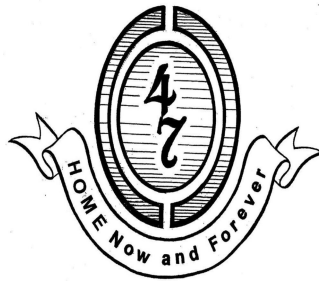


“47” Alumni Association of the Deaf, Inc.



105th Anniversary Celebration of “47”

“47” Award Night Ceremony with History of “47”

Wednesday June 5, 2013

7:00 pm to 11:00 pm

at

**“47” American Sign Language and English Lower School
“47” American Sign Language and English High School School
225 East 23rd Street
New York, NY 10010**

PowerPoint Presentation History of “47”

This PowerPoint presentation exploring the history of 47 is dedicated to the much beloved Walter J. Connolly, 47 Alumni Association of the Deaf's first president. 47 Alumni is truly grateful for Walter's loyalty, enthusiasm, and interest in serving the organization. We continue to hold strong in our organization because of he was a trailblazer.

You will be taken on a journey throughout six different periods in the school's history, from 1908 to 2013. You will see photographs of students doing any number of things, and photographs of the principals who shaped the school during each of their tenures.

The following was written by President Connolly for *The Voice*, the school newsletter, in January 1914:

Shortly after Miss Kearns took charge of P.S. 47, the school graduated its first class. These first graduates with those pupils who did not wait to graduate, for the first alumni of P.S. 47. In order to keep in touch with them, and to provide for a reunion of the teachers and alumni, Miss Kearns invited them at intervals to meet in the old school building on 23rd Street.

In 1916, P.S. 47's alumni had been augmented by the graduation of few more classes and more former pupils. Miss Kearns then advised the election of officers and the formation of a permanent organization. This was done, and a committee of officers and alumni was formed to arrange meetings and to conduct whatever business was necessary.

Since then the meetings have been held frequently. Last year on account of the conditions, only two meetings were held, but during the previous year, a meeting was held nearly every month. The usual program of a meeting includes a short address by Miss Kearns on the topics of the day, and whatever announcements are necessary. The rest of the time of these meetings are devoted to the playing of games and to dancing or to some special entertainment.

The officers, lacked experience in conducting meetings and arranging games but by a great amount of diligent thinking and discussion, they managed to arrange enjoyable programs. They hope to make the meeting still more successful and enjoyable and to make the organization achieve much in the way of profit and pleasure for the alumni.

These meetings give the former pupils a chance to meet their teachers and Miss Kearns and to talk about their work and their success, or their need of help. The pupils are also glad to meet each other and have a good talk. At our last meeting Mrs. Chester Jones brought her baby boy. He is a fine lad.

