REALTIME FILE

EHDI 2018 Annual Meeting

Broadening Perspectives: A Collaboration Between

Traditionally Divisive Ideological Camps on Deaf Education

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>> Hello! Welcome back and congratulations on a full day! We hope that you found today's sessions and stakeholders meetings fruitful. We're gathered for our second plenary of the meeting. But first, we wanted to take a moment to recognize and thank our 2018 exhibitors and sponsors. We have one platinum, four silver and two bronze level sponsors for the 2018 EHDI meeting. We thank and recognize our platinum sponsor this year, Med‑El. Our four silver level sponsors are Otometrics, Audiology Systems, vivo sonic, otocon pediatrics, and Advanced Bionics. And the two bronze level sponsors for this year's meeting are pediatrics newborn hearing screenings and the National CMV Foundation. We thank these organizations for their generosity as well as our exhibitors at the 2018 EHDI meeting.

 I have a few notes to share about tomorrow. If you are presenting a breakout session, please go to the presenter room to be sure your presentation file is ready for your session. The presenter room will be moved to sand stone tomorrow. Which is Tuesday, for the day. This is located one floor above the ballroom.

 For those checking out on Tuesday, luggage storage will be available. Bring your luggage to the bellman stand near the hotel's front desk. For lunch tomorrow, the hotel is offering a variety of grab‑and‑go options in the exhibit hall. There will also be available for purchase by catch or credit card.

 Also, the restaurants at the hotel will be open for lunch.

 Finally, the presentation of the Maxon award for the EHDI excellence will be made immediately following the plenary session. So please don't leave.

 I would now like to introduce the presenters for the plenary session. Betsy Moog‑Brooks is the executive director of the Moog Center for Deaf Education. A nonprofit private school that teaches children with hearing loss to talk. She recently earned her doctor in education in instructional leadership. She received her master's degree in speech and hearing from Washington University, and is certified in deaf education, behavior disorders, learning disabilities, early childhood education, and is a listening and spoken language specialist. She has been in the field of early intervention for more than 30 years and continued to provide direct service and parent support to families with children, birth to 3.

 Dr. Thomas Horejes received his PhD in justice studies at Arizona State University and is currently Gallaudet university's associate provost of student success and academic quality. Prior to his position at Gallaudet, he was the former executive director of DEAF Inc., based in St. Louis, that provides advocacy and interpreting services to the deaf and hard of hearing community. He has numerous publications, and he is also a former professor of sociology at Gallaudet University.

 Please extend a warm welcome to both of our presenters.
[Applause]

>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: Thank you all for joining us this afternoon. I think it's very timely that our topic is broadening perspectives, after the plenary session this morning. This is a nice continuation. Although it seems planned, it was totally a coincidence.

 So, as the introduction said, I'm the director at the Moog Center for Deaf Education in St. Louis, where all of our educational services are provided using spoken language. However, we do work very hard to help families understand the benefits of sign language, and that's something we're going to talk about today.
>> Thomas Horejes: Good afternoon, everyone. Hello! Yes! I would like ‑‑ I like the energy in the room. Thank you. So, as we just heard, we're going to talk a little about our presentation in the introduction. I work at Gallaudet, but I'm going to talk to you today about my perspective as a deaf person. I grew up, my journey was oral, I did not sign. I grew up and I was against sign language and what it stood for. I acquired language later, then I became actually very involved in the deaf community and I was a guest in education. Now, I've come to a point where I have a broad perspective that I can luckily go between both worlds. Today, I want to say that I am thankful for that opportunity to have ASL and English in my life. That broad perspective has benefited me, and it's very rich, and I want to have that opportunity to share that with you, and you can bring it back to your community.

 All right. Let's take a look at the slide. Relationships are like a car without gas. Without one, you're going nowhere. So we have to be sure that we build a relationship. But a relationship also requires trust first, and for this kind of environment trust can be dangerous, and it takes a lot of courage and a lot of risk. So we do have to talk about these broad perspectives, and we have have to consider how we can build the trust first, then how we can have a safe, brave space to have that discussion and that dialogue.

 EHDI, e‑h‑d, early hearing detection, strongly has a medical framework. The I, intervention, is still influenced by the medical framework. But we have to build a bridge so that we can build collaboration.

 The early hearing detection, many of us would agree, it has to be early identification. A baby does need to be identified where they are on the spectrum of hearing so that we can provide better services. What we struggle with though, and the discussion is, the I part, the intervention. What does that look like?

