

125 Years of SDAD Advocacy

1900's

- SDAD was established; Charles Loucks was the first President.
- Held the first convention at the SD School for the Deaf.
- Became incorporated and advocated for sign language use at SDSD.
- Urged lawmakers to ban impersonation of Deaf individuals.
- Began early efforts toward equal rights and communication access.

1940's

- Fought for Deaf individuals' right to obtain driver's licenses.

1970's

- Promoted TTY access for communication.
- Advocated for stronger interpreter certification standards.
- Helped establish Communication Service for the Deaf (CSD).
- Raised awareness of accessibility barriers.
- Strengthened partnerships with Deaf-serving organizations.

1980s

- Participated in a national rally for closed captioning on CBS.
- Supported a bill that created TRS and equipment distribution; it passed.
- Expanded public awareness of media access needs.
- Advocated for inclusive television broadcasting.
- Increased state-level visibility for Deaf access.

1990s

- Supported interpreter privacy and ASL as a school language.
- Helped protect TTY communications from being used in court.
- Advocated for interpreter certification under DHS.
- Supported TRS funding through wireless surcharges.
- Led rallies to save SDSD and pass the Deaf Child Bill of Rights.

2000s

- Supported rulemaking for interpreter certification fees.
- Opposed state funding for cochlear implants using TRS funds.
- Continued work on interpreter standards and Deaf education rights.
- Maintained collaboration with CSD on legislative efforts.
- Addressed technology equity for the Deaf community.

2010s

- Modernized telecom access and mobile device support.
- Helped pass HB 1155 (LEAD-K) for early language acquisition.
- Prevented repeal of interpreter certification requirements.
- Secured captioning and livestreaming of legislative hearings.
- Updated state law to replace "hearing impaired" with "Deaf and Hard of Hearing."

2020s and more to come!

- Supported HB 1228 to include hearing loss in child data reporting.
- Released South Dakota's first ASL election information videos.
- Promoted public access to civic and emergency communications.
- Testified in support of interpreter certification expansion.
- Advocated for stronger Deaf Child education protections.