

Your HKNC REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE is an:

ADVOCATE for individuals with combined vision and hearing loss

LIFE-LONG POINT OF CONTACT to services and resources

RESOURCE to individuals, families, and agencies

- Provide **consultation, technical assistance** and **learning opportunities** (professional/consumer) to support successful outcomes for consumers to work and thrive in the community of their choice
- Collaborate with education and pre-employment and transition teams for youth (ages 14-21) to adult services
- Connect individuals with local, state, and national services and resources
- Facilitate and support interagency state collaboration as requested
- Specialized services and referral for individuals, age 55 and better, families and service providers
- Coordinate the referral process to HKNC and community rehabilitation programs for vocational training options toward employment
- Identify individuals for the National Registry of Persons Who are DeafBlind:
<https://www.helenkeller.org/hknc/national-registry>

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HKNC 2022 Training Programs

There are many exciting training opportunities available at HKNC's headquarters in Sands Point, Long Island, NY. Please take a moment to review the following list of programs for 2022. For additional information on any of the trainings listed below, contact your region representative.

The Comprehensive Vocational Rehabilitation Program

This program is for adult consumers 18 years of age and older who have a combined vision and hearing loss and want to gain independence and employability skills. The program provides individualized training that is tailored to meet the unique cultural and communication needs of each student. HKNC's person-centered training approach includes five major areas: orientation and mobility, technology, independent living, communication, and vocational exploration and training. A six-week assessment assists in determining training, which includes: student's preferences, instructors' recommendations, and the state VR approval for funding and training objectives. Each training period is 13 weeks and students in the Comprehensive Vocational Rehabilitation Program, on the average, stay 6-12 months at the Center.

In addition, the Comprehensive Vocational Rehabilitation Program provides an opportunity for students who have demonstrated advanced independent living skills to take part in HKNC's on-campus apartment program (Supported Independent Living Experience), or the off-campus apartment program (Apartments in Mainstream). There is an additional fee for these programs.

Short-term focused training

Specific individualized training is available (1 to 4 weeks) to consumers with a desire to participate in only one of a few specific training and do not wish to participate in the full comprehensive vocational training program. Some examples are Adaptive technology, braille or vocational exploration. A program can be designed to meet the priority training objectives of the consumer with consideration of their time constraints for training.

Discovery: Introduction to Vocational Rehabilitation

This is a four-week program to assess with the person how he/she functions in important domains of his/her life. Classes are offered in the five core training areas to assess strategies, tactile techniques, accessibility, adaptations and modifications. An action plan is co-developed to determine lifestyle changes to incorporate upon returning home.

Youth Programs

M~POWER Summer Program

In its 22nd year, this is a two-week summer program for young adults, ages 16 to 23. This training is conducted by a team of experts – including DeafBlind facilitators and mentors - in a group classroom environment with up to 8 students. The program is designed to assist young adults who are DeafBlind to explore their vocational and educational interests and encourages them to take a more active role in planning their future. This program has integrated activities that promote self-determination and self- advocacy skills.

Summer Assessment Program

Structured after our Comprehensive Vocational Rehabilitation Program, the 8-week summer program provides students, ages 16 to 22 with a comprehensive assessment in the areas of: vocational exploration, assistive technology, communication, independent living, orientation & mobility, low vision, and audiology. Participants will also have creative arts classes. If they elect to, students have the option to take additional classes in nutrition planning, emergency preparedness, American Sign Language, and more.

Summer Youth Vocational Program (SYVP)

HKNC offers a 6-week summer work program for transition age youth; ages 16-25. The program provides participants with the opportunity to engage in career exploration and participate in a community based work experience. In addition, the program provides opportunities to gain self-awareness and determination through socializing and meeting with others who are deaf-blind. HKNC offers a unique adult learning community where peers, mentors and deaf-blind leaders share experiences, perspectives and support one another's learning.

In addition to the learning activities, the program includes night and weekend activities in and around Long Island and New York City. While these activities are a fun break from the classroom environment, they are structured to help promote independence, peer learning and relationship building.

Senior Adult Services

Confident Living Program

This program is for individuals who are age 55 and “better” with combined hearing and vision loss. The program typically consists of up to 6 participants. One of the benefits of this program is the development of peer support opportunities with other participants. This program has two offerings: one with sign language users, and the other with non-sign language users.

This is designed to provide senior adults with coping skills, enhanced independent living skills, knowledge of elder laws, information about self-advocacy, hands-on sessions with the latest in assistive technology and much more. It provides older adults an opportunity to share experiences while learning about their vision and hearing loss in a comfortable environment with others who are having similar experiences. This program is organized by HKNC’s national coordinator for Senior Adult Services and team.

Internships

Professional Learning and Leadership Institute (PLLI)

This innovative program was initiated by a grant from the Lavelle Fund for the Blind, Inc. It offers three month paid internships at HKNC headquarters for nine to twelve individuals over a three-year period. The goal of this project is to provide DeafBlind individuals with the opportunity to gain skills they need to launch a career in the field of vocational rehabilitation. Areas of study may include adaptive technology, braille training, job coaching, residential habitation, and independent living.

To apply, send in a resume, letter of reference, and a cover letter that addresses the following information:

- The area of DeafBlind rehabilitation in which you are interested
- The reasons for your interest in this program
- A post-internship employment plan

Programs for DeafBlind Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities

DeafBlind Immersion Experience (DBIE)

This new five-day training program is for individuals who are DeafBlind with intellectual disabilities and for the staff who work with them in their home communities. DeafBlind participants will receive a lifestyle assessment, a low vision and audiological assessment, and assistance in developing an individualized communication system. Staff will receive in the moment training and mentoring with their focus person in activities of daily living, work and leisure. Participants in this experience and their staff will have the ability to interact with the staff from Destiny Home, the first home in New York State for individuals who are deaf-blind and have intellectual disabilities. This will help them to gain knowledge of activities that they can emulate once they return to their home community.

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Contact your local Regional Representative for further information:
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You can also check out our Frequently Asked Questions:
<https://www.helenkeller.org/hknc/frequently-asked-questions>



HKNC is a partner in iCanConnect, the National DeafBlind Equipment Distribution Program. We can help you to navigate the application process, determine your equipment needs and configure your devices, and can provide you with assessment training, or information about resources in our state as appropriate.

Sending an email or chatting on the phone can be challenging for people with both significant vision and hearing loss. iCanConnect is a national program that provides free equipment and training to help people stay connected with friends, family, and the world. iCanConnect provides equipment including smartphones, tablets, computers, screen readers, braille equipment, and software to people with significant combined vision and hearing loss who meet federal income and disability guidelines. Each person receives an individual assessment to determine the best equipment solutions. iCanConnect serves people from a wide range of backgrounds, including older people who have lost vision and hearing later in life, and people with Usher and CHARGE Syndromes.

Contact the following individuals for more information on iCC in the following states:

- Texas: Brenda Baroncelli, Brenda.Baroncelli@hknc.org
- Louisiana: Scott Crawford, scottc@affiliatedblind.org
- New Mexico: Lyssa Matsche, LyssaM@copdnm.org
- Arkansas: Brittany Fuhrmann, b.fuhrmann.icc@gmail.com
- Oklahoma: Stephanie Butler, sbutler@okdrs.gov