 We often have a great understanding of the early intervention that's a strong medical frame, but that still is influencing the cultural frame, and the cultural frame needs to be brought forward as well. The deaf perspective can contribute to that collaboration. Deaf people have a rich opportunity to really contribute to EHDI's work, and EHDI doesn't have to be divide between EHD and I. We can actually have a joint collaboration. Traditions what I'm talking about. We had strong division. I would like to make sure we address that this afternoon.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: I'm going to give you a little background about how we got together. I was Tommy's teacher when he was 5 years old. We won't talk very much about that. Tommy was his pre ‑‑ was as precocious then as now. It was very clear back then, many, many years ago, that we had a relationship, and that relationship has continued throughout both of our lives. So Tommy grew up, he went off to school, then found himself several years ago back in St. Louis. When he came back into St. Louis, he contacted me and said, Let's get together. We began talking about this whole elephant in the room, about sign language and spoken language. And he asked if I would consider having a discussion, an honest discussion, about my perspective versus his perspective. And so over the past several years, we've continued to have honest discussions and have really broadened each of our perspectives by listening.

 So, this is sort of ‑‑ this has sort of become a platform for both of us, that perspectives can change when you listen actively to the other person. We now think this is really important, and we think that we can make a difference.

 For those of you who didn't attend our session yesterday, we did a session that was also about broadening perspectives. Though that wasn't the title. When there was an activity that was happening at the tables and we weren't looking, Tommy looked at me, he said, This is so historical.

 So, at the tables we had diverse groups. We had about 75 people in the room, a combination of people who are listening and spoken language proponents, and people who are ASL proponents. And some really amazing things happened during that time. I think we're both pretty proud that we brought that group together, and actually no battle broke out. That was amazing.

 So I think what we want to talk about today is that we now know that's actually possible. We lived it yesterday, and we hope that we can carry it forward throughout the rest of EHDI. And that's really what we want to talk about today, is if you can build a trust with someone with a different perspective, then you can actually open up your mind to engage in their perspective, and in the end it can only move us all forward.

 Michael, can you scroll to see if there's anything else there.
>> Thomas Horejes: I would like to add also, when we had this conversation, we can't say oh, those other people. We can't file the old "Other people" strategies. That really means us. It's us. We are them. It's not them. It's us.

 So, our goal to have one mission for the deaf child and the parents, and provide a structure for them. We want to work together to provide the appropriate resources for the children and the parents. We all agree on that. So we can't afford to continue "Oh, they said." No, we have to own this. The community together has said this. Also, Betsy and I, she's known me since I've been 5, so we still have dialogue still. We still sometimes have these critical conversations, and there are misunderstandings that happen. So I cannot imagine what it looks like for you with two strangers coming together to express their ideas. That's a very brave space, and we have to have a sensitivity and understanding that it requires a lot of courage and it reyears choirs a lot of ‑‑ requires a lot of sensitivity to be involved in this dialogue. We are lucky we have that history together, so we are very familiar and aware of that with each other.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: So the trust related to that, everyone in the room is going to have to turn to the person next to you, and the person next to that person, and begin to just trust. One of the things we know is that we're all here for the exact same reason. So we have something that's very much in common. We all want to improve the quality of services to children who are deaf or hard of hearing. So that's the first layer of that trust. You know the person sitting next to you actually has the same goal that you have.
>> Thomas Horejes: I want to add, I'm sorry, requires the trust, but that also requires the vulnerability and the willingness to be vulnerable. We often think that vulnerability is a bad thing, but I want to reflect what Brenny brown said in a Ted X talk about shame and vulnerability. It doesn't matter to be vulnerable. It's important to us to be vulnerable, because that leads to considerations of innovations. And we have a long history of representing two very diverse camps. The innovation is really teamwork collaborative event that where new ideas and innovations can occur, but we have to cross those lines. That requires a lot of risk, a lot of trust, a lot of mutual respect for that to develop.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: We need the next slide. Number 3.
>> Thomas Horejes: Yeah, sorry, there we go. Let's go back to this slide. It's not showing on the monitor.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: You got it. Thank you. It's you.
>> Thomas Horejes: Oh, OK. Here we go. Take a look at the slide.
[Laughter]
Well, this is interesting, one perspective and then the other perspective, 6 and 9. They're both right. They're both right. They're not wrong. But we have to actually overcome that. We have to be able to talk about and have the dialogue so we can avoid the things, in the plenary they talked about, remember, the critical conversations. I have to admit I've been guilty about wanting to be right all the time. If you know me, you know I like to discuss things and I like to win it! But for this work, we cannot afford to do that. We have to let that go. We have to change our mindset and let that go. We have to realize there is no right or wrong. We have to have a perspective, and each of us has a perspective, and we're all important. Including the deaf community involvement, the parent involvement, the stakeholders' involvement. Everyone has to be involved. That is critical.

