentors are profoundly deaf and have cochlear implants with the exception of Natasha Barnes who wears hearing aids.

Sam Taylor is a Doctor working at Dunedin Public Hospital. Eva Bergler is a Paramedic working with St Johns. Natasha Barnes is a Nuclear Disarmament Specialist and works with the Department of Internal Affairs. Anna McNab is a Chartered Accountant with her own accounting firm. Hayden Nash is a budding politician and works for the Commerce Commission. Josh McLean is an Application Specialist and works for Trimble Navigation Limited. Josh Foreman is working towards a Bachelor of Physical Education at the University of Auckland. Michael Allen is an Internal Communications Executive at Air New Zealand and was the top public relations graduate in 2005.

Elena Keith is the Special Projects and Events Manager at the Hearing House and the Programme Director for Hear For You NZ. Since working together since 2011 the mentors have become a real team that lead and inspire the teens to aim high and to not let their hearing loss define what they can and can't do.



THE FUTURE IN NEW ZEALAND

- Hear For You is the only programme of its kind in New Zealand and is currently based in Auckland. We have had numerous requests for parents from the Wellington region and the South Island to expand the programme to Christchurch to better meet the needs of the teenagers in these regions.
- Hear For You is a much needed and valuable programme for young deaf New Zealanders and should we secure enough funding we intend to continue to run in Auckland and launch Hear For You in the South Island in 2014 so that more deaf teenagers can benefit from this life changing programme.

2014 looks to be an exciting time for the New Zealand program as it continues to grow in name and recognition as a great program to for New Zealand deaf and hard of hearing teenagers.

Elena Keith

New Zealand Oral Program Co-ordinator, under licence held by the New Zealand Hearing House



SUCCESS STORIES



STEPHANIE NASR - MENTEE 2010 PROGRAM

Some might say that I am truly blessed, I have my amazing cousin Rania Ajaka who was a mentor for Hear For You and for myself for as long as I can remember. I graduated as a Hear For You mentee in 2010.

Three years later, I am twenty-one years of age and recently completed a Bachelor of Architecture at the University of Technology Sydney and will be carrying on to study Masters in Architecture, something I never thought in my wildest dreams was possible. At the same time, I work with an architect and am a freelance makeup artist, which has definitely boosted my confidence in expressing my ideas and communicating with other people. Self-employment is definitely difficult especially at the start, however it has boosted my skills and confidence in ways I never imagined. I have been very blessed with great love and support from my family and friends, which motivated me to achieve set goals.

While being a mentee at Hear For You, it was some of the inspiring stories from my mentors and mentees that simply made clear that anything and everything is possible for me. My cousin and mentor Rania is always one call away, especially when I'm confused or stressed about any issues relating to my hearing. I found that for me it takes a simple positive, honest and encouraging response to keep marching on. Hear For You is like Rania. And not everybody has a Rania! So we're lucky to have Hear For You and I'm excited for all students to join such a great team.

This year, I helped assist the mentors at a couple of sessions and I can't help but express my excitement of officially becoming a Hear For You mentor next year. I would like to thank everyone on the Hear For You team for this incredible journey and I look forward to sharing and listening to some incredible stories... bring on 2014!



SAM CARTLEDGE – MENTEE 2009 NEW SOUTH WALES PROGRAM

Since graduating from Hear For You in 2009, I completed my HSC as the outgoing College Captain of Broughton Anglican College in Campbelltown and am currently in my second year of studying a Bachelor of Arts in Architecture at the University of Canberra. In order to pursue this degree, I moved away from home to reside on campus at the University of Canberra. The move itself was life changing. It taught me to become more responsible as a student and person and over time my personal independence grew.

Alongside university studies, as a dedicated and aspiring athlete, I recently returned from the 22nd Deaflympics held in Sofia, Bulgaria, where I was elected Vice Captain of the National Deaf Basketball team, 'The Goannas'. I am a University of Canberra Basketball Scholarship holder and part time coach of multiple junior teams at Radford College. I have aspirations to

reach the highest level of Basketball that I can, with the NBL being my ultimate goal. I also desire to further enhance and improve Deaf Sports in Australia with Deaf Basketball being my main priority.

To enable me to get to where I am now, I can say it was the mentors at Hear for You that built confidence and independence in my philosophy and DNA. Hear For You introduced me to other teenagers going through the same life challenges, looking for our place in a hearing world. The Hear For You mentors pointed me and my fellow mentees in the right direction. Knowing what we were going through having already been there before, they offered advice and guidance that continues to this day, to help and motivate us to our future aspirations.

In the not too distant future, I want to follow in the footsteps of my Hear For You mentors and help advocate and enhance deaf and hard of hearing people to reach their full potential in life and not be hindered or put off by small hurdles along the way. I am slowly learning Auslan and ASL so as to help me communicate and connect with my deaf friends from all over the world. I want to encourage everyone to succeed and realise their gifts and talents and to inspire them to put them to use.