The officers are: Miss Kearns, honorary president; Walter Connolly, president; Milton Board, vice-president; Beatrice Osserman, treasurer; and John Maxcy, secretary. Mary Meyer, the first treasurer, Lena Slom, and the officers form the executive committee for conducting business and arranging the programs of the meetings.

~~~Program~~~

Master of Ceremony

Joel Goldfarb and Kenneth Mortensen

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**Opening Remarks**

**“47” Alumni President, Cheryl Mortensen**

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Proclamation

**Deputy Commissioner of
Mayor Office of People with Disabilities**

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**Volunteer Awards**

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“Our School Cry”

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**History of “47” PowerPoint Presentation**

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“47” Alumni Awards Ceremony

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**“47” School We Love”**

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Closing Remarks

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**Refreshments**

**All are invited for refreshments in the cafeteria**

## School's History

Since 1908, the school's name has changed several times, starting with P.S. 47 School for the Deaf. The number 47 is symbolic of the first 47 students. The name was then changed to J.H.S. 47 School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and then changed again to J47. Located on 225 East 23<sup>rd</sup> Street in New York City, the school served both elementary and middle school departments within the school with one principal and two assistant principals.

On February 2, 2002, the school was renamed 47+The American Sign Language and English School. Three years later on February 1, 2005, New York City Department of Education Chancellor Joel Klein announced his decision to convert the lower and secondary programs into two schools, now called 47+The American Sign Language and English Lower School and 47+The American Sign Language and English Secondary School. The primary reasons for having two schools include better budget control and improved teaching methods.

The elementary school, from preschool through the fifth grade and gradually the middle school, from sixth through eighth grade, became a new school, and the high school, from ninth grade through twelfth grade, remained the same. The schools are general education programs serving Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Children of Deaf Adults, Special Education, and Hearing students in an American Sign Language and English dual language environment under the auspices of Region 9.

Each school has its own principal, activities, athletics, administrators, balanced literacy program, budget, parent coordinator, parent-teacher association, related services, school leadership team, Union Federation of Teachers (UFT) chapter leader, and library.

All schools in New York City must have a three-digit identifying number and 47+The American Sign Language and English High School has carried over the code of 02M047, while 47+The American Sign Language and English Lower School is 02M347.

The 47+Alumni Association of the Deaf cherishes its alma mater and has worked closely with the school ever since its origin. We celebrated our beloved 47+school's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2008, and 105<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2013 and we look forward to continuing our relationships with the school, the neighborhood, and the Deaf and Hearing community as a whole. We also provide a museum and archives, along with an office, that are open to the public.

## **“Our School Cry”**

**1913**

Boom! Whee!  
Boom! Whee!  
Boom! Whee!  
F-O-R-T-Y S-E-V-E-N  
Rah! Rah! Rah! Rah!  
Rah! Rah! Rah! Rah! Rah!

Forty-Seven! Forty Seven! Forty-Seven!  
Forty-Seven

The Voice 1913

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47 School We Love

1950's

47 School we love,
Best in the land,
True, we'll always be to her
For 47 School is grand
Gold as the sun above,
Blue as the sky,
Colors that we all love
At 47 School our Junior High

To the tune of %Anchors Aweigh+
By Arnold Allison, Gym Teacher during 1950s

Posthumous Hall of Fame

Walter J. Connolly '14



Walter J. Connolly worked diligently with P.S. 47's second principal, Carrie W. Kearns, throughout his term as the first president of the P.S. 47 Alumni Association of the Deaf in 1916. He graduated with honors in 1914 from P.S. 47 School for the Deaf, and attended East Orange High School in New Jersey in 1917.

He told Principal Carrie Kearns in an October 20, 1914, letter, "Upon entering the School for the Deaf, a new world was opened to me. I began to take more interest in events around me. Before I was not interested in my future but then the future began to look bright to me."

In recognition of and appreciation for his love of P.S. 47 School for the Deaf and for his devotion, talent and leadership, the P.S. 47 Alumni Association of the Deaf is honored to present the Posthumous Hall of Fame Award to Walter J. Connolly, Class of 1914.

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"I am always glad to recommend the School for the Deaf, in fact whenever I get a chance to talk, I often seize the occasion to talk about the school. With deep gratitude to you and the teachers, I am always." Walter J. Connolly, 1<sup>st</sup> Alumni President, *The Voice* . January 1915