 Listening. Don't listen to be ready to have an argument to come back at. Once you feel that emotion building up, you have to take that moment, check yourself, and find out why that resistance is coming. Where is that bias coming from? We have to be able to recognize that and put it aside and try to actively listen and understand the other person first. We don't want to force them to understand what we have to say. We want to be able to listen to what they have to say.

 We have equitable perspectives. That's an interesting word, equitable. We come here to EHDI, some come here, with more equity than others. And we they'd to recognize the power, and we want to level the playing field that we do have a lot of diverse players.

 We want to use the levels as an opportunity to include those people who do not have the same amount of equity in the discussion.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: As professionals, we need to be really mindful that the family's perspective may not be the same as ours, and that the choices that families make may not match our choice, what we would do if this were our child. But that's our job. Our job is to not bring our bias to the situation when we're introducing opportunities to families.

 When we're working with families, there are many, many perspectives to consider. There's the parent. There's the child. There's the grandparent. There's the other professionals that are all coming and telling the family different things. Sometimes, they're coming with conflicting information, maybe many times they're coming with conflicting information. So one of the most important things is to work very hard to be mindful of that family's perspective or that parent's perspectives.

 Everyone, all of these groups, can contribute to providing good information to the family and information from deaf people is also important to be brought into that. So the family gets a full picture of what their opportunities are.

 We need to be careful that the information that we're providing is actually good information, that it's quality information, that it's data‑based, not just our idea or our opinion, etc. What we know to be true, because it's based on something real and factual.

 There's not just one way to help children who are deaf or hard of hearing reach their potential. And that's what we need to remember. There's not just one size fits all.

 OK, so this, I'm going to talk a little about a collaboration that began when Tommy was at Deaf ink, was introduced as an organization in St. Louis that is traditionally very deaf culture oriented, and when Tommy came back into St. Louis he worked very hard to include all families who have children who are deaf and hard of hearing and not just families that were accepting of the deaf culture and using ASL. So that's how we began to have a collaboration.

 So through our conversations about sign language and about his perspective was that by only presenting spoken language to familiar it's, it was limiting opportunities for their children.

 So, over a long period of time, I took this into consideration and I really thought about the families at the Moog center and about the families for whom I felt that some children may leave the Moog Center and for whatever the reason is, which is a whole other presentation, may benefit and probably will benefit from having access to sign language in a sign language ‑‑ and a sign language interpreter in their education once they leave the Moog Center. Although the children were able to learn successfully spoken language and could communicate with their families using spoken language, we still have children who are deaf and hard of hearing that are learning spoken language, but in my opinion it would benefit them if they had access to an interpreter when they enter into a general education setting, and will need that visual support to be able to follow higher level academics.

 Although this is not necessarily the thinking of all people who are teaching spoken language, it's how I view it for the children with whom I work.

 So, together, we created an after‑school program for the children at the Moog Center and their families. As I said, all of our academics during the day and all of our teaching is spoken language‑centered, but we offered an opportunity for families to engage in an after‑school program two times a month where the parents were in sort of a discussion or conversation. When Tommy lived in St. Louis, he was part of that and since he's left DEAF, ink, the new executive director helps me with that program.

 So the parents were engaged in conversation and the purpose was to empower them to advocate better for their children, but also to broaden their perspectives about the deaf community and about sign language.

 I think that many parents who choose spoken language for their children may want their children to be exposed to sign language or they may want themselves to know sign language, but once they've made that choice, they feel that it will be wrong if they pick up that second option at some point in time or that second opportunity.

 So together we were trying to help the parents realize that it's OK to give your children spoken language and sign language.

 So in this after‑school program the parents were in a conversation, then the children were engaged in activities based on their age with a teacher from the Moog Center who was a spoken language person, and a young deaf adult who was a ‑‑ could use spoken language, but also knew ASL. They engaged in the typical sort of after‑school activities, snacks, reading stories, playing games. During that time, the spoken language person, if they were reading a book, she would read the story, but then the person who knew sign language was there to interpret it as it would be done in a classroom.

 From that experience, I think it just released a lot of anxiety from the parents. They felt very relieved that we, the Moog Center, who promotes sign language, was accepting of the idea that it was OK for their children to learn sign language. I think that made a big difference for them.

 Do you want to talk about the parent perspective?
>> Thomas Horejes: Yes. So we did send out evaluations that the parents filled out, and we gathered the data based on many of the parents ‑‑ not all of the parents, but many said, Wow! We learned more about sign language. All of the parents recognize the importance of sign language in their child's journey, and they wanted to learn and take additional courses.

