



...DEAFNET...

## THE DEAFNET DISSEMINATION PROJECT

### Introduction

SRI International is conducting a two-year project for the Special Education Program Office in the U.S. Department of Education to inform deaf people throughout the nation about DEAFNET--a computer-based telecommunications network for the deaf. As part of the project SRI will also assist groups of deaf people in 20 selected cities to develop and operate local telecommunications networks and thus become a part of DEAFNET.

DEAFNET allows deaf persons to benefit from emerging information technologies. With DEAFNET, existing communication services are matched with new technologies, enabling users to communicate through a computer network using telecommunications devices for the deaf (TDDs) or computer terminals, to send and receive messages. Conversation can be instantaneous, or messages can be left and picked up as electronic mail. DEAFNET will link deaf people with family, friends, and hearing individuals. It will help meet the communication needs of the close to one million deaf and other hearing-impaired persons who are unable to use the telephone.

### The Project

The goal of the project is to facilitate the formation of computer based networks by persons in deaf communities in the following metropolitan areas:

New York, NY	Nassau-Suffolk, NY
Los Angeles, CA	St. Louis, MO
Chicago, IL	Pittsburgh, PA
Philadelphia, PA	Baltimore, MD
Detroit, MI	Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN
San Francisco-Oakland, CA	Atlanta, GA
Washington, DC	Newark, NJ
Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	Anaheim, CA
Houston, TX	Cleveland, OH
Boston, MA	San Diego, CA

SRI will concentrate on helping establish DEAFNET in up to ten communities in the first year of the project, and the remainder during the second year.

To accomplish the project goals SRI must first discover leaders in the selected communities who can recognize the potential a DEAFNET network offers in providing a communications link between deaf persons; between deaf individuals and their hearing family and friends; and between deaf persons and business.

When leaders have been selected they will attend a three day orientation and training session at SRI in Menlo Park, CA so they may become:

- . familiar with both the concept of networking and the use of DEAFNET already housed on an SRI computer
- . comfortable with using equipment by which they can access DEAFNET, and which they will take into their communities to demonstrate DEAFNET
- . informed about the various ways a group might organize, and the legal and financial implications of each
- . informed about outreach techniques, finding and using volunteer help, fundraising, and establishing user fees.

Throughout the project SRI will provide technical support to the local communities by maintaining DEAFNET on its computer system, continued assistance on organization and outreach methods, and advice on procuring equipment, installing facilities, and securing financing.

To provide additional support to these local efforts, SRI will conduct a national information campaign about DEAFNET throughout the life of the project. This campaign will include a series of news releases and articles describing the project and its progress, and presentations and demonstrations at four major conferences for deaf persons. As local DEAFNETs become established SRI will facilitate their working together for information sharing and support.

#### For Further Information on DEAFNET

For further information please call the DEAFNET Inquiry Line:

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Or write:

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