

TRIPOD Organization Description

TRIPOD was incorporated in September, 1982 and commenced operations in July, 1983 as a "not for profit" organization providing educational and charitable services to deaf, hard of hearing and hearing families affected by hearing loss in the Greater Los Angeles area. In August of 1989 TRIPOD began a private/public partnership with the Burbank Unified School District. By September 1990, TRIPOD's educational program consisted of Montessori Parent-Infant/Toddler Preschool/Kindergarten classes and a Model Elementary School full-inclusion program in all grade levels at the Washington Elementary School. One year later, this model was expanded to the sixth grade at John Muir Middle School, adding a grade level each year until the fall of 1997, at which time the program served children from birth (or diagnosis) through high school.

Today, in addition to the parent/infant-toddler preschool program operating at the Horace Mann site, TRIPOD provides educational support to this full-inclusion program at the elementary, junior high school, and high school levels at George Washington Elementary School, John Muir Middle School and Burbank High School, respectively.

In addition to educational support, TRIPOD performs charitable services for the deaf, hard of hearing and hearing families affected by hearing loss by providing such outreach programs as the FAMILY/COMMUNITY SIGN PROGRAM offering affordable sign language classes to families and community members taught by deaf adults who serve as positive role models. Also, the TRIPOD CAPTIONED FILM PROGRAM (TCF), a working partnership with major film studios and theater chains, provides the only source for first-run open captioned films now available to the 28 million hearing-impaired Americans, averaging 30 films per year in 300 cities nationwide. Finally, through its annual awards luncheon, TRIPOD uses its many media and entertainment industry contacts to raise public awareness and thus establishes its role as an advocacy organization on behalf of the needs of deaf children, their families and community.

TRIPOD plans to continue its work on a national level by assisting other schools to implement the educational model and document the success of deaf and hard of hearing children in the program through a series of both independent and collaborative research reports. Outreach programs will be expanded as resources allow.

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