

# BACKTALK



**VOL 2 ISSUE 1** *THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF SSPNJ* **SPRING 2015**



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## SSPNJ Staff Update

SSPNJ Program Director Kathy Gabry and Northern Regional Manager Lori Amato are leaving SSPNJ June 30, 2015. Kathy and Lori have appreciated working with all of the SSPNJ Family, and both will return to their "roots" as active SSPs on the Approved SSPs list. The new Statewide Coordinator, Kathleen Spata, starts work the first week of July. We'll introduce Kathleen in the next issue of **BackTalk**. **Reminder: all SSPNJ services and policies remain the same**, and Dot is ready to take your SSP requests. Thanks for your support as we transition to new leadership!



## **SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK**

**We want to know what you think of this newsletter!**

**David Rims School of Education PO Box 7718 Ewing, NJ 08628**

**[ssp.nj.tcnj@gmail.com](mailto:ssp.nj.tcnj@gmail.com) 1-888-684-6903 fax 1-609-771-2768**

**Send anonymous comments to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/62KYK8V>**



Sprint’s Aparna Lele, right, discusses new technology

## Taste of Technology

By  
Carly  
Fredericks



Joe Lovett’s presentation

SSPNJ definitely left an impression at The Taste of Technology event held at The College of New Jersey on March, 19, 2015! The Taste of Technology conference was a collaboration of six organizations/agencies: Sprint New Jersey Relay, The College of NJ, the NJ Consortium on Deaf-Blindness, iCanConnect/NJ, SSPNJ and the NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Taste of Technology was an opportunity to raise awareness and understanding of the new technologies that are available for individuals with a combined hearing and vision loss. More importantly, it was an opportunity to allow our new families to engage with our community and to observe the wonderful support services going on around them.

More than 230 people attended the conference, including 30 consumers, SSPs and interpreters. Families and their educational teams were also present. Professionals from school districts, CBVI staff, and individuals that work independently in the DeafBlind community all came together for one cause!

iCanConnect Outreach Coordinator and NJCDB Family Specialist Carly Fredericks, said, “SSPNJ shined showing off the benefits of their program. The SSPs were professional and enjoyed the event just as much as the consumers.”

Advocate and filmmaker Joe Lovett presented the Keynote address. The documentary *Going Blind* is his personal journey about vision loss due to glaucoma. Due to the overwhelmingly positive response to Joe’s presentation, a screening of his film may take place at an upcoming social gathering. Stay tuned for details!

We hope those of you who attended enjoyed the event, and we hope it will empower you to apply your new skills and/or information in your workplace or everyday life.

## SSPNJ Activity Update

	1st Q 2015	4 <sup>th</sup> Q 2014	3 <sup>rd</sup> Q 2014
<b># Clients Using Services</b>	26	27	31
<b># SSPs Providing Services</b>	27	31	36
<b># Completed Assignments</b>	238	252	245

**BOOK REVIEW*****Helen Keller: A Life***

By Kathy Gabry

My fascination with Helen Keller goes back to 1962 and the release of one of my all-time favorite movies, *The Miracle Worker*.

In 1998, a very good friend, knowing of this fascination, gave me *Helen Keller: A Life*. I usually read a book only once, but I've read this one twice and plan to read it again this summer.

Helen was admired by the general public for overcoming the challenges of being both deaf and blind, as well as for her altruistic spirit. Through her personal story, letters, notes and pictures, we find that she was so much more. This is an honest portrayal of Helen as a vulnerable, humble human being with a sensitive soul. I admire her even more every time I read this book.

*Available from NLS and Bookshare in Daisy Text, BRF and audio*

**Summer Reading & Recreation****BOOK CLUB AT TBBC**

The New Jersey Talking Book & Braille Center hosts a Book Club. The club is facilitated by Karen Carson and meets quarterly both on the phone and at the library. If you would like to participate, call Karen at 800.792.8322.