FEEDBACK

PARENT FEEDBACK

- After the first day, when I picked my daughter up, she was grinning from ear to ear and said she had “the best day in a long time”. It’s all she’s been talking about! My daughter was very impressed by the mentors and also enjoyed being with the other teens. Thanks so much for making the opportunity available to her - it certainly is worth the trip to Auckland!
- Fantastic, all mentors are a true inspiration.
- My daughter sparkled with joy when she came home.
- A fantastic and very valuable program. Programs like this help to validate the young deaf person’s worth, improve self-esteem, networks and provide “lived” experiences that teenagers can relate to. I very much appreciate it. Thank you.
- Thanks so much for offering this program and providing your time and the opportunity to spend some time with some great role models.
- Our son had stopped wearing his hearing aids and the timing of the workshop was perfect to assist in helping him adjust to wearing them around other people. He has reverted back to being confident about wearing them and people noticing. Thank you.
- Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all you have done for our daughter. You are an amazing bunch of people and I am so very grateful for all you have done.
- Our daughter’s confidence has improved dramatically. She has “dealt” with bullies at school herself in terms of her being hard of hearing.
- The mentors always possessed a sense of professionalism and their attitude and happy smiley faces were magic.
- I just think the young ones are so very lucky to have something like this, to go to and have mentors to look up to. Conan had Ana and Hayden as his mentors and Conan said they inspired him. Already looking forward to the next workshop and many thanks again Elena.
- Thanks a lot Hear For You, she really enjoyed it. Said it was great to relate to people who understood the issues she had to deal with. She had previous contact with young deaf people, but most were signing, so had very different experiences.
- Sasa has been really impressed with the workshop. She keeps saying that the workshops are awesome and the mentors are cool.



- Thank you so much for organising Hear For You! Ella had an awesome time! She hasn’t stopped talking about it all weekend! It far exceeded any ideas she thought the group would engage in! Thank you.
- I wanted to say thank you very much for providing this programme. Carlea left there beaming, talking about all the new friends she had made. When I asked what was the best thing about the day, she replied that it was the fact that everyone spoke like her and that made her not worry about sounding different, so she was able to say whatever she wanted to. I think it was a relief to Carlea to be around so many people (especially older ones) who were just like her. Once again, thank you very, very much and we are so looking forward to seeing you and your team again in May.
- Just to say a big thank you to everyone that is involved in this amazing programme. I feel very lucky that my child has been able to be involved and am sure it will make a big difference to his confidence levels as time goes by. Also for me the reassurance that anything is possible for him.
- It was so good to meet the New South Wales mentors and other parents, I am now more confident of sharing the journey ahead with my child, thankyou!
- Thank you so much for the opportunity for my daughter to attend. It will assist her with her growing and learning development for her future. I look forward to coming to the next one.
- Hard to hold back my tears of joy when I saw my son participating in the drama play, he has grown in confidence and happiness.
- This is a great model of youth health promotion! It would be great to get it out to many more teens, families and schools. To bring awareness and support to the adolescent and broader community.
- Thank you so much for providing the Auslan workshops for my child, it was inspiring to see the mentors share their experience with him.

MENTEES FEEDBACK

- It’s so fun and it’s great to have experiences with other deaf people.
- I loved working with my mentors.
- I would recommend Hear For You to everyone! Because it is more welcoming - whether you are deaf or not.
- Hear For You is fun and educational.
- I had a great experience.
- It’s the best!!! It makes me feel welcome and happier! And I have fun and friends! Thank you!
- Hope I can attend next year too!
- Hear For You has motivated me to start searching for a part-time job and my level of knowledge about my future has gained more.
- Since joining Hear For You, I feel I have grown as a person in confidence about who I am and my deafness.
- Hear For You broke down the tensions between me and my mother when it came to discussing relationships and love. I realised the mentors experiences were similar to that of what my mother was trying to explain. Now mum is one of my best friends when I want to talk about my relationships.



THANK YOU

Hear For You would like to thank all of our financial supporters and volunteers

DONATIONS

Organisations

- The Carnegie Foundation
- The Matilda Rose Early Intervention Centre

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- Emma Lawrence
- Darren McLeod
- Stephanie Nasr
- Dr Andrew Normand
- Alicia Stack

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- Leaders Advisory led by Donald De Boar (Pro-Bono Accountant)
- Macquarie University - The Hearing Hub
- North Melbourne Football Club
- Original Boot Camp
- Victoria College of the Arts
- VicDeaf



2014 PROGRAM*

Program	Year 7 & 8	Year 9 & 10	Year 11 & 12	Parents
Workshop 1	Meet & Greet Identity / Leadership / Teamwork			Parents Introduction Session
Workshop 2	Careers / Communication			
Workshop 3	Confidence / Human Rights / Technology			
Workshop 4	Relationships / Well-being / Drama			Mentees Performance & Graduation

* Auslan and Oral Programs will alter slightly to accommodate cultural, social and personal differences as well as availability of mentors, guest speakers, venues and funding.

Programs are tailored to specific age groups that reflect the different stages of a teenager's life situations. More detail is provided after registration, once age groups and pre-workshop feedback are considered.

DATES

New South Wales Oral Program

- April to July

Queensland Oral Program

- March to May

Queensland Auslan Program

- July to September

Victorian Oral Program

- April to June

Victorian Auslan Program

- May to July

Rural and Regional Australia Oral Program

- Early July

For New Zealand or any other location please email: info@hearfor you.com.au

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