

**Accessibility Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan
Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, Seattle, WA
Comments by Janice Schacter Lintz**

August 31, 2020

INTRODUCTION:

I am Janice Schacter Lintz,¹ CEO of Hearing Access & Innovations² (HAI) (f/k/a Hearing Access Program)³ and the mother of a 26-year-old daughter who is hard of hearing.⁴ My appointments and honors include:

- 2020 participant in the WBENC WeTHRIVE Program in partnership with IBM
- 2019 Horasis speaker
- 2018 Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Goalkeepers Partnership with ThePointsGuy.com
- 2016 Aspen Institute Spotlight on Health Scholar
- 2016 Nominated as United State of Women Changemaker by the White House, the US Department of State, the US Department of Labor, and the Aspen Institute
- 2013-2015 US Access Board's Committee on Rail Vehicle Accessibility
- 2012-Present Syracuse University Burton Blatt Institute's Advisory Board
- 2009 NYC Mayor's Office Taxi of Tomorrow Stakeholder Committee
- 2008-2014 New York State Interagency Council for Services to the Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing, established by Governor David A. Paterson but not currently funded
- 2008 People magazine's Heroes Among Us
- 2007-2008 US Access Board's Passenger Vessel Emergency Alarms Advisory Committee
- 2006-2015 Lower East Side Tenement Museum's Advisory Board

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³ <http://www.hearingaccess.com>

⁴ <https://janicehintz.com>

- 2004-2008 (two terms) FCC Chairman Kevin J. Martin's Consumer Advisory Committee

I have advanced hearing access at more than 100 companies, organizations, and government agencies, including the following actions⁵:

1-Motivating Senators Warren and Grassley to introduce and pass the OTC Hearing Aid Bill by reframing the affordability problem as one of monopoly pricing rather than a healthcare or Americans with Disabilities Act issue

2-Resolving poor quality TV captions by developing a White Paper with the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) that recommends closed captions for commercials; the FCC's adopted captioning standards mirroring those in the document for TV programming.⁶

3-Pioneering hearing access in NYC's taxis, while simultaneously employing the hearing access symbol as a marketing device

4-Working with Virgin Atlantic and Delta Airlines to add captioning for their inflight entertainment (IFE) to create a best practice model that was later adopted by the US Department of Transport.⁷

5-Spearheading the introduction of induction loops in airports, first with Delta at customer contact points; other airlines are following suit

6-Introducing hearing induction loops to the New York City Transit Authority, which installed them in all subway information booths/call boxes as part of the \$13.5 million President Obama stimulus package; train providers across the country are incorporating loops

⁵ https://www.hearingaccess.com/?page_id=25

⁶ janiceslantz.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/ana_closedcaption_whitepaper-f.pdf

⁷ janiceslantz.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/deltasky-515.pdf

As a result of my testimony before the Subcommittee of the National Park Service (NPS) in Congress on May 11, 2006,⁸ the NPS reinstated the Recreation Fee Program funding effective access for people with hearing loss, and I helped to write the NPS Guidelines with Jonathan Jarvis before he became the NPS director.⁹ My contribution is acknowledge on page 76. Mr. Jarvis contributed the following testimonial to my website¹⁰:

Janice Lintz came to my attention many years ago when I was acting Chief of Staff to the Director of the National Park Service. In that role, I fielded the public comments, both positive and negative, about their experiences in national parks. Janice's call stood out, because she was not only adamant about an accessibility issue, she knew the NPS could be better and she wanted to help. From that day, Janice has assisted the National Park Service in not only achieving its written policies for being fully accessible, but also raising the bar for the NPS to achieve an even higher standard in many of our parks. Janice is tireless, dedicated and effective in assisting organizations like the NPS ensure all Americans have the opportunity to have a high quality experience.