 So we set up like a deaf class opportunity for the parents to actually come in and learn sign language. Recently, the parents, I think you were telling me, they want to have their children learn sign language as well.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: Here's a huge problem. It's a great idea, but there's no one to provide the service. So our parents said they would like their children, they would like to go to a sign language class with their children. In St. Louis, the only classes are offered if your child is 10 years old or older. And we don't have any children in our school 10 years old. So the children are younger than 10, but don't have access to a sign language, like a family sign language class. So, we're back to that whole problem, which we'll discuss in a minute, about we have some systems problems related to being able to provide what families actually want.
>> Thomas Horejes: I just want to quickly add, you don't have to wait until they're 10. When a baby is born at zero, this he can begin. They just should be a part of the opportunity to see the rich visual language, and they should be able to ‑‑ parents should be able to take classes with their child at age zero. It doesn't have to be age 10. We want to do that earlier, just for the exposure. That's a better opportunity for the child and parent to have successful communication events with their children.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: Tommy wanted me to tell you this short story. The new director of DEAF, Inc is in the room saying we're looking and looking, but can't find anyplace to go with our children. I turned to him, I said, how many families do you need to start a sign language class for families with children under 10? I guess he wasn't thinking, he said, I don't know, maybe five. A parent in the room said I'll have five families for you tomorrow.

 Now he's stuck and has to start a sign language class for families for children under 10.
>> Thomas Horejes: I'll give you a moment to read the new slide. If the structure does not permit the dialogue, the structure must change. That's really one of my ‑‑ if you look at Paul Fererre, his philosophy and work, it's the same gold here's. EHDI is 17 years old. ADA was passed in 1990. So if you look at the history of EHDI, the strongly ‑‑ it strongly comes from the hearing professional world and hearing people. That frame, the medical model, and that's totally fine, that's OK. That's OK. That's nobody's fault. That's the way it is. That's the history. That's what it is. That's the perspective of how EHDI was actually built from the 17 years ago to now. So that structure is still strongly weighed with professionals who traditionally were from that perspective, that medical frame. Now we're noticing that there are more and more deaf professionals in early intervention, because many of them, like myself, finally can afford access to language and sign languages. The ADA allowed me to go to school. My master's degree, my PhD degree allowed me to bring all of this to early intervention.

 Before that, we didn't have a lot of opportunities with interpreters and things like that. That's why it's important to recognize the structure is changing, and it is changing for the good. We need to take that opportunity and build upon it to include all of the people, so that all the people involved in this room, because they all want the same mission.

 Status quo, of course, we live in a society where hearing, listening, and spoken language is the status quo and it is a precursor to the stereotypes. We need to set those aside, because the current status quo does not fit for our current needs of our children. We have to actually be able to discuss and innovate and create something that will change the status quo. Language is important, but we need to have equal standing in all language representation, including visual American Sign Languages.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: I think that was all you. Next slide.
>> Thomas Horejes: Oh, the structure. Everyone has to be involved in that. We can't rely on one person. One person cannot create the change. Karl White is not the only person who can create the change. Karl White has many people involved in what happens.
[Laughter]
So we can't pick on Karl. We can't! He's part of the energy of the change, and we all are part of that energy. We all have to be accountable for that. We need to be mindful. It's not easy to change. It's easy to target people, but we don't want to do that. We don't want to target the people. We want to look at the system and look at that perspective to change the structure.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: Next slide. That's all you.
>> Thomas Horejes: The next slide then. So, thinking of the children, when a child is born, they are not concerned with ideology. I think they're naive, innocent, beautiful human being, but they're part of the structure that we will construct, the ideology that we will construct for them, and we have to own that and be mindful of that. The structure permits the access for the child. And many of us, I think all of us, take this personally for all of us, this is not really a day job. This is not a 9 to 5 job. It requires a lot of frustrations and tears and laughter and emotions in our bag, and we're in this together.

 We need to recognize it's OK to take this personally. It's OK, because it's also political, and we need to recognize that as a deaf individual, as myself, I am part of this, and I want, I hunger, I desire for the dialogue. So let us be a part of this dialogue. I know you want to have this dialogue with us too. The question of how is the issue. That's where we have to go back to, and that goes back to the trust, the understanding, the perspectives, the multiple perspectives are important. There's not one right perspective.

 So, ask any deaf person how can I help? That's a simple question, but it's a very vulnerable question that can lead to fear. We have to be mindful of how we're working together.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: That was all you. I'm the next slide.
>> Thomas Horejes: OK.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: So read the slide. The circumstances surrounding each family and each child must be considered, and so when families are making language choices, they have to consider many factors. I alluded to this a few minutes ago.

 The professionals need to be respectful of those factors.

 Access to resources is a huge problem. It's a huge factor in language for the child. Especially for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. If a family chooses sign language but there aren't any resources, then we have a problem. If a family chooses spoken language but there aren't resources, we have a problem.

