



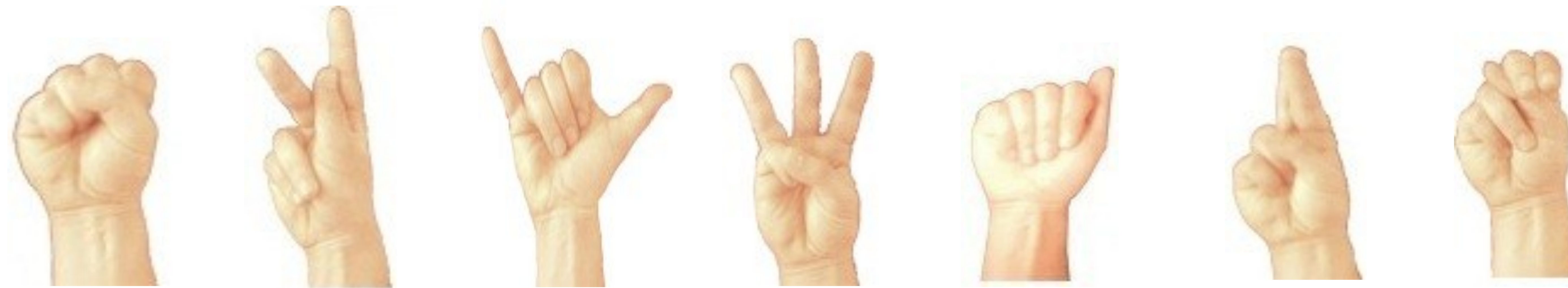
In Pursuit of a Weather-Ready Nation: SKYWARN Spotter Training For the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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Did you know???

Gallaudet University estimates that 14% of the population of the United States suffers from some form of hearing loss.

How it was started:

A local outreach and education group called Hearing Bridges reached out to WFO Nashville to participate in a committee called E.A.R.S. (Emergency Alert and Response Services) and asked NWS Nashville to provide a fully accessible Spotter talk for the Deaf and hard of hearing (captioning and interpreting services provided). NWS Nashville Intern Trevor Boucher, who has background in American Sign Language, provided the training.



WFO Nashville, TN



Meteorologist Trevor Boucher giving a presentation at the Nashville American Red Cross Auditorium on January 26th, 2012.

How it was done:

Through partnerships established in the E.A.R.S. committee, the venue was provided by the Nashville American Red Cross, captioning and interpreting services provided by Bridges, and training performed by WFO Nashville. Slides were designed to be more picture oriented rather than text oriented. New, web-based reporting avenues were encouraged like Facebook and Twitter. About 40 participants, both Deaf and hard of hearing were in attendance.

How YOU can get started:

1. Contact your state coordinator for deaf and hard of hearing services.

Each state has a state coordinator for the Deaf or director of disability services. These state officials work closely with the Deaf and have the resources and contacts needed to spread the word within your region.

2. Construct your special presentation.

A Deaf audience relies on non-auditory reliant means of communicating. Videos with dialogue and other sounds will need to be captioned. Slides will be more useful to the Deaf with less text. The attention will be on the interpreter or captioner, not the presenter.

3. That's all!

WFO Huntsville, AL

How it was started:

After meeting a deaf individual at a local NOAA Weather Radio programming event, Meteorologist Jennifer Schuller partnered with Trevor Boucher at WFO Nashville after their successful talk in January. Jennifer partnered with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and began organizing a similar event at the Huntsville Rehabilitation Center.

How it was done:

NWS Huntsville Meteorologist Jennifer Schuller partnered with the Alabama State Coordinator for the Deaf, Bedarius Bell Jr., to provide interpreting services for the presentation. Jennifer adopted many of the tips from NWS Nashville and as well as providing useful handouts, reference cards, and NOAA Weather Radio programming from other NWS Huntsville staff. The spotter training was well received with around 30 participants and requests for many more trainings throughout the state.



NWS Huntsville Meteorologist Jennifer Schuller answers a question with aid from an ASL interpreter.

Acknowledgements:

Bridges of Nashville
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