## Hall of Fame



### **Betty (Drummer) Kasher '65**

Betty Kasher, born in Satamare, Romania, is the oldest of the fourth Deaf Jewish generation in her family. She came to America at the age of eight with her sister to receive a proper education, and was enrolled at J.H.S. 47 in 1957.

Betty was active during her time at the school. She was a cheerleader, and was awarded best player on the volleyball team. She attended the first Deaf Jewish camp in the United States, Camp Laughton, which she credits for her learning about Deaf culture and becoming inspired. Today, she has three children, four grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

As a member of %7+Alumni, Betty has been involved with the school leadership team. She fought for the school to acquire its bilingual program. She is also very active with Deaf Jewish organizations in New York City, particularly Beth Torah for the Deaf and Brooklyn Hebrew Society of the Deaf.

In recognition of and appreciation for her extraordinary leadership to the Deaf Community, %7+Alumni Association of the Deaf is honored to present the %Hall of Fame Award+to Betty Kasher.

## Hall of Fame

### **Thomas Samuels '52**



Thomas Samuels was born in Sumter, South Carolina. He is currently living in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from JHS 47 in 1952 and earned his Liberal Arts Degree from LaGuardia Community College. He was employed at LaGuardia Community College's Program for Deaf Adults (PDA). During his 14 years tenure, he held the title of Assistant to The Director, Media Specialist, ASL Program Coordinator, Lab Technician, and PDA Newsletter Editor. He retired in from LaGuardia Community College in 2002.

He is well known in the Deaf and hearing community for his leadership and devotion as an advocate for the rights of Deaf/Hard-of-hearing individuals. He served as president of the National Black Deaf Advocates (NBDA), was member of NTID's Advisory Group (NAG), Representative of Video Relay Services Consumer Association (VRSCA) and is currently the director of NBDA's Senior Citizens Program. He served on several city and state advisory board and committees. He gave several presentations/workshops locally and nationally to Deaf and hearing organizations, Deaf Senior Citizens, Schools, Colleges, Libraries, and social groups on ADA, Black History, Deaf Culture, and Youth Empowerment.

In recognition of and appreciation for his extraordinary leadership to the Deaf Community, the 1977+ Alumni Association of the Deaf is honored to present the Hall of Fame Award to Thomas Samuels.



## Hall of Fame

### **Allen E. Sussman '47**



Allen Sussman was born in 1933 to deaf parents, and was raised in Brooklyn. In 1947, he graduated from J.H.S. 47 School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and then attended New York School for the Deaf (Fanwood) briefly. He then graduated from Gallaudet College in 1955.

After a brief stint as an athletics coach at Ohio School for the Deaf, he obtained his master's degree in 1967 and then his doctorate in 1973, both from New York University. His professional career includes serving as an adjunct assistant professor in psychology at NYU, the director of a community mental health center for the deaf in Brooklyn, a professor of counseling at Gallaudet University and a licensed psychologist. He also served as director of Gallaudet's counseling center, and then the Dean of Student Affairs. He retired from Gallaudet and private practice in 2002. He has been published extensively, and presented papers and conducted training seminars and workshops nationally and internationally. In addition to deaf community activities, he is the current vice chair of the Deaf Seniors of America conference, to be held this August in Baltimore.

In recognition of and appreciation for his extraordinary leadership to the Deaf Community, the Alumni Association of the Deaf is honored to present the Hall of Fame Award to Allen Sussman.

## Man of the Year



### **Lance Fischer**

Lance Fischer attended JHS 47 from 1952 to 1959. He continued his education at NYSD (Fanwood), 1959-66. He attended Gallaudet University. He majored in American History and graduated in 1971. He was hired as an archivist with the National Archives in Washington, DC, where he worked for nearly 35 years.

Since his retirement from the National Archives in 2006, he has immediately become involved in many activities within the deaf community. He is serving as president of Gallaudet Class of 1971; former vice president and currently a board member of Maryland Deaf Seniors, Inc.; a member of member of the Gallaudet University President Search Advisory Committee, which led to the selection of T. Alan Hurwitz as Gallaudet President. He has authored three books.

Lance is currently the Chair of the 12<sup>th</sup> Biennial Deaf Seniors of America (DSA) conference, which will be held in Baltimore, Maryland, August 21-27, 2013.

In recognition of and appreciation for his devotion in working closely with the Deaf in the Deaf Community, the Alumni Association of the Deaf is honored to present the Man of the Year Award to Lance Fischer.

## Woman of the Year

### **Sarita Laina '78**



Sarita Laina was born and raised in a small town in Manta, Ecuador, and came to America 1971 at the age of 10. She attended J.H.S. 47, graduating in 1978.

