

Signature. inspire

Issue 4

November 2018



A W A R D S E D I T I O N

Welcome

Welcome to this special edition of Signature Inspire Magazine. To coincide with the tenth anniversary of The Signature Annual Awards, we have decided to dedicate the entire issue to those who have been recognised for their amazing work over the years.

The Signature Annual Awards are a cornerstone in our work to recognise people who are going above and beyond to improve access for deaf people. For the past nine years, our prestigious awards have been awarded to business leaders, community groups, volunteers, and teachers to name a few.

To celebrate our tenth anniversary, we are bringing the awards back to the North East where Signature is based. On Friday 9th November 2018, we will welcome our finalists and their guests to the iconic BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art on the stunning Newcastle-Gateshead Quayside.

In previous years, we have hosted the awards in London, Durham, Leeds and Manchester. Since 2009, we have had the pleasure celebrating 125 winners, with a further 10 to be announced this year.

Inside this issue you will find interviews with some previous winners, and a glimpse into their lives after the Signature Annual Awards. You will also find the names of all 125 Signature Annual Award winners!



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2009

Carol Cook

Regional Teacher Award

Carol won the Regional Teacher Award for being an extremely enthusiastic and inspiring teacher. She makes lessons fun, interesting and full of information. Her passion for teaching is infectious and she is always thinking of new ways to help and encourage her students to learn. Carol uses a whole range of teaching methods one to one, group work, role play, video camera, handouts and computers.

Truly passionate about deaf awareness, Carol brings together the hearing and deaf community, organising a sign time club once a month, buying prizes for the quizzes she comprises and introducing many students into a local deaf club.

- ➔ The Signature Annual Awards exist as a way to recognise the achievements of individuals and organisations that are going above and beyond for the rights and accessibility of deaf and hard of hearing people.

How does it feel to have been awarded the Regional Teacher award in 2009?

To have won the award for 2 years was fantastic - and made better knowing that it was my students that had nominated me.

- ➔ Would you say winning a Signature Annual Award has had a positive impact on you?

It gave me confidence and proved to me that I must be doing a good job!

- ➔ Celebrating the achievements of inspirational people and organisations is the driving force of the Signature Annual Awards. What inspires you to continue the amazing work you're doing?

Knowing that I make a huge difference in peoples lives. I have seen my students go on to change jobs and work in the industry and it is always wonderful to know that I was a part of that.

- ➔ If you could offer some advice to organisations that are looking to make a difference in terms of their deaf awareness strategies, what would you say?

That it doesn't take long to learn some deaf awareness. I have held some 2 hour deaf awareness workshops and the impact of those have been amazing.



So 2 hours out of someone's day can make a massive difference.

- ➔ What changes would you love to see happen in the near future?

There has been much talk of a GCSE in BSL - it would be wonderful if this happened.

There is so much demand in schools but, because it isn't a GCSE, schools have issues for the funding to teach the level 1.

- ➔ We're sure you're busy at the moment, but what are you currently working on?

I have been self employed for the past 5 years teaching levels 1 to 3. The business is ever expanding and the workload is increasing.