 Although many people think that for a child whose family has chosen spoken language if everyone just talks to the child, that child is not going to learn spoken language. The way that children who are deaf or hard of hearing learn spoken language is being, for most of them, is by being taught, because they're not just overhearing the people in the conversation in the room. Children who are deaf or hard of hearing don't learn spoken language the same way that hearing children learn spoken language.

 The same is true for sign language. If a child is born in a family that chooses sign language, and the parents are hearing, the parents may not know or probably don't know sign language. So, we have the same problem, that just by the parents signing a few words here and there, that's not going to be enough for the child to learn sign language.

 So we have a problem with our circumstances, and those circumstances relate back to what Tommy was saying about the system. We have a problem with our system. We don't have enough providers. We don't have enough trained providers. I'm guessing everyone in this room knows that, the parents in the room felt this frustration, and the people in the room trying to hire trained people definitely feel the frustration. And the people who are, those who are becoming professionals, you have jobs. That's a guarantee, for sure.

 So all of those things go into the consideration of the family, if the family chooses something that's not available to them, they might have to take a new path. And the other thing is, when we think about the family circumstances, circumstances at this point in time may not be the same circumstances as this point in time or this point in time.

 So a family may choose a language here to get started and then decide that they'd like to add or move around or try a new opportunity. As professionals, we need to be respectful in the way that we guide those families, that we just need to think about the parents' perspective.

 I think the title of our presentation, broadening perspectives, it's not just about being willing to open your mind to someone else's perspective, but really opening your mind to the perspective of the family.

 So if the family is asking about a perspective different than yours, it's your responsibility to provide information regarding that, and to provide information that is truthful and honest and based on data, not just, as I said before, your ideas.
>> Thomas Horejes: Yes. She mentioned two words, I'm offscript, I apologize, but the two words that are critical, a continued dialogue, and you talked about the parent choices, the choice. That often is an interesting word. It makes sense, choice, but it can be misleading. Because, for a parent, they often feel they must choose one choice. So other considerations are maybe we can change the language we use to opportunity. We have some opportunities that allow the parents then to understand that there is a range of opportunities available that could be provided, that we readily have available. That's something we have to also recognize, parent choice is important, but also that might get a little sticky because the semantics of language, there may not be choices available in some stakeholders' lives.

 So sometimes if a stakeholder dictates what happens, that's really not a parent's choice. Giving the parent the choice, but I wonder if we can change the language to opportunity, to frame it in a way that we can show there are many resources available, to ensure that the parents are given the resources and the opportunity, so that they can have equitable decisionmaking processes in place.
[Applause]
Thank you. Yes, thank you.

 Parents naturally are grieving. They want a child that is the same as they are. So when they come into the EHDI field, the choices are often things that naturally lead the parents to choosing something. But we must provide the opportunities to look at the broad spectrum of things that are available. It's not just a choice. It's several opportunities. It's not an either‑or. You can have both. You can have English and ASL. You should actually be able to do anything that you want to do to provide the opportunity, the environment, they can co‑exist. They should allow for a full language development of that child.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: Again, I think the issue is that we want to provide opportunities. Everyone would agree those opportunities are important. The issue is if the parent chooses an opportunity that's not available, because we don't have trained people to support that. That's really a huge problem that we have. Next slide.

 So, as we sort of begin to move towards the wrap‑up of our presentation, we want to talk about what you can do now, strategies to move forward. I keep referring to the systems problem, which I think we really have. I told Karl that he just needs to go to the federal government and get enough money for everybody to have equal services and the whole nation can be on the same path, and we can look like Australia and everybody gets what they need.
[Applause]
He offered me his wallet, and it didn't have enough money in it.
[Laughter]
So I think that this is the direction that we need to really take, but we need to take it all together. We need to all broaden our perspectives, that if we can work together, that together we can make a systems change, but we're not going to be able to do that if we're fighting with each other. And if one perspective is saying "But we need to make sure everyone gets this" while the other perspective issation ‑‑ is saying "No, no, no, we need this." But the only way to make change ‑‑ I don't know if we can make change with this government. Maybe if the government pud their attention on ‑‑ put their attention on children who are deaf and hard of hearing things would be better all around. We could redirect the government.

 We'd like to ask you to really think about where you stand right now, where you're sitting right now, where in that chair are you? Are you opening up your mind? Are you thinking these two people are kukoo? This can never happen? We took great risk yesterday. All of those 75 people who joined us took great risks yesterday, and it ended up being an incredibly powerful and really good discussion.

 We took great risk when we collaborated with each other. Tommy's reputation is essentially on the line. Mine's not so much on the line, but maybe after this presentation it will be. I don't know.