With her tremendous talents, she works closely with young people. She served as the president of New York Deaf and Hard of Hearing Parents Association for 10 years and has helped organize activities for this organization. She worked for United Cerebral Palsy for 30 years.

During her current tenure as vice president of "78" Alumni Association of the Deaf, she has encouraged young people to volunteer for alumni events, along with serving as a volunteer herself.

In recognition of and appreciation for her extraordinary energy and enthusiasm, and devotion to working closely with young Deaf people, "78" Alumni Association of the Deaf is honored to present the Woman of the Year Award to Sarita Laina.

## Humanitarian Award



### **Mario Mucci '54**

Mario Mucci, '54, came to J.H.S. 47 in 1950 as a fifth grader. Graduating in 1954, he attended Printing High School and graduated in 1957.

In 1960, he and RoseMarie Covello, '56, married and later had a daughter and a son. They are proud grandparents of four granddaughters. After a career with the United States Postal Service, Mario retired. He currently is the president of the Wantagh Deaf Seniors Center in Long Island.

In recognition of and appreciation for his extraordinary energy, enthusiasm and concern for the welfare of Deaf Seniors, '67+ is honored to present the Humanitarian award to Mario Mucci.

*We aim high.*  
*“Excelsior” is our Motto!*  
1908

# Young Alumni Achievement Award

## Charles Chambers



Since graduating from %b7+and then from the work-study program in 1986, Charles Chambers has worked as a dental assistant at Bellevue Hospital for nearly 30 years. He assists the hygienist, who works with both deaf and hearing patients. He also works part-time at %b7,+where he sees students and employees walking the halls he once walked as a student.

He has served as a role model for deaf patients and deaf students served by the clinic and at %b7.+

In recognition of and appreciation for his extraordinary achievement in his profession working closely with the Deaf community, %b7+Alumni Association of the Deaf is honored to present the %Young Alumni Achievement Award+to Charles Chambers.

# History of P.S. 47

## 1908



**1865 Building**  
**P.S. 47 School for the Deaf**

In 1906, New York boasted of having three schools for the Deaf. All were residential and all required payment. However, a group of parents wanted their children to return home daily and these parents protested at City Hall, braving a storm. They pled with Mayor George Brinton McCelan to form a public day school for Deaf students. The Board of Education assigned two educators to study this concept, and then approved money for the renovation and repair of a warehouse at 225 East 23<sup>rd</sup> Street.

The 1865 warehouse was originally Peter Stuyvesant High School, and then became P.S. 40 before becoming P.S. 47 School for the Deaf in 1908. With 47 Deaf students, the building had such poor lighting and accommodations, but the school made do with what it had. Behind the school was a horse stable, and in between the buildings was a playground. Principal Carrie Wallace Kearns wrote to the Board of Education many times requesting a new building.

### **1925/1926**

Finally in 1925, the horse stable on 24<sup>th</sup> Street was torn down to make way for a new school building. The students and staff moved to this new building, and in 1926, watched as the 1865 building was torn down and rebuilt. Upon completion, the students happily moved back to that side, with a hallway connecting both buildings. An elevator was installed.

# **Thank You**

## **“47” Alumni Coordinator**

Dorothy Cohler

## **Master of Ceremony**

Joel Goldfarb and Kenneth Mortensen

## **Proclamation**

Mayor Michael Bloomberg

## **“47” Alumni Association of the Deaf, Inc.**

President Cheryl Mortensen, Officers and Board Members

## **“47” Alumni Nomination Awards Committee**

Dorothy Cohler, Leila LeBovic, Maureen Woods

## **Photographer/Videotaper**

William Newman and Luba Olsen

## **PowerPoint Presentation**

Dorothy Cohler

## **“47” Alumni Volunteers**

Maria Laina,, Maria Maisonet, George Rivera Jr,  
Soldely Rodriquez

## **The Office of Sign Language Interpreting Services**

Rachel Grudberg, Lewis Merkin, Bill Moody and Nancy Angermaier

## **Administrators of**

### **“47” The American Sign Language and English Lower School**

Principal Dave Thacker Bowell

Assistant Principal Maryanne Fisher

and

### **“47” The American Sign Language and English High School**

Principal Watfa Shama

Assistant Principal Liz Brown

**“47” Alumni Association of the Deaf, Inc.  
2012 -2013**

**Officers**

President . Cheryl Mortensen :62  
Vice President . Sarita Laina :62  
Secretary . Dorothy Cohler :57  
Treasurer . Sara Sue Penn :61

**The Board**

Christopher Barlow (left :65)  
Steven Fertik :69  
Joel Goldfarb :69  
Jacob Horowitz :62  
Betty Kasher :65  
Leila LeBovic :66  
Kenneth Mortensen (left :65)  
William Newman :69  
Rolf Olsen :69

**Logo Design**

John Garbera :63

**Honorary Board Members**

**In honorarium**

Evelyn Gamsu :67

**In memoriam**

Natalie (Drachman) Aranow Altsitzer :61  
Herman Barrett (left :65)  
Marvin Knopfler :41  
Dorothy (Finkelstein) Pakula :42  
Robert Penn :68  
Emily (Levenson) Siegel :63  
Jewelle (Abramson) Weiner :64

[www.47alumniofthedeaf.com](http://www.47alumniofthedeaf.com)  
[alumni47@aol.com](mailto:alumni47@aol.com)

**“47” The American Sign Language and English Lower School**

Principal Dave Thacker-Bowell  
Assistant Principal Maryanne Fisher

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