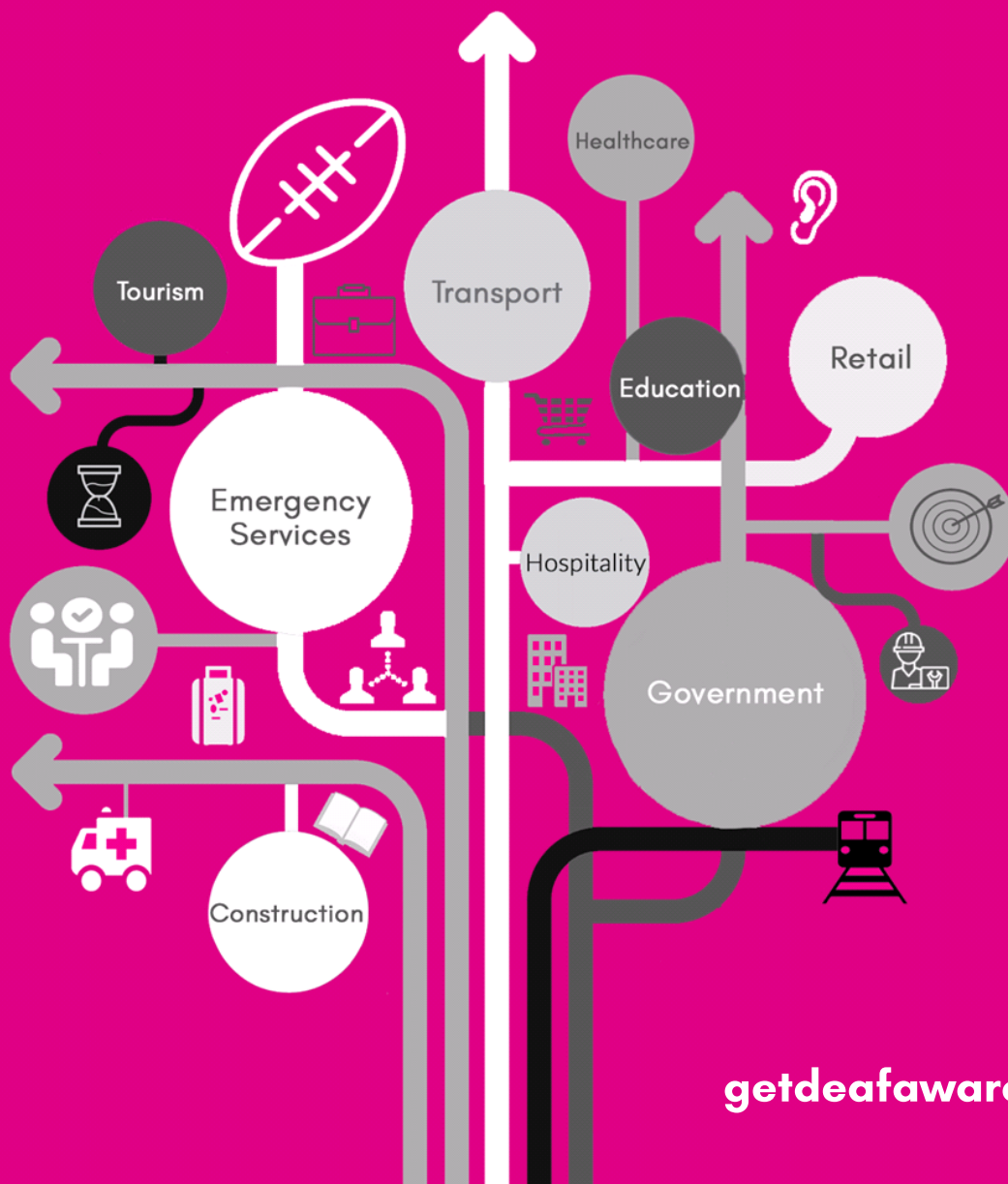
But this is fine and exciting. it is great to know that there is still so much demand for BSL courses.

As well as running my own courses, I am also teaching level 1 in a local secondary school and also to a local business.



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2011

Jean Gough

Communication Professional of the Year Award

Jean Gough is a Speech to Text Reporter (STTR) with a wide range of experience working in the UK and across Europe. She is a friendly face who has tremendous patience and puts everyone at ease.

Jean was previously one of the most experienced subtitlers working for the BBC and then Red Bee Media providing live subtitling on TV programmes such as the BBC News and Big Brother. She was a truly deserving winner in 2011.

➔ **How does it feel to have been awarded the Communication Professional Award in 2011?**

I was very proud to have been nominated by my peers for doing a job that I love.

Also, I think it helped to raise the profile and awareness of speech to text reporting as another essential means of communication support.

➔ **What do you remember about the awards evening, and how did you feel when you were announced as the winner?**

I had been nominated for the award a year or so earlier, but on that occasion the award went to a far more worthy winner, Sara Scanlon, who worked tirelessly for the lipspeaking profession.

In 2011, I had high hopes, but didn't want to get too excited.

During the evening, as the names of fellow nominees were read out, detailing what they had done to merit their nomination, I was amazed at just how much they had each done in the course of their work, and beyond, and how they were all potential winners!

