

**LHH Consulting** assists organizations and institutions to create access for patrons who are blind or visually impaired in compliance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, (ADA). Guided by consumers with disabilities, this business works closely with cultural, recreational, and educational institutions to develop affordable and reliable accommodations that create access for people who are blind or visually impaired. "LHH Consulting" opens up passages to commercial, social, artistic, and civic events and finally makes them accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired. Since the passage of the ADA, increasing numbers of people who are blind or visually impaired recognize their right to participate in varied educational and entertainment organizations. Along with people who are blind or visually impaired, senior citizens are a significant percent of the market for these services. LHH Consulting is a business owned and operated by a woman who is blind.

**About the Owner**

In addition to developing these innovative services, Lisa Helen Hoffman, Owner/President of LHH Consulting, evaluates and utilizes them. Her experience consulting for the Audio-Described Theatre for the Blind Program at Geva Theatre in Rochester, NY since its inception in 1994 and her experience developing and consulting for the Art Access group at the Memorial Art Gallery since 1996 have prompted her to offer these services to a wider audience. Ms. Hoffman actively supports cooperative efforts among sighted and blind individuals to develop the most effective access services available. As a person who has been totally blind since surviving retino blastoma, cancer of the eyes, at age 2, Ms. Hoffman has tested a broad range of access services.

Her team approach to access services, her first-hand knowledge of the strategies required to create a truly accessible event, and her keen understanding of the satisfaction of broader access and independence for people who are blind or visually impaired all guide Ms. Hoffman's approach to creating access.

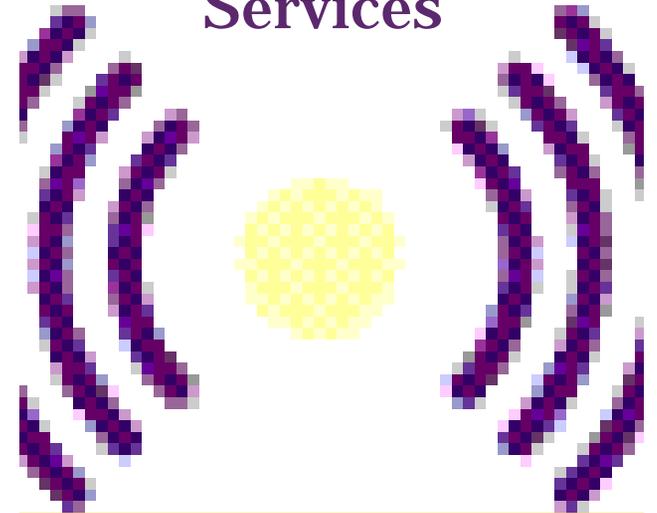
Ms. Hoffman attended audio-description training at the Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute at Ohio State University and is a graduate of the University of Buffalo. She was a participant in the National Forum on Careers in the Arts for People with Disabilities at the Kennedy Center.

L H H C O N S U L T I N G



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**LHH Consulting Services**



**"Verbalizing the Visual"**

## Description of Services

### Audio-Description

Visual information is made accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired through Audio-Description. A trained audio-describer's verbal descriptions of the visual details are transmitted to patrons in a timely fashion via the earphones and compact receivers of an assistive listening system. This creates access to the visual aspect of a broad range of venues including plays, balletic and other dance performances, museum exhibits, workshops, demonstrations, ceremonies, concerts, movies, sports, parades, and any other presentation with a key visual element. Visual information, usually essential to understanding presentations, traditionally could not be accessed in a timely fashion by patrons who are blind or visually impaired who had to rely on a sighted companion to explain what was happening. Audio-Description eliminates this dependence on sighted companions.

### Audio-Description Consulting

The range of venues to which audio-description can be applied is limitless. Ms. Hoffman offers consultation on establishing and marketing an Audio-Description Program or arranging audio-description for productions, exhibits, or events.

### Audio-Description Training

This unique training is designed to instruct individuals who are sighted to convey visual information verbally. Participants learn and practice techniques for describing live productions such as theatrical performances or stationery objects such as paintings.

### Touch Tours

Guided either by a trained guide, an audio cassette recording, or material in Braille or large print, people who are blind or visually impaired receive information about objects as they explore them using touch, a primary communication channel for this population. Touch Tours are used in museums, theaters, cemeteries, and all cultural, educational, or recreational venues. People who are visually impaired experience, Hands-on, architecture, sculpture, costumes, sets, props, parade floats, and any other subjects that are tactile in nature. Participants "see" objects with their fingers as others see them with their eyes. The combination of touch and either reading or listening to information creates a unique learning experience which facilitates the understanding of previously inaccessible subjects. Additionally, learning tactually about physical objects assists people who are blind or visually impaired to conceptualize spatial relationships. While people who are sighted acquire this skill naturally, people who are blind learn it through discussion and tactile exploration of physical examples.

### Touch Tour Consulting

Assessment is made of subjects to determine what quantity of descriptive information will be necessary for participants to comprehend the subject. The importance of accuracy in models or reproductions is discussed. Additional subjects include exhibit labeling in Braille and large print, the Sighted Guide Technique and disability awareness.

### The Printed Word in Accessible Formats (Braille, large print, and/or audio cassette)

While Touch Tours and Audio-Description create access to performances and exhibits for people who are blind or visually impaired, large print, cas-

sette recordings, and Braille materials create access to the printed word. Materials such as conference schedules, theatre bills, and museum brochures and labels in accessible formats create access to information and promote independence.

### Disability Awareness Training

Many sighted people believe that people who are blind are unable to perform the same tasks that a person who is sighted performs. Through Disability Awareness Training, organizations learn that people who are blind adapt to not seeing, and perform these tasks relying on their remaining senses. They participate fully in the workplace and in the community as employees and patrons. Topics of presentations include: an introduction to commonly used adaptive technology, the Sighted Guide Technique, and one woman's attitude and philosophy of living life with a disability.

### Convention Planning and Support

Owner Lisa Helen Hoffman consulted with the Empire State College "Disabled Enabled Empowered Determined: DEED2000" Conference Organizers to create access for conferees who are blind or visually impaired. Employing Braille materials, Braille signage, and audio-description, Ms. Hoffman also assists hotels and convention halls to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Her conference and workshop consultations instruct personnel to recruit, train, and retain individuals who are blind or visually impaired, evaluate companies' ADA-compliance, provide Braille and large print transcription and audio description, identify appropriate, cost-effective technology for "Reasonable Accommodations" that create access, and offer referrals to reputable businesses producing additional ADA-compliant services and technology.