



In This Issue

- [What's New at NDA](#): Activities and Celebrations, NDA's New Website
- [Employee of the Month](#): Jennifer Stylinski, Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist
- [Ask a Clinician](#): Transition Planning
- [Job Postings](#): Mental Health Technicians (MHT), Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS), Regional Community Relations Representative, Staff Interpreter
- [Quote of the Month](#): Helen Keller

What's New at NDA

Activities and Celebrations

Spring is in the air at National Deaf Academy and with two holidays this month there were plenty of festivities and activities. On St. Patrick's Day the kitchen made a traditional corned beef and cabbage meal along with a special cake and desserts. Residents prepared for Easter by dyeing eggs and decorating them with sponges. On Easter Sunday there was a large Easter egg hunt throughout the campus followed by an Easter dinner of Cornish hens.

Other activities this month included making "little grass houses," a project involving planting seeds on sponges in the shape of houses and then continuing to care for them. With the warmer days upon us, the residents have been enjoying more of their favorite activities such as swimming, water activities and the ropes course.

NDA's New Website

Our Marketing Department has been busy working on a new website. This site will feature updated information on our programs and staff as well as a slide show featuring different areas of our campus. We hope to have the new site up by mid-April.

[Back to top](#)

Employee of the Month

Jennifer Stylinski, Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist

Jennifer Stylinski, CTRS has been named the March 2008 Employee of the Month at National Deaf Academy. Jennifer has been employed at NDA since August 2007 and she has also completed two internships at NDA during the summers of 2005 and 2007. She is a graduate of Gallaudet University where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Therapeutic Recreation.



Jennifer chose to pursue a career in Recreation Therapy after working in the mental health field. She worked in a group home with three different programs for Deaf adults and Deaf and Blind adults. This experience opened her mind to many different possibilities in this field, particularly Recreation Therapy.

Jennifer enjoys working with people, especially with the Deaf, and empowering them with the knowledge that they are capable of doing anything they put their minds to.

Jennifer currently lives in Mount Dora, but her family is from Phoenix, Ariz. She has two older brothers and one of them is also Deaf. She has four beautiful nieces and one handsome nephew. She does not have a pet although she says she is looking for a furry animal.

When she is not helping the residents of NDA, Jennifer enjoys a variety of activities and is always open to trying new things. She enjoys a lot of sports, especially basketball, and she is rooting for the University of North Carolina in the NCAA Tournament this month. There are a lot of things she would like to try, such as paintball, rock climbing, more intense rope courses, kayaking, parasailing, and more of what this beautiful state can offer.

Jennifer says she has several favorite things about working at NDA, but will narrow it to two. First and foremost is the opportunity to see the residents change for the better and grow through Recreation Therapy. She says it is quite touching. "It just makes me smile when I see them succeed," she says.

Her second favorite thing about working at NDA is she knows that everyone, herself included, is working here to make a difference in residents' lives whether it is seen immediately or not.

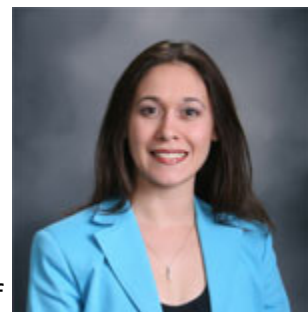
[Back to top](#)

Ask a Clinician

What type of planning is done at NDA to ensure a resident's smooth transition back to their home?

-L. McMillian, Denver, Colo.

One of the primary goals for treatment here at National Deaf Academy is enabling a resident to return to a lower level of care. In order to do this, the patient must maintain a level of stability sufficient to handle the ups and downs of



everyday life. The return to a lower level of care is coordinated in transition planning.



Transition planning at NDA begins when a resident is admitted to our facility. The clinical team discusses transition goals that the resident will work on with family, guardians and/or case managers during their stay. Once treatment begins, the therapist consistently discusses these goals with the resident to identify additional needs for discharge and transition.

One way the clinical team at NDA is involved in transition planning is through monthly treatment team meetings for each resident. In these meetings the resident's treatment goals are reviewed and the resident is assessed on how they are progressing in meeting those goals. These meetings include everyone involved in the resident's treatment process: the resident, caregivers, therapist, psychiatrist, nurse, recreational therapist, group therapist, school representative, utilization review nurse, and case managers. We often use phone conferencing and/or video conferencing to include a resident's multidisciplinary team in the meeting.

In addition, we review what the plans are for the resident at discharge. That may be returning home to family or another caregiver, step-down placement, group home, foster care or independent living to name a few. The clinical team works in conjunction with other professionals to identify the best plan and advocate for each resident on an individual basis.

As a resident meets goals and demonstrates more flexible coping skills, transition planning includes planning for continuance of care after NDA. While residents may be discharged successfully from NDA, we always recommend continued outpatient services, as the transition back home (or another placement) can be stressful. The therapist may work with families or case managers to identify a therapist in the hometown for individual and family therapy, a psychiatrist for medication management, and any other services that the resident may need.

Finding an appropriate therapist is often difficult, as efforts are frequently frustrated by a lack of signing- or ASL-fluent therapists and service providers. If the resident's family is unable to locate a therapist, the clinical team at NDA will help by researching resources in the resident's home state and hometown area to identify appropriate services. We also frequently schedule conference calls with providers to offer historical information and explain how the resident progressed in their treatment.

Transition and discharge planning is an ongoing process that begins the moment a new resident is introduced to NDA and we get to know their particular needs. The entire treatment process is geared toward working with the resident's family and larger network to identify goals and equip the resident with the skills they need. Ideally the resident will leave treatment and be able to draw from the skills they learned here. They should continue to make substantial progress toward becoming their best possible selves.

Veronica Potter-Lundy, MA, NCC, is a Psychotherapist at National Deaf Academy.

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

[Back to top](#)

Job Postings

Mental Health Technicians (MHT)

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 residents' 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 also 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.

Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS)

Responsibilities include planning, directing and organizing recreational programs, assessments and documentation. Fluency in American Sign Language preferred, however, willing to train the right candidate. Bachelor's in therapeutic recreation or related field and current CTRS required.

Regional Community Relations Representative

The ideal candidate is a resident of California or a surrounding state with previous healthcare marketing experience, preferably in mental health. Primary responsibilities include identifying viable potential referral sources within the Deaf target markets and determining how to access those sources and developing and maintaining direct referral relationships with the Deaf West. Familiarity in mental health and deafness required. Must be fluent in ASL.

Staff Interpreter

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.

You will be interpreting 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

*Also seeking part-time contract interpreters interested in mental health interpreting to work with us on an as-needed basis.

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
EOE

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

"The world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of tiny pushes of each honest worker."

- Helen Keller

[Back to top](#)

If you would like to receive our print publication, the SignPost, please reply to this email and send us your mailing address.

- Residential Mental Health Care for Deaf Children, Adolescents and Adults -
National Deaf Academy - 19650 U.S. Hwy 441, Mt. Dora, FL 32757 | V: 352-735-9500 | TTY:
352-735-9570
www.nationaldeafacademy.com