I was absolutely delighted when my name was announced in 2011, although it seemed an incredibly long walk to get to the stage at the front to collect my award!

➔ **Would you say winning a Signature Annual Award has had a positive impact on you?**

Yes. I felt that all my time and effort on behalf of my profession over the preceding years had been worthwhile.



I have always tried to boost awareness of what speech to text reporters actually do amongst my fellow language professionals (interpreters, lipspeakers and notetakers), and it gave me fresh impetus to keep going.

I am very proud to include the title Signature Communication Professional of the Year 2011 on all my letterheads and at the bottom of my emails, whenever I feel it's appropriate.

I may be a has-been now, as other more worthy winners have been announced in succeeding years, but I still look at my unique green glass award ornament occasionally and remember that colleagues and others thought I was worthy of the award.

➔ **Do you think that the awards have had a positive impact on the deaf sector itself?**

Yes, I think so. It's raised awareness of the range of professionals out there prepared to go the extra mile, or several miles in some instances. I was very proud to be the first speech to text reporter to receive the Communication Professional of the Year Award, and I know a number of my colleagues were pleased, on my behalf.

I received some lovely emails from colleagues and clients after the awards evening. My local newspaper (the Biggleswade Chronicle) even ran an article about my receiving the award, including a photo of yours truly, which raised awareness of speech to text reporters, what we do and the service we provide.

Some of my neighbours had no idea what I did for a living before they read the article, so I was able to talk to them and spread the word and the deaf awareness message even further.

- ➔ Celebrating the achievements of inspirational people and organisations is the driving force of the Signature Annual Awards. What inspires you to continue the amazing work you're doing?

I just love my work. Every day is different. I meet such a variety of people and it's great to see equality in action. Every time someone reading the text from my screen joins in at a meeting, a conference, a training course, or even in response to a joke at a wedding reception, I know I've done my job.

As soon as I can see my client smiling at a joke, or reacting to something they've just read a moment before, that's all the inspiration I need to keep doing what I do.

- ➔ If you could offer some advice to organisations that are looking to make a difference in terms of their deaf awareness strategies, what would you say?

Deaf awareness isn't rocket science; most of it is just commonsense, being conscious of other people and being considerate. Don't always assume deafness equates with sign language. Everyone can benefit from deaf awareness, at work and at home.

I'm constantly surprised how some people will have that light-bulb moment when you draw some basic point of deaf awareness to their attention. It's quite simple, but it's amazing how misunderstandings happen when work colleagues/bosses are just inconsiderate or thoughtless.

- ➔ What changes would you love to see happen in the near future?

So many more people could benefit from speech to text support than happens currently. The numbers of people with acquired hearing loss who use English as their first language are steadily increasing, currently far more than those who use sign language. We need to raise the profile of the ACE professionals - so STTRs, electronic notetakers and lipspeakers – and find a way to create more awareness that such support exists. There is a HUGE gap between those who need text support and those who receive it, whether that's from a stenographer, palantypist, or through voice recognition.

We need to raise greater awareness amongst the general public that there's no stigma or shame in having a hearing loss!

- ➔ We're sure you're busy at the moment, but what are you currently working on?

Over the last year, together with the Chair of the Association of Verbatim Speech to Text Reporters, I've spent a fair bit of time working with Signature and NRCPD to put together a workable route to registration for STTRs wanting to work in the communication support field. The last time an STTR was able to register was back in 2012. Between us, we devised and ran a training course for six candidates culminating in a live assessment, which I'm pleased to say they all passed.

I am on the NRCPD Practitioners' Forum, and I hope I am able to represent my colleagues' views, plus the overall interests of my profession, in pretty much everything I do.

Finally, I aim to encourage good, obvious deaf awareness tactics, every chance I get, whether that's at work, in church or at social gatherings. It is so engrained now, I'm afraid I just can't stop myself!