 So we need to ask all of you to engage with someone with a different perspective. When you leave this room, you need to seek out someone who you know has a perspective different than yours, and try to engage in something with them. Have a conversation. Ask them questions about where they come from, and try to understand their perspective. If everyone in this room did that, an hour from now we'd all have a really different perspective. And that would be an incredible thing.

 Related to ‑‑ Michael, you went too far. Back up a little bit, please. Thank you.

 You need to take a risk. It's OK. This is relatively a safe place. People hopefully won't be too judgmental. Those of you who were here for this morning's plenary, now you have strategies for making ‑‑ for taking that risk. This afternoon, put whatever you learned this morning into action.

 Related to our mission here, to our mission and related to EHDI, we're not asking you to change your mind. We're not asking you to believe something an hour from now that you didn't believe when you came into the room. That's not our goal at all.

 Our goal is to just listen to the other person. This is something that historically at EHDI we, for whatever reason, just don't do. It just doesn't happen.

 The two, as Tommy calls it, polarized camps, spends their time being polarized, and the comments that come in at the end of EHDI are polarized. It would be lovely, especially for Karl, if the comments that came in were more of I'm going to have a new mindset. I met someone that was really empowering to me to listen to critical conversations and to try to broaden my perspective.

 It can only create good for all of us. And we need to remember that parents need, we owe it to the parents to provide them with a full range of what Tommy is now calling the opportunities. And we need to do that honestly and with good information, not just with our opinions and our own personal life experiences.

 We need to remember that we're all serving children and their families, and we're doing that with the same end goal in mind, to make sure that the children have language to be able to live full lives and reach their potentials. And the best way to do that is to do it together.
>> Thomas Horejes: Thank you. Thank you.
[Applause]
I have two takeaways I'd like you to consider. Well, three things. First of all, we must be continuously curious. We have to have that fire and that passion. We do. This is tough work. It's messy work, but we have to continue the curiosity. And how we're curious, we're asking questions, not just the easy questions, but the very difficult questions. Those are the challenges that hopefully can allow us to change the system. We must continue to be curious, and include work with people who provide different perspectives. Be curious. Be curious about deaf people and sign language. The hashtag #why I sign, take a look at that. Ask questions. Bring them to the table. Ask the deaf children who grew up oral. Ask them why did you choose spoken language? Bring that to the table. Ask the parents why they chose the language. Bring that to the table. All of those perspectives, all of that curiosity comes and benefits us.

 Be curious, but we also have to be tolerant. That requires careful consideration, observation, listening, and mutual respect. We have to recognize that. The resistance, the bias puts us on the defensive. It's not what we're about. That's really against our goals together. Be curious, be tolerant, and work in love. We have to work in love.

 Bring love to everything that you can. It's easy to target and hate and to have a violent reaction. We need to change that. We really are in this together, and we really are lovable and loving of each other, whether we know it or not or like it or not. Breathe. It's OK. Look at each other. Figure out how we can share the love, because really, the child is the thing that is most precious, and how we can get there, we can't go wrong if we can continually recognize the love, who they are as individuals and bring those perspectives together.

 So I hope you can take that away and remember that when you go home.

 Second takeaway really, as we move forward to continue, check your bias that you bring. It may be bringing the barriers and we want to look at the opportunities. That will be critical to look at how our own biases, I'm not talking about really we have to be very careful to recognize that I have a privilege and a bias that can create a barrier to the opportunity of the child's growth. So those are the two things that I would really like you to take back to your community, continue to be curious, tolerant and understanding, mutually respectful. Mutual respect of the perspective, and love.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: My hope is that this session will help people understand that children who are deaf or hard of hearing have the right to learn spoken language or sign language, and in fact, it may be important to learn both.

 That's what we have.
[Applause]

>> Thomas Horejes: Does anybody know how much time we have left?
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: I don't know if we should take questions. That might make me break out in a sweat. We have a few minutes. So as long as you ask your question to Tommy, it's fine.
>> Thomas Horejes: How much time do we actually have left? Anybody? OK, we kind of ‑‑ I hope there's hopefully we'll be a little long so there'd be no hard questions. I'm going to trust you that we have the time to ask maybe some tough questions, we'll be willing if you're brave enough, we're willing to go through this process with you.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: Well, he's speaking for himself.
[Laughter]
We'll see how that works out. If you have a question, you're going to need to stand, then we may not be able to see you because the light that is on us is keeping us from really ‑‑ there's one right there. I see a hand up back there. Only if your question is for Tommy.
>> I don't are a ‑‑ I don't have a question.
>> Thomas Horejes: Your name?
>> Laura Hobnell from Arizona. I want to say thank you to both of you. You're very brave, and ‑‑
[Applause]
We need this conversation, and I just thank you for being vulnerable and bringing it to the table.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: Thank you. However many more people would like to do that, that would be really good instead of a question.
>> Thomas Horejes: I want to add that you're all brave for coming here too. Thank you for coming. You're very brave to do that.
>> I'm Gay Luckanor with AG Bell. I want to recognize you for coming together. Obviously, you have quite the great working relationship, it's a great model. I really appreciated that both of you talked about the importance of parents and the kids individually and just thank you very much for today.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: Thank you.
>> Thomas Horejes: Thank you. That's really brave for AG Bell, I think. I thank you for that. I do.
[Applause]

