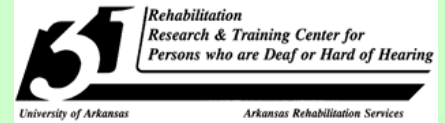




Selected Proceedings of ALDAcon 2004 “Green Mountain Odyssey”



I. King Jordan Award Presentation

Nancy Hammons: Tonight the ALDA Board of Directors has selected for the I. King Jordan Award for Distinguished Achievement, a professional volunteer who has dedicated many, many hours to be where she is today. This person has chaired and continues to serve on ALDAcon committees and she's presented many, many workshops. As an ALDA Past President, Region Director, Chapter President, Chapter Coordinator, creator of the ALDA membership database, and former editor of ALDA Biz, not only has this person dedicated time to ALDA Inc, she has also devoted time to various community organizations such as the Kiwanis, Lions Club, Senior Service, Center for Sight and Hearing, and Dakota International, [who presented Kathy with] the Deaf Woman of the Year award. She's the wife of a farmer, mother of two children, grandmother to five and soon to be six grandchildren and we know her as "A Little Bit of Country" Kathy Schlueter! (Applause)

Dr. I. King Jordan: I have to tell you a story about Kathy. When you hear the story, you'll know it's her. In high school, in class, she was trying to whisper to someone, but she didn't know that her whisper was loud. So everybody in the room heard her. And her teacher heard her. And her teacher said, "Kathy, maybe you'd like to teach class." So Kathy said, "Okay" and walked up to the front of the room. (Laughter) And she said, "Okay. Let's start on page . . ." and the teacher said, "You go to the principal's office!" Kathy said, "Make up your mind. Do you want me to teach the class or not?" (Laughter)

In high school I was the class clown. We have something in common, I think. Seriously, Kathy's been with ALDA since the very beginning. She went to the party [in 1987]. I'm delighted that she is receiving the I. King Jordan award. I'm really thrilled. I love her. You love her. Stand up and recognize her. (Applause)

Kathy: Thank you for the honor of receiving the I. King Jordan award. Words can never express the gratitude nor the appreciation I'm feeling tonight. Nancy, thank you for the wonderful introduction. I've enjoyed working with you while on the Board and the various committees, and also having the opportunity to become friends. Thank you. To the Board of Directors, thank you. It is indeed an honor to be recognized by my peers and family members. Dr. Jordan, it is with greatest respect and noted privilege that I am receiving this award. I will continue to strive to support and reach out to as many

individuals as I can in the future. My work is not finished, nor the teamwork with other late-deafened adults and groups who support the empowerment of deafened people.

Years ago when I went to the "Windy City" of Chicago for my first ALDAcon with my counselor, I went into panic mode. If there was any way I could have contacted her and not shown up, I would have stayed home. Instead, I was introduced to Bill Graham and ALDA, and fell in love with both of them. That night I went home with real spirit in my heart and was determined to be with people and learn more about ALDA. Over the years Bill and I continued to correspond. Tonight I know that he is here with me in spirit. Thank you, Bill.

My family couldn't be with me tonight, as most of them are farmers, and a lot of our crops are coming in. They are here in my heart. To my parents who told me I can do anything and stood behind me when I tried, thank you. To my sons, Kerry and Garrett, for the first ten years of your life, you gave me support, understanding, and held me when I wept through frustrations. A mother couldn't be prouder of the fine gentlemen that you have become. To my husband Perry, it is probably the hardest for you to accept my deafness, but you still gave me support when I said I needed to go, whether to give a presentation, go back to my office to develop ideas, or to attend ALDAcon and be with my second family. Thank you for being there. To my daughters-in-law Tina and Bobbi Jo, you have become my sounding boards and listened to my ideas. My grandchildren, Brady, Kendahlyn, Garrett, Blake, and Olivia, you have accepted your grandma with unconditional love, and you have chosen ways to communicate with me. Thank you for supporting me in your lives.

The road to my achievement has not been traveled alone. My eyes have watched and my ears have listened, to some phenomenal role models. Marylyn Howe, you took me under your wing as a greenhorn on the ALDA Board. Roy Miller challenged me to continue in my growth. My very special "ALDA babes," Cheryl Heppner, Robin Titterington, Nancy Kingsley, and Jane Sokol Shulman, along with Gloria Popp, Carol Postulka, and Judy Viera, have encouraged me to reach for my highest potential. They were my backbone when I felt the pressure. Patricia Graves of Caption First, your friendship has gone beyond service, and our friendship is continuing to grow. Another person is Bob Brewer. [When I presented workshops at ALDAcon], he would always be there and make sure my equipment worked. I couldn't have done it without him. Last but not least, my fellow ALDAns, thank you for your support. Your questions, concerns, and issues and undying support help me to continue my work and to make it better for all of us. Dr. Jordan once said, "Look in a mirror and see who we are." I can now answer the Five Ws: Who am I? What will I become? When will I accept? Where am I'm going? And Why am I here? I'm Kathy Schlueter, late-deafened, an advocate who supports the empowerment of deafened people. Thank you. (Applause)

Kathy Schlueter is also the recipient of the 1993 Bob Hawley Fearless Leader award and the 1997 ALDA Special Recognition award.