2012

deafscotland

Formerly Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD)



Organisational Achievement Award

deafscotland formed in 1927, as the Scottish Association of the Deaf (SAD) and is the lead organisation for deaf issues in Scotland.

deafscotland's vision is to act as an intermediary body of organisations and agencies working with deaf people in Scotland. They achieve this by forming strategic alliances, developing policy initiatives and using them to improve the human and civil rights of deaf people in Scotland.

deafscotland are also heavily involved in the Scottish BSL National Plan; offering funding and support throughout. The plan runs from 2017-2023, and describes 70 actions the Scottish Government will take in the next three years to make progress towards 10 long-term goals, aimed at ensuring deaf and deafblind BSL users can be involved in all aspects of daily life and public transport.

Interview with Janis McDonald, deafscotland Chief Officer

- ➔ The Signature Annual Awards exist as a way to recognise the achievements of individuals and organisations that are going above and beyond for the rights and accessibility of deaf and hard of hearing people.

How does it feel to have been recognised in the Organisational Achievement category in 2012?

Although I was not involved with the organisation until 2014, I can say that the whole organisation was very proud and pleased to get recognition for its efforts in 2012.

The Board, staff team and membership celebrated success over the 85 years that it had existed.

- ➔ What do you remember about the awards evening, and how did you feel when you were announced as the winner?

The evening itself was tense and thrilling. Everyone in the SCoD party was simply pleased to be there, never mind win an award.

Everyone reported feeling exceptionally emotional however Lilian Lawson was particularly pleased to be accepting the award as the leader of the organisation at that time.

- ➔ Would you say winning a Signature Annual Award has had a positive impact on deafscotland?

Winning the award gave us the strength to review SCoD and recruit a new Chief Officer. It also gave us the appetite to work harder and achieve the BSL (Scotland) Act 2015.

Recognising that we needed to build on success we were brave enough to change our name, our image and raise our expectations beyond BSL and the language gap to close the communication gap completely.

- ➔ Do you think that the awards have had a positive impact on the deaf sector itself?

We can only really talk for Scotland. Winning the award raised the profile of both Signature and SCoD. A winning combination if the legislation was a result. The awards can only have a positive impact recognising work, achievement and positively reinforcing all that is good about working on behalf of those affected by deafness.

- ➔ If you could offer some advice to other organisations that are looking to make a difference in terms of their deaf awareness strategies, what would you say?

I personally would say in order to make a difference you need to make it real for people.

Set your deaf awareness in real stories, demonstrate simple everyday barriers, tell human stories and make it fun. People will remember a good experience, meaningful stories and act to change.



➔ What changes would you love to see happen in the near future?

I'd love to see everyone leaving school with some level of BSL to communicate confidently in visual language. I also like to see more investment in bilingualism as evidence has proven its good for you.

With a magic wand I'd still remember that a lot of folks need access to goods and services in English and want to see resources for deaf awareness and those technical fixes for people who find themselves deafened, deafblind or hard of hearing.

Those that need different solutions to their daily challenges.

➔ Celebrating the achievements of inspirational people and organisations is the driving force of The Signature Annual Awards. What inspires you to continue the amazing work you're doing at deafscotland?

There is clearly still so much to be done to level the playing field for those affected by deafness.

For so many people the basic communication, quality of human relationships and daily activities are adversely affected by the barriers they face.

Many solutions are simple yet difficult to achieve: shifting social attitudes is a difficult and long-term objective.

Building inclusion and integration reasonable yet challenging intentions – what's not to like?

The successes and stories must surely fuel us all? We know its worthwhile because we have achieved some change.

➔ We're sure you're busy at deafscotland with the BSL national plan now in place, but what else are you currently working on?

We believe there are gaps: not enough is being done to prevent deafness where it is preventable and not enough is understood about the links between deafness and preventing social isolation.

We are trying to develop meaningful campaigns in areas that address this.

We are working with many members on specific areas: promoting inclusive communication, improving access to mental health and well-being services, improving opportunities for older adults and working to improve attainment for deaf children.

Not much!



2013

Dr. Margaret Du Feu

Joseph Maitland Robinson Award

Dr Margaret Du Feu has used both her personal and professional life experiences to framework much of her work. She really is an inspiration and continues to strive for improvement in the sector. Deaf individuals as a whole and those who face mental health issues really can take a lot of encouragement from her life's work.

