MARK JOHNSON
COMMUNITY SERVICE

Mark Johnson, a longtime SDAD member and well known to our South Dakota deaf community as deaf civil rights advocator, deaf historian and served many responsibilities to the deaf community.

As an alumnus of South Dakota School for the Deaf, graduating in 1974 and his parents were also SDSD alumnus. He attended Gallaudet University for a year.

He started his first ASL Class in March 1981 and taught for 32 years through varies of agencies and schools. He still teach ASL and provides mentoring services for interpreters which he is currently working with students from Augustana University interpreting program.

He had varied of career mainly in deaf services such as SDSD residential houseparents, Museum with Communication Services for the Deaf, as well as ASL and interpreting related teaching for CSD, Southeast Technical Institute, Augustana University, and Interpreter Services Inc. He was the first deaf mentor for the State of South Dakota which begins in 2001.

He was also is known as the leader in Deaf Rights advocacy such as telephone issue at Public Utilities Commission in the early 1980s. He also led the rally at KELO-TV building to protest for closed-captioned. He also led a big rally - STOP - Stop Taking Our Property - in an effort to save the SDSD campus from selling to the public in 1993. He served as a statewide independent living council board member for 3 years and as statewide vocational rehabilitation board members for 2 years.

He also has been volunteers to many purposes for our deaf community. He was on SDAD Boards and officers throughout some years as well as being on the committees for many organizations. He deeply dedicated his time to the Cultural Heritage Center and preserved the history of SDSD and community since 1997. He also contributed his time with SD Deaf Senior Citizens which he is currently on his tenth year of presiding this organization.

During on his own personal time, he enjoys the crocheting and spends his time with his wife, LaDonna.