



In This Issue

- [What's New at NDA](#): Our New Website, Advisory Board Meeting
- [Employee of the Month](#): Anne Kramlinger, Mental Health Technician, 1:1 Program
- [Ask a Clinician](#): Impulse Control Program for Adolescent Males
- [Job Postings](#): Mental Health Technicians (MHT), Contract Interpreters - Per Diem
- [Quote of the Month](#): Marilyn J. Smith

What's New at NDA

Our New Website

The new [NDA website](#) was launched this month. In addition to a new look, you will also find pictures of our facility, as well as updated program and staff information. You can also find an archive of all the eNewsletters and SignPosts. Please visit our new site at <http://www.nda.com/> and stay tuned for additional updates and features.

Advisory Board Meeting

Shortly after last month's newsletter was released, National Deaf Academy welcomed its Advisory Board for their first meeting of 2008. The Board is comprised of individuals with strong knowledge of deafness and Deaf culture as well as experience in mental health and/or education. The group met with NDA's administrative team to discuss ideas to expand and improve services and programs. [Read more about our Board members on our website.](#)

[Back to top](#)

Employee of the Month

Anne Kramlinger, Mental Health Technician, 1:1 Program

Anne Kramlinger has been named the April 2008 Employee of the Month. Anne's employment at National Deaf Academy began in 2002 after she graduated from George Washington University with a degree in theatre. She resigned in 2004 to pursue a job in her home city of



Minneapolis, Minn., working as a Program Manager with disabled Deaf adults and teaching independent living skills.



In August 2005 Anne left Minnesota to attend the renowned Jacques Lecoq International Theatre School in Paris. This prestigious theatre school teaches the control of gesture and movement through melodrama, human comedy and tragedy. After completing a year of study Anne returned to the U.S. and returned to work at NDA in August 2006.

Anne and her brother Joe grew up in an oral family. Both were mainstreamed throughout elementary, middle and high school. After they completed college her brother became very active with the Deaf community and for the first time learned American Sign Language.

At her brother's suggestion Anne applied for a position as a Mental Health Technician and once hired made it her urgent goal to learn American Sign Language. She quickly met her goal by practicing throughout her shift, taking notes and practicing on evenings and weekends. She strongly believes that her theatre experience helped her portray the facial expressions so necessary in Deaf culture. While working at National Deaf Academy Anne discovered her "social service" side and has future hopes to somehow find a way to bring her acting/theatrical expertise into her work in the 1:1 Program.

During her free time Anne pursues her love of dance and theatre. She loves to travel and will be heading out west next month to hike in Colorado.

[Back to top](#)

Ask a Clinician

*I recently read you have a program for adolescents with sexual issues. Can you tell me how this program is different from your regular program?
S. Gray - Newport, Ore.*



The Impulse Control track treats up to eight Deaf male adolescents who present with a history of inappropriate sexual behaviors. Though many of these individuals have been victims of sexual abuse themselves, the program's philosophy stresses the importance of accepting responsibility for one's actions and not using past experiences as an excuse for problematic behaviors in the present.

To accomplish this goal, the program utilizes cognitive behavioral techniques that require the resident to do the following:

- Acknowledge the behaviors that resulted in their hospitalization or previous incarceration
- Document their pattern of psychological triggers that typically precedes their behaviors and emotional reactions
- Learn how excessive preoccupation with sexual themes can contribute to

their acting out and how that ultimately leads to an internalized sense of low self esteem

All of this is done in a communication barrier-free environment with American Sign Language being the primary language.

The residents in the ICD program are supervised 24 hours a day by highly trained staff who are specifically selected to work with these clever, and at times, manipulative young men. Because appropriate but firm confrontation by both staff and peers is a critical component of the process, residents work in quads with no more than four residents assigned to a staff member at all times. Residents utilize a behavioral reinforcement program to earn privileges, and consequences tend to focus on encouraging residents to identify feelings leading to problematic behaviors.

The clinical program includes weekly contact with the psychiatrist, daily group psychotherapy, and weekly family therapy (either in person or through video conferencing and daily recreational therapy). Additionally, these residents are required to attend the Charter School. The teachers at the Charter School work closely with the Treatment Team to coordinate their efforts and integrate psychologically meaningful events into the learning process. They are trained in specialized techniques to confront manipulative behaviors.

Michael Huffman is the Senior Psychotherapist for the Impulse Control Disorders Program.

Reply to this email with your question to an NDA clinician.

[Back to top](#)

Job Postings

Mental Health Technicians

Individuals holding the MHT position are responsible for implementing and assisting in the daily management of our resident population. MHTs work on an ongoing basis to improve the resident's social, communication and personal hygiene skills. They engage the residents in activities, help implement their treatment programs and maintain a safe living environment while providing close supervision and observation. This job is often referred to as Psychiatric Assistant, Group Advisor, Dorm Counselor, CNA or Youth Leader. Prefer the candidate to be fluent in American Sign Language, however will train the right individual. \$500 sign-on bonus for qualified individuals fluent in American Sign Language.

Contract Interpreters - Per Diem

NAD or RID certification preferred. QA-3 considered with experience. This candidate should be able to interpret in a variety of settings. Minimum of three years professional interpreting experience required. Mental health interpreting experience preferred.

Interpreting will be for clinical, educational and medical meetings/sessions including:

- Family, individual and group therapy
- Clinical meetings/Treatment Team meetings
- Staff training/meetings
- Medical appointments (as needed)
- Charter School meetings/training sessions

How to Apply

NDA offers a competitive salary and excellent benefit package. Send resume to:
Director of Human Resources
National Deaf Academy
19650 US Hwy 441
Mt. Dora, FL 32757
Email: btashlein@nda.com
Phone: 352-735-9500
Fax: 352-735-4939

Working at National Deaf Academy

National Deaf Academy offers a wide range of deafness and mental health employment opportunities. More than 60 percent of our direct-care staff members are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing. Though we actively seek individuals who are fluent in American Sign Language, many of our current employees have developed fluency both on the job and through classes available on campus. Employees enjoy an excellent benefits package that includes medical, dental, vision and a choice of electives such as short- and long-term disability. We offer a paid-time-off (PTO) plan that is generous and allows for flexibility. In addition, employees can participate in NDA's 401(k) plan and enhance their professional growth through tuition reimbursement. National Deaf Academy also serves as an internship site for therapists, social workers, educators, interpreters and other professional disciplines.

[Back to top](#)

Quote of the Month

"To stick to your convictions in the face of adversity is often a very lonely journey. It is also one of the most courageous things you can ever do."

- Marilyn J. Smith, Deaf Woman

[Back to top](#)

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