In 2014, Margaret was awarded an OBE for her services to deaf people in Northern Ireland. She also authored a book titled Mental Health and Deafness in 2016.



- ➔ The Signature Annual Awards exist as a way to recognise the achievements of individuals and organisations that are going above and beyond for the rights and accessibility of deaf and hard of hearing people.

How does it feel to have been awarded the JMR award in 2013?

It was an amazing surprise to receive the 2013 award.

- ➔ What do you remember about the awards evening, and how did you feel when you were announced as the winner?

It was a great evening, seeing people I hadn't seen since I have been working in Ireland.

- ➔ Would you say winning a Signature Annual Award has had a positive impact on you?

The award was a tremendous boost for my confidence. My work can leave me professionally a bit isolated, and this recognition from a prominent deaf organisation was wonderful.

- ➔ Do you think that the awards have had a positive impact on the deaf sector itself?

The awards recognise and encourage people who are doing what can be uphill work.

The rewards of helping individuals and being with a great team are what keep me going.

- ➔ If you could offer some advice to organisations that are looking to make a difference in terms of their deaf awareness strategies, what would you say?

1. Comprehensive deaf awareness training for all staff.

2. A "mystery shopper" to test procedures in place.

3. Having deaf staff.

- ➔ What changes would you love to see happen in the near future?

1. Proper recognition of Sign.

2. BSL GCSE.

3. Availability of Sign on TV and in schools for all children, and bilingual education for deaf children.

- ➔ We're sure you're busy at the moment, but what are you currently working on?

I am currently working in the Republic of Ireland to develop mental health and deafness services within the HSE.

(I am also trying to retire to spend more time with my granddaughter!)

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2014

Janice Crossland - Jones

Teacher of the Year Award

As a natural leader, teacher and ambassador, Janice is well known for the level of support, passion and understanding she gives to each and every one of her students.

Janice founded the Fylde Coast BSL Centre in 2007. Since then, she has helped many students achieve their goals.

Janice is also the director of Deaf Business Academy and even won the award for best UK Deaf Business in 2016. Recently Janice visited deaf schools in South Africa and Namibia.

➔ How does it feel to have been awarded the Teacher of the Year award in 2014?

I feel very proud to have won this award. Before I founded The Fylde Coast BSL Centre in 2007, I had broken my arm on holiday in Greece. I was off work from my University job for 12 months and I lost my confidence in teaching and myself. As British Sign Language is my main form of communication and not being able to sign had a negative effect on me. I worked hard to gain my confidence back and ensure my teaching standard was high. I worked with Blackpool council to set up my own signing classes and gained a big boost seeing my students achieve their goals. To be recognised and awarded for doing something I loved was fantastic.

➔ Would you say winning a Signature Annual Award has had a positive impact on you?

Yes, I feel it has. Before this award I always did my best to keep my teaching standard high and ensure that my students reached their full potential.

I felt very honoured to win the award. It now gives me the motivation to do my best, maintain my high standards, and continue to try and improve deaf awareness and services for deaf people.

I feel it also helped my business. Classes become full very quickly and have continued to do so. I feel very privileged to have a high profile because of this. I would love to win the award this year also.



➔ I have worked with Signature for many years, they are special and to win on the 10th anniversary would be amazing.

Would you say winning a Signature Annual Award has had a positive impact on you?

Yes, I feel it has. Before this award I always did my best to keep my teaching standard high and ensure that my students reached their full potential. I felt very honoured to win the award.

It now gives me the motivation to do my best, maintain my high standards, and continue to try and improve deaf awareness and services for deaf people.

➔ Do you think that the awards have had a positive impact on the deaf sector itself?

I believe it has. I think anything that can give BSL/ISL teachers something to strive for has to be positive.

It means that we keep high standards for teaching and students skills, which will make better services and access for the deaf community.



- ➔ Celebrating the achievements of inspirational people and organisations is the driving force of The Signature Annual Awards. What inspires you to continue the amazing work you're doing?

Seeing my students achieve their goals inspires me. Seeing their signing skills develop and knowing that this is helping improve access and services for the deaf community. It is a passion of mine to share my language. It is also great to see more and more of my students progressing onto the interpreter course with my partnership company, BSL Interpretations, and becoming fully qualified, as we have a huge shortage of interpreters across the UK.

