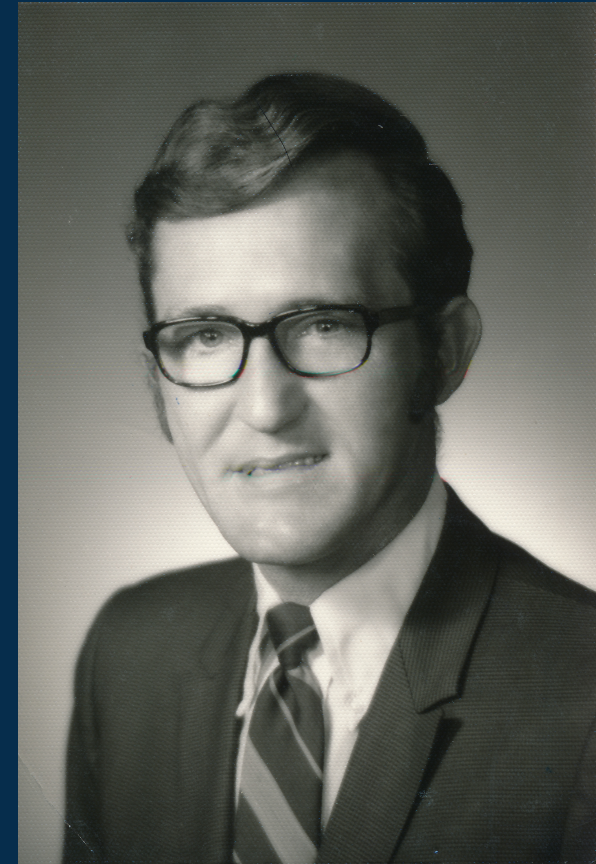




Special Thanks:

Marilyn Call, Eleanor McCowan, Jorie Hill, Jenefer Reudter, Philippe Montalette, Jodi Kinner, Valerie Kinney and Bronwyn O'Hara for making W. David Mortensen's honoring event a reality.



**Utah Division of Services to the Deaf
and Hard of Hearing and Utah
Association of the Deaf Center
present W. David Mortensen a
special lifetime advocacy award**

March 29, 2014

**Robert G. Sanderson Community
Center of the Deaf and Hard of
Hearing**

Program Contents

Brunch: 10:00 – 10:45 AM

Program: 10:45 AM – 12:00 PM

Welcome: Marilyn Call, DSDHH Director

Ribbon Cutting: W. David Mortensen

Comments:

- **Philippe Montalette, UAD President – Dave's brief biography**
- **Marilyn Call – Recollections of Working with Dave**
- **Don Uchida – USOR Executive Director (retired) – Advocacy**
- **Valerie Kinney, a longtime friend – Recollections of Dave**

Through collaboration with the UAD Honoring Event Committee and Utah Division of Services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, we are honoring Dave at a morning brunch and giving him a special lifetime advocacy award for his advocacy contributions. This plaque along with his portrait and brief biography are hung in the museum area at the Sanderson Community Center for all to see and remember.

Jodi Becker Kinner

Edited by Valerie G. Kinney & Bronwyn O'Hara
2014

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A Tribute to

W. David Mortensen

Dave served on the Legislative Coalition for People with Disabilities and had worked with the Utah State Committee of Consumer Services. He also served in a variety of positions in the UAD itself.

After that of president, his most notable position was editor of the UAD Bulletin since 1967. He has always been a strong advocate for the deaf throughout his life. Dave stated, "I firmly believe that an education taught in the proper mode will enable many to achieve a good education and much success in life."

Dave has been the ultimate example of a Deaf leader. He deserves recognition for all that he has done for the deaf community in the state of Utah. His long-time voluntary contributions to deaf causes as well as community service should not be overlooked. Dave deserves to have his historical legacy passed down from generation to generation.

Sanderson Community Center and Utah Association of the Deaf are honoring W. David Mortensen, known as Dave, for his lifetime advocacy. He has made substantial contributions to the wellbeing of the Utah Deaf Community. A plaque is on the museum wall to denote his service. It was Jodi Becker Kinner, an amateur historian who proposed honoring Dave for his exemplary service.

Dave worked alongside Dr. Robert G. Sanderson, a vocational rehabilitation counselor and Deaf advocate. While Dave was president of the Utah Association of the Deaf (UAD), Dave was the most visible and active leader and spokesperson for Deaf needs. He accompanied Dr. Sanderson on innumerable meetings with legislators. He wrote articles that were published in the local newspapers and in the UAD Bulletin. One issue that deserved Dave's attention was in expressing his opposition to the structuring of the Sanderson Community Center for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing. He explained how the center could best serve the deaf population. Dave worked hard to help secure funding from the Utah legislature to run the Sanderson Community Center for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing of the Utah Deaf Community.

Dave has been an ambitious, persistent leader, a real role model for the deaf young adults and youth who will follow in his footsteps. In his professional life, he was the first deaf person in Utah to become a certified social worker.

But he is probably best known for his work as a political activist. He has continued to carry the torch in advocating for the rights of Deaf people to receive appropriate and adequate services at the Sanderson Community Center, striving to make sure their communication needs are met. Additionally, Dave has a long history of serving as president of UAD. In fact, no one has beaten his record. He has been president a total of 24 years, serving in the years 1971 – 1985, 1987 – 1991, 1993 – 1997. Dave worked tirelessly as he directed UAD during a time of growth. He saw the organization go from a simple format to a more complex format, where he was called upon to administer several programs. UAD went from a small home-run organization to a well-functioning business office during his presidencies.

Among his many accomplishments, Dave worked effectively with the Utah legislature. He successfully solicited the help of his district representatives and senators on issues of importance to deaf people. This was during a time when most deaf people were unaware of what they could do to get involved with the legislative process.

Dave was neither afraid nor lazy. Dave used his political contacts to educate the legislators about deafness and deaf people. In fact, he was instrumental in getting the TTY program set up in Utah for the deaf. He did this in 1975 through a grant from the federal government. His lobbying also provided support for the establishment of the very first community center for the deaf, which was called the Utah Community Center for the Deaf located in Bountiful, Utah.

In 1986 Dave toiled to influence the state legislature to pass a law mandating that there be two deaf persons to serve on the Institutional Council/Advisory Council of the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB).

In 1987-1988 Dave worked behind the scenes, organizing members of the Utah Deaf community to lobby on Capitol Hill to get a deaf relay service for Utah. It was through his efforts that the law passed, thus establishing the Utah Relay Service in 1988.

In 1994 Dave was again before the state legislature, lobbying to recognize American Sign Language as a language. This provided legitimacy for the language of the deaf in many applications. One application was in the establishment of the Interpreter Training Program at the Salt Lake Community College, which Dave helped set up. He accomplished this task by speaking with committees at the Community Councils of Salt Lake City and United Way. This led to the establishment of the interpreter service operated by the UAD. Appointments could be made through UAD for situations such as doctor's appointments, meetings with lawyers, and more. That morphed into the Utah Interpreter Program housed at the Robert G. Sanderson Community Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. A number of interpreting training programs at various colleges and universities were expanded throughout Utah and a number of freelance interpreting businesses also sprang up. It was through Dave's reminders to the medical community to provide interpreters for their deaf patients/clients that the medical professionals now know to arrange for sign language interpreters.