**SCIENCE SENSE TOURS: CATS & DOGS OF NORTH AMERICA**

*American Museum of Natural History, NYC, Wed, July 8, 2 p.m.*

Explore the varieties of cats and dogs found in North America. Discover the Canadian Lynx, the Cougar, and more in the Bernard Family of North American Mammals. Specially trained museum tour guides engage participants through extensive verbal descriptions and touchable objects. To register, call 212.769.5567 or e-mail [accessibility@amnh.org](mailto:accessibility@amnh.org). Science Sense is free with museum admission.

**SEEING THROUGH DRAWING CLASS**

*The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC, Sat, July 10, 2015, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.*

This class is for adults who are blind or partially sighted. The museum's collection of art inspires innovative techniques that make drawing accessible. Class is free, but reservations are required; request interpreter at time of reservation: 212.650.2010 or [access@metmuseum.org](mailto:access@metmuseum.org)

**PHILLY TOUCH TOURS: MORRIS ARBORETUM, Summer Evening Event**

*Philadelphia, Wednesday, July 22, 2015, 5 – 8 p.m.*

Light dinner from 5 – 6 p.m., and the tour starts at 6 p.m. Explore the Tree Adventure, the Rock Wall Garden, and the Victorian Fernery. Contact Trish Maunder for more info and to reserve your spot: 215.790.9079 or [trish@phillytouchtours.com](mailto:trish@phillytouchtours.com)

**Advisory Council Thanks**

A HUGE thank you to the members of the **SSPNJ Advisory Council** for their two years of service, December 2012 – December 2014: Stephanie Arrington, Dawn Brady, Alice Eaddy, Victoria Jarosz, Jason Weiland, Chris Woodfill and Martha Zapata.



## Info & Policy – Review Quiz

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**DP-TIP  
Deaf-Blind Training,  
Interpreting & Professional  
Development**

Webinars available at any time

<http://www.dbtip.org>

**DBLNJ**

No meetings in July & August  
Next meeting: 9/19 @ JKTC

**DIVERSE DEAF CLUB**

No meetings in July & August  
Next meeting: 9/19 DINGO

**MONTHLY DEAF CHATS**

**East Hanover, Godfather Pizzeria**

1<sup>st</sup> Mon, 6 – 10 p.m.

**Edison, Starbucks, Menlo Park Mall Food Court**

1<sup>st</sup> Fri, 6:30 – 9 p.m.

**Montclair, Panera**

1<sup>st</sup> Wed, 6 – 10 p.m.

**Paramus, Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, Garden State Plaza**

3<sup>rd</sup> Fri, 7 – 10 p.m.

**West Orange, Panera**

3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs, 7:30 – 10p.m.

**REMINDER: IF YOU'RE GOING TO DEAF CHAT ... get your SSP Requests in early! (activity code #501)**

So far in 2015, 12 SSPs have renewed their SSPNJ credentials. At renewal time, we asked our SSPs to take a quiz. The questions below were frequently missed. Can you get them right??

1) The emergency signal for Deaf-Blind is which letter drawn large on the individual's back?

**O X B C**

2) Who hires SSPs?

**DeafBlind individuals SSPNJ**

3) If an assignment goes overtime, SSPNJ will pay the SSP for the extra time. WHO has to tell us that the time went over?

**DeafBlind individual SSP**

4) If an SSP has to cancel, who should she notify?

**SSPNJ DeafBlind individual**

5) How much time is considered a "No Show"?

**15 minutes 30 minutes 60 minutes**

6) Who provides an SSP with a 1099 for tax purposes for earning more than \$600 per client in a tax year?

**DeafBlind individual SSPNJ CAU**

7) As you're going through a doorway, who ALWAYS goes first?

**DeafBlind individual SSP**

8) **True or False:** As long as your comments are positive, it's okay to talk about other SSPs and DeafBlind people.

9) **True or False:** If you're an SSP on an assignment that involves shopping, it's okay for you to shop and buy things for yourself, as long as you put your purchases in your backpack and keep your hands and arms free for communicating and guiding.

10) **True or False:** While you're SSPing, it's okay to call Access Link to check on today's transportation.

**ANSWERS: 1) X 2) DB 3) DB 4) DeafBlind consumer 5) 60 mins 6) CAU 7) SSP 8) False 9) False 10) True**