- ➔ If you could offer some advice to organisations that are looking to make a difference in terms of their deaf awareness strategies, what would you say?

Making sure their staff have basic deaf awareness is very important. Simple things like not shouting and making their lip patterns clear can make such a big difference. If you have staff that know some BSL even better. Members of staff need to have a positive attitude this will help them connect with the deaf community.

- ➔ What changes would you love to see happen in the near future?

I would love to see better access for the deaf community across the UK. It is a passion of mine to visit deaf schools across the world. I want to learn about the access they provide and hopefully try and bring some of this back to the UK. I have had the opportunity to visit many different places so far, Dubai, South Africa, Northern Ireland as well as many others.

I also recently had the opportunity to travel to Australia. Everyone I met had deaf awareness. I was shocked when I took a taxi. The equipment and services were amazing. I would really like to see things like this come to the UK.

I would also like to see a BSL GCSE. This would not only help improve deaf awareness in young people but give deaf children the chance to achieve a qualification in their first language.

- ➔ We're sure you're busy at the moment, but what are you currently working on?

Yes I am very busy. I am currently working with Association of British Sign Language Teachers and Assessors for a big deaf awareness workshop.

At the Fylde Coast BSL Centre we have a lot of new courses starting. BSL level 1, BSL NVQ Level 6 starting in Halifax and Preston, and interpreting courses with our partnership company, BSL Interpretations.

We are already fully booked for the BSL level 2 course which is starting in November. Our BSL Level 3 group are busy studying for their receptive exam and we are also continuing to welcome new BSL learners on our foundation courses.

It's a lot of work but I have help and support from my PCA's Ellie Hudson and Ruth Yates. When things get stressful we work well together and keep each other smiling.

It can be hard work but I really enjoy meeting BSL teachers and new students, sharing my language with them and helping them achieve their goals.

2015

Vanessa Addison

Deaf Entrepreneur Award

Vanessa Addison is the founder and Director of Green Bee Homes Ltd, a company building affordable green homes for the next generation of house buyers. Created only 7 years ago the company now has an annual turnover of over £3 million.

Vanessa has never allowed her deafness to hold her back in her career, which has also included Fund Manager roles overseeing \$500 million of investments, becoming Vice President of Barclays Global Investors, Governor at Mary Hare Deaf school and a trustee of the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (now Action on Hearing Loss).



- ➔ The Signature Annual Awards exist as a way to recognise the achievements of individuals and organisations that are going above and beyond for the rights and accessibility of deaf and hard of hearing people.

How does it feel to have been awarded the Deaf Entrepreneur award in 2015?

Immensely honoured. It makes all those hard times – and of course there have been some, worthwhile and makes one appreciate that with hard work, perseverance and determination, dreams and ambitions can be achieved.

- ➔ What do you remember about the awards evening, and how did you feel when you were announced as the winner?

My son sadly came down with the winter vomiting bug, so I was unable to attend – the joys of being a mother – however, when I was told the news it certainly perked me up and I felt extremely honoured to have been selected. Thank you to all those that have supported and helped me along the way – none of it could have been achieved without the support and love of family and friends.

- ➔ Would you say winning a Signature Annual Award has had a positive impact on you?

Yes definitely – it makes all the hard times worthwhile! Helped to re-iterate never to give up!

- ➔ Do you think that the awards have had a positive impact on the deaf sector itself?

I really hope that the awards help to inspire others and show them that dreams/passions should be pursued and, that united we can work toward change.

- ➔ Celebrating the achievements of inspirational people and organisations is the driving force of The Signature Annual Awards. What inspires you to continue the amazing work you're doing?

Knowing that a difference is being made – however small it may impact someone and make a difference to their life. The more there are, the more powerful we can be in raising awareness and helping to make changes or a difference to peoples' lives.

- ➔ If you could offer some advice to organisations that are looking to make a difference in terms of their deaf awareness strategies, what would you say?

Be proactive and inclusive – with an aging population we probably all know someone who is deaf and hard of hearing and one day it maybe you. Try wearing ear plugs for the day and see how you manage!