>> I love the love. I'm Nora Lee Hasso from California. Born and raised in the central valley, transplant to the Bay Area. I'd like to throw a plug in that within that diversity we really need to also have very crucial conversations about how race plays a giant role, not just in deaf education, but in every institution in this country, and predominantly the Latino population, which in California is the largest population that we serve. Yet, here I am one of none, one of just the only Latina teacher from that area who is here, and a lot of families who need support.. And I feel really alone out there, so I'm hoping that we can start those conversations without the animosity or the resistance. Thank you.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: Thank you.
[Applause]

>> Thomas Horejes: Yes, yes, I want to add one thing to your comment. As a white person, I do recognize my privilege as a white person, that maybe have excluded others. I appreciate that you've called me out on that. We don't want to just focus on the sign language. We have other barriers as well: Race, socioeconomic status. Yes, race is critical to be a part of this discussion, and thank you for mentioning that. We need to continue to work on that.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: Karl, right there.
>> Well, my first comment is that this was wonderful, as was the meeting we had yesterday, the 75 of us. Now, I'm in the ‑‑ I'm going to say something scary, I think. Or, well, I'm sort of thinking out loud, you guys prompted me to think, and I'm thinking about how we train people in a collaborative way to understand language development and bilingualism. I'm a speech pathologist, former teacher of the deaf, I also have a degree in applied linguistics. It was there when I started studying bilingualism I had some ahas about when people learn a first language, they can learn a second, but they've got to learn the first one early. You guys have just gotten this room of people to that point.

 I think it's fabulous! You have made a huge difference in the lives of people. I meet children who are language deprived. They don't learn to read, many of them. One young man has an IQ of 130. The nonverbal part. And a verbal of 70. Sign language, when he was a baby, could have helped him. But his parents chose ‑‑ anyway, I'll stop. But I'm just happy. Thank you.
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: Thank you.
[Applause]

>> Thomas Horejes: You're making me cry. You really are. Thank you.
>> Thomas Horejes: Can you reflect the question?
>> Karl said oh, duh.
>> Thomas Horejes: Come on up, please. Thank you. Thank you. Julie, come on up, please. Come right on up.
>> I want to thank both of you for the opportunity to work ‑‑ I'm sorry, I'm Julie Rems railroad Mario, from California ‑‑ Julie Rems‑Mario. From California. Yay, California! I'm proud of California. Option schools and the center for early intervention for deaf infants, CEID, and the California Association for the Deaf. Do I have any people from California association of the deaf? The deaf community have been partnering and working together. We found a space where we can agree, because we agree that language deprivation is there. We proposed a bill. Because we work together, the bill was adopted. By both parties. Can you imagine?

 It was 100% unanimously passed. Because we care about the same things. Kansas passed the same bill. Hawaii has recently passed the same bill. Oregon has. And just South Dakota has passed the same bill. We have two more states in progress who will be adopting the bill soon, because we work together.

 If you have not passed those bills in your state, think about the stakeholders, think about the deaf children, and their literacy. Healthy language acquisition foundation is so key for 5‑year‑olds when heading into school to learn literacy. I want you to think about that and work together.
>> Thomas Horejes: A quick comment, Julie. Julie provided a good example on a national‑state level, that we can work together and we didn't really focus on that so much. We focused more on the community level. So you're taking it to the next level in the process, the state level, working with legislators, working with the community. I agree. To get some things done. Is that it? Are we done with time?
>> Betsy Moog‑Brooks: Yeah. I'm going to be your teacher now. It's over.
[Laughter]

>> Thomas Horejes: OK.
>> Karl White: Thanks! Please join me in one more round of applause for Tommy and Betsy.
[Applause]

>>[music]
To dream the impossible dream

[Music ends]

>> Karl White: We heard a really great presentation. We want that music playing to remind you that this morning we had some awards for family leadership. We're going to now present the awards for the Maxon award. But I think you've seen what happens when brave people get together, and there are a lot of brave people here. I thank Tommy and Betsy again for a great presentation. But hopefully, more than that, we will put into action what they suggested we do, that we will seek out someone who has a different perspective than we do and have an honest conversation with them. That is a small step, but it's a big step at the same time. It can lead to great places.

