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Forum

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FORUM

INTERNATIONAL SYMBOL ON DEAFNESS ANNOUNCED BY NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE DEAF

The National Association of the Deaf has announced acceptance and approval by the World Federation of the Deaf of an emblem which will symbolize deafness. Work was begun more than three years ago on this logo which is intended to add a degree of visibility to one of the most prevalent and least understood of sensory deprivations.

The symbol, which consists of the drawing of an ear crossed by a bar to denote impairment, closely approximates the international access symbols in design, color and size. Approval has been given by the more than 75 nations which comprise the World Federation of the Deaf. The WFD, with headquarters in Rome, Italy, is affiliated with and sanctioned by the United Nations.

Final modifications to the basic conceptual design were accomplished by "Jack Weiss Associates," a design partnership which is based in Chicago. This concern also was instrumental in perfecting the now universally recognized and accepted International Symbol of Access.

In releasing the new symbol by agreement with and authority of the WFD, the National Association of the Deaf points out that there are in excess of 14 million Americans with impaired hearing, over 2 million of whom are profoundly deaf. Accurate figures for world populations are difficult to obtain – especially in view of the fact that it is not possible to readily perceive the disability or the problems in daily living experienced by those who are unable to hear. Best estimates place the world figure at close to 100 million hearing impaired.

It is expected that guidelines for the use of the new emblem will be developed in the near future. Many uses of this identifying logo come readily to mind. One of the most important may be the impact on the general public knowledge about deafness which should result in improved employment opportunities.

Additional information may be obtained directly from the National Association of the Deaf, 814 Thayer Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910; telephone (301) 587-1788 Voice or TTY.