- ➔ What changes would you love to see happen in the near future?

I feel strongly about improving access to deaf and hard of hearing people to employment. Given this I would love to see a more even platforms for deaf and hard of hearing people in employment/improved access and greater awareness and improved communications. With an aging population it is going to become increasingly important.

- ➔ We're sure you're busy at the moment, but what are you currently working on?

Juggling a hectic family life raising two young sons together with running a property development business and trying to find time for myself to learn to play golf!

2016

Pascale Maroney

Community Champion Award

Since 2009, Pascale was responsible for booking and organising interpreters for Glastonbury Festival.

She has worked to secure interpreters on the iconic Pyramid Stage, and with festival organisers and interpreters to ensure that the experience is positive for deaf festival goers, artists, stage managers and the interpreters themselves.

Her dedication and attention to detail has allowed many more deaf people to enjoy the festival.



- ➔ How does it feel to have been awarded the Community Champion Award in 2016?

It's very humbling to have been recognised for my work, alongside many others and within a wider team I hasten to add, at DeafZone for Glastonbury Festival.

- ➔ What do you remember about the awards evening, and how did you feel when you were announced as the winner?

It was a beautiful evening, we'd enjoyed a delicious meal there was a lovely atmosphere and energy within the room. I was genuinely shocked to win as the other nominees were outstanding and walking up there to receive the award was quite surreal.

- ➔ Would you say winning a Signature Annual Award has had a positive impact on you?

Yes, it has been positive, the nomination itself was special as it came from those who worked in my team and it got a bit of extra publicity for the sign language and interpreting services that the DeafZone provide which is awesome!

- ➔ Do you think that the awards have had a positive impact on the deaf sector itself?

I think the awards definitely have a positive impact on the deaf sector but they extend beyond that and into the mainstream. They offer the chance for the behind-the-scenes efforts to be recognised and celebrated and offer a special event that brings people together to share their experiences and focus on the positive work that is happening which is very powerful.

- ➔ What changes would you love to see happen in the near future?

Campaign wise - for equal language and cultural rights to be afforded to all.

- ➔ What inspires you to continue the amazing work you're doing?

The inspiration for the festival was always the response from Deaf punters, we got some great acts and performances interpreted but there were also challenges and barriers to us as a team and this affected the Deaf festival goers experiences, this was hugely frustrating but it motivated us to fight for more and better access. Whilst I'm no longer in this coordinating role I continue to do what I can to support and challenge for access.

- ➔ If you could offer some advice to organisations that are looking to make a difference in terms of their deaf awareness strategies, what would you say?

To consult with the deaf community, hold focus groups – they are the experts through experience so ask them what deaf awareness strategies would work best. I have seen organisations make great strides from bringing in a professional deaf Consultant for advice too.

- ➔ We're sure you're busy at the moment, but what are you currently working on?

As an interpreter I continue to work with and for the deaf community, I'm still on the festival circuit but as a volunteer interpreter rather than a coordinator. I'm working with VS1 Productions helping to create more programmes in BSL. And I have qualified as a Personal Trainer so encouraging everyone to be as healthy and as fit as they can be!

2017

Emma Caswell

Experienced Teacher Award

Emma received her Signature Annual Award due to her years of experience in teaching BSL. She also uses her wealth of experience to help improve and maintain the quality of Signature qualifications. She remains committed to offering her students the best possible learning experience, and is very much an ambassador of Signature.

Emma currently works as Centre Manager at Heathlands School. In recent years, she developed a business plan so that the centre could grow in terms of development and student numbers.

- ➡ How does it feel to have been awarded the Experienced Teacher award in 2017?

I was awarded the Professional Contribution Award for helping to develop Signature courses and creating the BSL in secondary education course.

- ➡ What do you remember about the awards evening, and how did you feel when you were announced as the winner?

I went to the awards as a nominee and wasn't expecting to win. When my name was announced I was shocked, I hadn't expected it and to see Ian spell out my name was amazing. I'll never forget the evening.

- ➡ Would you say winning a Signature Annual Award has had a positive impact on you?