– Jonathan B. Jarvis, Director
National Park Service

DISCUSSION:

Sadly, despite my testimony before the subcommittee in 2006, the Klondike Gold Rush Seattle Unit National Historical Park is seeking comments from people with hearing loss rather than relying on the well-crafted and clear guidelines mentioned above and hiring a consultant to help clarify any con-

⁸ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-109hhr27519/html/CHRG-109hhr27519.htm>

⁹ <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/hfc/accessibility.htm>

¹⁰ https://www.hearingaccess.com/?page_id=324

cerns.¹¹ These guidelines were based on the document I wrote for the American Alliance of Museums.¹²

It is inappropriate for the NPS to keep asking people with hearing loss to demonstrate the need for access that has already been established in the guidelines.¹³ The Park is defeating the entire point of writing the guidelines.

The one thing that pops out of the Proposal is the lack of a plan to use induction loops for an assistive listening system. Induction loops were preferable even before the COVID-19 pandemic, since they enable people with hearing loss to access sound without needing to request a receiver and worry whether it is charged or broken. Today, because of the pandemic, people should not be asked to put any assistive device that touched someone else on their head, around their neck, or in their ears, which means that induction loops are the safest option.

Museums all over the country, such as Ellis Island (Ex A), are using induction loops for their exhibits. So why is the Klondike Gold Rush Seattle Unit National Historical Park not doing so? Vendors try to sell what is easiest to install and generates the most profit. However, hearing access is not about what is best for the contractor, but what is best for the end user, the person with hearing loss. Induction loops are the easiest to use, require no distribution and maintenance of receivers, and most importantly, spread no germs.

SUMMARY

The NPS needs to rely on the guidelines so people with hearing loss can have consistent access to exhibits across the park system. It is critical that induction loops be used so the spread of COVID-19 does not occur.

¹¹ <https://thriveglobal.com/stories/why-are-people-with-disabilities-still-fighting-for-equal-access/>

¹² <https://janiceslintz.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/16-0208-effectiveaccess.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/consulting-people-disabilities-janice-s-lintz/?trk=prof-post>

I am happy to work with the Park to assist as a consultant, but please stop asking people with hearing loss and their advocates to work for free.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice S. Lintz
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Exhibit A: Sampling of Induction Loops Around the World

Canada: Canadian Museum for Human Rights



France: Maison de Victor Hugo



Greece: National Library of Greece

(Although the sign is a flimsy material and the placement is incorrect.)



Hong Kong Disneyland



Ireland: Cliffs of Moher



Israel: Outdoor Detention Center



United States

California: The Getty National Monument

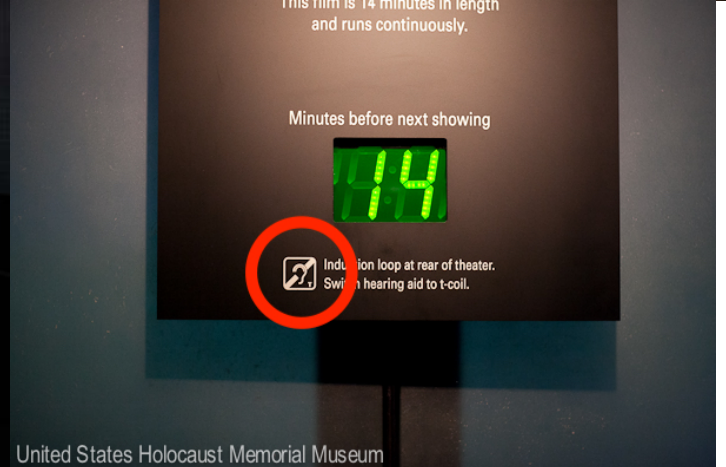


Colorado: Colorado



Hearing Loop at Colorado National Monument

DC: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum



Florida: The Bass



Indiana: Indiana State Museum



Minnesota: Mill City Museum



New York:

Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration New York Botanical Garden



American Museum of Natural History

Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum



Tenement Museum

