

Learning About + Celebrating the Deaf-Blind Community

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MIDDLEVILLE, MICHIGAN, UNITED STATES, June 26, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Deaf-Blindness is a “low-incidence” disability, which means that a small percentage of our population experiences it. Today, there are approximately 10,000 Deaf-Blind children and youth across the United States, and up to 70,000 adults; globally, it is estimated that more than 15 million people live with some degree of Deaf-Blindness. Learning about Deaf-Blind people throughout history, their activism, and key facts and resources pertaining to this disability will help to ensure that our collective actions toward inclusion also benefit people who are Deaf-Blind.

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Steve Locke

When you think of the Deaf-Blind community, Helen Keller is probably the first who comes to mind. She was a crucial advocate for Deaf-Blind people and those with just deafness or blindness across the world, and an important example of how access changes lives. Helen Keller passed away in 1968, and many other Deaf-Blind pioneers have emerged to carry the torch. Late teacher and author Robert Smithdas co-founded the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults and was the first Deaf-Blind person to earn a Master’s degree. Attorney and author Haben Girma is the first Deaf-Blind person to graduate from Harvard Law School and is now a legal advocate for people with disabilities. Alex Garcia is a Deaf-Blind educator and activist who is working toward access and inclusion for Deaf-Blind people in Brazil through the Gaucha Association of Parents and Friends of Deaf-Blind people and people with Multiple Disabilities (AGAPASM).

Within the United States, several resources exist to support Deaf-Blind people and their families in navigating education, employment, and other aspects of independent living. The Perkins School for the Blind provides formal educational programs and outreach and advocacy to help people understand how to promote inclusion of Blind and Deaf-Blind. The [National Federation of the Blind](#) and the National Center on Deaf-Blindness offer resources, training, and outreach to Deaf-Blind people throughout the United States. In Michigan, the [Bureau of Services for Blind Persons](#) also offers Deaf-Blind services and Central Michigan University provides support and

resources for Deaf-Blind people through age 26.

The Deaf-Blind community has worked hard to raise awareness and increase opportunities for Deaf-Blind people in the U.S. and across the world. This month, we recognize the importance of these efforts and strive to ensure that our own disability advocacy makes a positive impact for Deaf-Blind people. Connect with your local Center for Independent Living at

www.misilc.org/independent-living-resources

Tori Sullivan-Cortez

Michigan Statewide Independent Living Council

+1 (313) 644-2048

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