 So thank you very much for your attention and for participating in this. We had a circumstance this morning where the winner of the Family Leadership Award wasn't able to be here, but she's here now. So if Melissa Tumblin would come forward, we'd like to make the award that we had planned to make this morning. Please join me in welcoming Melissa.
[Applause]
Melissa, if you would like to say a few words, we want to congratulate you. Here's the trophy, and I'll hold it so you don't have to. And your Don Quixote book.
>> Thank you. Wow! What an honor. Especially being here at EHDI in Denver. This year your community is headquartered here in Colorado. So this is very exciting.

 I found your community after my youngest daughter Allie was born with microcrocia in her right ear and we struggled to find the answers. Since then, since 2010, your community has managed to help thousands of microcia anatresia families here nationally and all over the world. We donated nearly 80 new bone‑anchored devices since 2012 to the needy.
[Applause]
We have awarded 10 college scholarships, and have hosted nearly 50 family events with medical professionals involved here nationally and in seven different countries.
[Applause]
Every day, I'm reminded of what I do and what my board members do and families in the community, why it's so important and means so much to us, because I remember what I went through as a parent, as a family trying to find help for my daughter. Just yesterday, just as EHDI started, in the exhibit hall, a mom found our booth, and she was so relieved and so happy to have found us, because for nine years with her little girl, they have felt alone. They department know where to go and could not find the answers. But they have a community now, and so it's moments like this that keep me going and why your community does what it does for these families. For that, we're grateful. Thank you. This is quite an honor.
[Applause]
>> Karl White: So I'm glad we were able to close that loop. We'd now like to introduce the Maxon award for EHDI excellence. So the names of the awardees are on the slide here. If I could invite each of them to come forward. Don't wait until your name is read. Start now. So we have Robert Cicco from Pennsylvania. Lenore Holte from Iowa. A couple of these nominees were not able to be here today. So we won't have the full complement. But those of you here, please come forward. Judith Marlowe. Jessica Messersmith from South Dakota. Heather Morrow‑Almeida from Oregon. South Dakota EHDI collaboration. Stephanie Olson and Karen Putz. Anna Wagner, our youngest ever Maxon nominee. We're delighted to have Anna as one of the nominees. Then Yusnita weirather and Nancy Rushmer. These are all brave people who have done incredible things. I remind you of the metaphor of Don Quixote. We have Don Quixote books for each of you, and hope you will be inspired by them. Don Quixote was regarded by many as kind of a funny old man, but because he had a different way of imagining the world around him, and persistence, and took joy in what he did, he was able to accomplish great things. That's what all of you have done. We're all richer for your having been participants in the EHDI process, and this doesn't mean that you get to stop and relax. There's still a lot of great work to do.

 So the decision on who receives the Maxon award for EHDI excellent is always a challenge. I hope that you will go to the website and read the nomination letters for each of these people and be inspired, as I was inspired. You have here now on the screen a picture of this year's awardee. Well, almost. It's Bob Cicco from Pennsylvania. Congratulations.
[Applause]
If you'd like to say a few words.
>> Wow! I will tell you I'm a little embarrassed or maybe a lot embarrassed to get this. I'm certainly honored. But in reality, the real honor is being mentioned in the same breath with Dr. Maxon, the greats that have received this honor before. The real honor is actually being able to stand on stage with all these wonderful people who have done so much to further the EHDI cause. Throughout the years.

 The real honor is actually being involved with the state EHDI program in Pennsylvania since its inception and seeing it grow and mature during this time. Despite budgetary challenges. The real honor is being able to work with the AAP and my fellow colleague pediatricians who have, over the years, dedicated themselves to making sure that physicians actually become part of the solution rather than being part of the problem.
[Applause]
I'm not saying or suggesting we're there yet, but we're working on it. I want to thank the committee so much for this honor. But more importance than that, I want to thank everyone in this room. I want to thank everyone at this meeting. Because you inspire me. The work that you do inspires me. It should inspire all of us to recognize that when you have hard work and you have dedication and you have passion, you can achieve pretty much anything, and that's the result of everyone at this meeting. Thank you very much!
[Applause]

>> Karl White: And thanks to all of you for all you've done and for helping to make EHDI such a successful endeavor. So thank you. We would like you all to hang around after we close the session so we can get a picture. And we're going to close right now. If you just wait right here.

 OK, we finished the first day! We made it! There's still a few meetings tonight, I know, that have been scheduled. So listen to what Betsy and Tommy talked about. If you could go back once ‑‑ or just two slides. I would invite you to think about ‑‑ no, one more. One of these is Betsy, one is Tommy. You decide which one is which. OK? But we're grateful to have had them here. Please go out and take their advice and come back bright and early tomorrow, and we'll have another great day. Thank you!