Winning the award has confirmed for me that what I am doing is the right path I have taken in my life and has given me an extra boost to continue the hard work of creating and delivering courses to learners.

- ➡ Do you think that the awards have had a positive impact on the deaf sector itself?

I think the awards have become a highlight of the BSL teaching community and for centres that deliver the courses to strive to achieve and support learners the best they can.

I think deaf people with connections to BSL teachers have an understanding of the awards more than the wider deaf community who have the knowledge of Signature as an awarding body for BSL qualifications.



- ➡ If you could offer some advice to centres that are looking to make a difference to their learners, what would you say?

Be mindful that learners are on courses because they don't know the information; they are like seeds that grow into plants that then flower as the course progresses. This works for each level of BSL, every time a learner starts a course they are the seed that need water and light, they receive this through our teaching.

Each course allows them to bloom a little bit more. As teachers of a visual language we have to make sure everything is visual, our own productive BSL is clear for learners to understand, our resources such as hand outs and power points include the right information and the right amount of information.

If we over load power points the learners will wilt and not grow.

Learners should be taught deaf awareness from the first lesson, how to gain attention, how to convey information if you are unable to sign it. Different communication tactics, these can be built on as you go through the course.

➔ What changes would you love to see happen in the near future?

I would love to see the BSL in secondary education course being offered nationwide within schools. This would breakdown so many barriers and enable deaf and hearing people to develop an understanding of each other, as well as cultures.

With the potential that in the future both communities will be integrated. This would enable deaf people to achieve employment easier, attend appointments without the fear of not being understood.

There would still be the need for interpreters, but they would be able to do their job easier because there would be the basic understanding of deaf awareness within the wider community.

I would like to see a specialist teaching course for BSL users to become fully qualified to teach BSL to all levels. Courses at the moment are geared to teaching hearing courses they are not deaf aware of provide the correct information for teaching BSL.



➔ We're sure you're busy at the moment, but what are you currently working on?

My main job is BSL Centre Manager at Heathlands School; this role includes all aspects of running the Centre and teaching BSL level 1 through to 6.

I like to focus on teaching level 3, 4 and 6 because I enjoy delivering the linguistic knowledge to learners.

I qualified as BSL/English interpreter but after difficulties with my hearing I couldn't continue. I began working as a residential support worker at my local school for Deaf children and then supporting communicators and pupils. After that I went into teaching BSL and gained my PGCE.

My favourite thing about delivering Signature qualifications is that they are straight forward; follow the qualification specification and you can't go wrong. Adding to the learning environment through discussions, debates and research allows the learner to develop a range of vocabulary and knowledge, this in turn allows for a greater development in both receptive and productive skills.

Emma Caswell



125 Signature Annual Award Winners 2009 - 2017

Richard McFadden
Alan Sanders
Wayne Richards
Charlie Butler
John Smith
Melanie Potts
Carol Cook
Karen Pane
Illan Dwek
Robin Herdman
Andrea Simpson
Daryl Johnston
Jon Hickman
Pam Missin
Amelia McCable
Teresea Quail
Elizabeth Cook
Carole Ham
Ryan Williams
Karen Budd
Dorothy Hegarty
Rachel Clifford
3 D Derby Deaf Drama
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John Mancini
Jack Ashley
Queen's University Belfast
Trudy Field
Mike Bush
Signamic
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Celine Crowley
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Lesley Weatherson
Caroline O'Brien
Scottish Council on Deafness
Cornwall Deaf Centre
Shannon Havern
East Holton NVQ Assessment Centre
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Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Key Teaching Skills

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Judicial

Developed and presented by subject experts, for Communication Professionals and Teachers, these structured activities will develop your competence and performance whilst contributing towards your CPD portfolio.

COMING SOON!

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A photograph of two young children in a garden. In the foreground, a boy with short brown hair, wearing a red school sweater over a white collared shirt, is looking upwards and to the right with a thoughtful expression, his hand near his ear. Behind him, a girl with blonde hair, also in a white collared shirt, is looking in the same direction. To the left, a large, colorful pinwheel with yellow, green, blue, and pink petals is visible. The background shows green foliage and a wooden fence.

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