

# Melanie P. Thornton

Post Office Box 194  
Roland, Arkansas 72135  
[melanie.thornton@mapleseedenterprises.com](mailto:melanie.thornton@mapleseedenterprises.com)

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## Education

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*Master of Arts:* May 1987.  
Area of Study: Counseling with an emphasis in deafness  
Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C.

*Bachelor of Arts:* June 1984.  
Area of Study: Psychology  
Hendrix College, Conway, Arkansas.

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## Professional Experience

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May 2000  
to  
Present

***Project PACE, Disability Support Services  
University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Little Rock, Arkansas***

**Project Director  
Outreach Specialist**

January 2001 to Present  
May 2000 to January 2001

Initially provided outreach and technical assistance for two federal grant-funded programs charged with developing and providing disability-related professional development opportunities and resources for faculty, staff, and administrators in post-secondary settings. Promoted to Project Director, coordinating the provision of technical assistance, project evaluation, and product development.

- ◆ Coordinated the development and publication of eight newsletters, a resource manual, two videos, four training CDs, a project website, and four handbooks.
- ◆ During first two years of project, facilitated the provision of a combined total of 1036 hours of professional development to 73 faculty, staff, and administrators at UALR.
- ◆ Member of Web Accessibility Policy Development Committee, responsible for revision of policy and development of implementation plan.
- ◆ Disseminated over 5000 products during first funding period.

June 1987  
to  
June 1995

***Toltec Mounds Archeological State Park  
Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, Scott, Arkansas***

**Park Interpreter**

Developed and provided a variety of programs for the public related to Native American history and heritage, archeology, and nature. Provided tours of the archeological site.

- ◆ Streamlined and expanded educational programming through the development of an award-winning teacher's guide and an accompanying activities guide.
- ◆ Worked to raise awareness of accessibility issues in parks and museums by publishing articles and presenting at state and regional conferences.
- ◆ Documented all existing park programs in a new training manual.

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**Professional Experience (continued)**


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May 1989 ***Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing***  
to ***Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Little Rock, Arkansas***  
June 1995

**Mental Health Counselor**  
**Transition Counselor**  
**Rehabilitation Counselor**

May 1989 to June 1995  
June 1988 to May 1989  
June 1987 to June 1988

Provided counseling to consumers of this rehabilitation agency in three capacities—at the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center, at Deaf ACCESS and finally at the Deaf Outreach Center. Provided consultation and training to other service providers to assist them in meeting the needs of deaf and hard of hearing consumers. Collaborated with members of the Deaf community to develop outreach programs.

- ◆ Facilitated the development of a grass-roots organization that provided HIV and AIDS related training within the Deaf Community.
- ◆ Coordinated efforts across the state to improve access to mental health and alcohol treatment facilities and services.
- ◆ Facilitated the development of a model peer-counseling program.
- ◆ Chaired a committee responsible for implementing two total immersion workshops to assist in the development of staff sign language skills.

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**Professional Experience: Part-time**


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Spring/Fall ***Interpreter Education Program***  
Semesters ***University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Little Rock, Arkansas***  
1998

**Adjunct Instructor**

Course taught: *American Sign Language I*.

Spring ***Research and Training Center for People who are Deaf***  
Semesters ***University of Arkansas, Little Rock, Arkansas***  
1992 to

1996  
**Adjunct Instructor**

Course taught: *Techniques in Counseling Hearing Impaired Individuals* (Graduate level.)

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**Certificates and Licenses**

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National Certified Counselor, National Board for Certified Counselors, October 1995.

Licensed Professional Counselor, State of Arkansas, December 1994.

Level V Interpreter, Arkansas' Mid-South Quality Assurance Screening Test, July 1993.

Certified Rehabilitation Counselor, April 1987.

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**Publications**

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Russ, K. & Thornton, M. (2003). *Piece by piece: Library instruction for students with disabilities*. Little Rock, AR: University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Project PACE. (2003). *Make a difference: Tools for enabling faculty to teach students with disabilities*. [CD Training Package]. Little Rock, AR: University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Disability Support Services. (2003). *Faculty handbook on accommodating students with disabilities*. Little Rock, AR: University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Lefebure, H., Queller, S., & Thornton, M. (2002). *Make a difference: Tips for teaching students who have learning disabilities*. Little Rock, AR: University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Queller, S., Thornton, M., & Threm, D. (2001). *Make a difference: Tips for teaching students who are blind or have low vision*. Little Rock, AR: University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Best, J., Lewis, S., & Thornton, M. (2000). *Mounds of knowledge: Ideas and activities to make your field trip more meaningful*. Little Rock, AR: Arkansas State Parks.

Thornton, M. (2000). *A guide to the plants on the plum bayou trail*. Little Rock, AR: Arkansas State Parks.

Thornton, M. (1999) Top ten lessons I've learned about first impressions, lasting impressions, and hospitality. In *Visions - the Newsletter for Region 6 of the National Association of Interpretation*, Volume XIII, Number 5, September - October, 1999.

Best, J., Lewis, S., & Thornton, M. (1999) *Mounds of knowledge: A teacher's guide to visiting Toltec Mounds State Park*. [Brochure]

Thornton, M. (1997) Breaking the sound barrier: Communicating effectively with visitors who are deaf or hard of hearing. *Legacy: The Magazine of the National Association of Interpretation*, July/August, 1997.

Ketchum, H. & Thornton, M. (1995) HIV education and outreach: Establishing a partnership for life. In B.D. Snider (Ed.) *Innovative Partnerships in Recovery*, Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press.

Anderson, G. & Thornton, M. P. (1993) Unresolved issues in providing mental health services to persons who are deaf. In O. Welch (Ed.) *Research and Practice in Deafness: Current Issues in Education, Psychology and Vocational Rehabilitation*, Springfield, IL: Charles Thomas Publisher.

Thornton, M. (1991) Peer support: A vital link for persons newly diagnosed as hard of hearing, In *Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc. Convention Proceedings*, Bethesda, MD: SHHH, Inc.

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**Presentations\***

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- Thornton, M. (2004). *Moving ahead with learning disabilities*. Concurrent presentation at the First Annual Arkansas Transition to Adulthood Conference, Little Rock, Arkansas.
- Thornton, M. (2004). *Universal design: Enhancing interpretive programs for all visitors*. Concurrent session at the National Association of Interpretation Region 6.
- Thornton, M. (2003). *Universal design: Enhancing education for all students*. Abstract and talk for topical session on Universal Design at the 2004 Annual Conference of the Geological Society of America.
- Dixon, A., Queller, S., Russ, K., & Thornton, M. (2003). *Collaborating to make a difference: Building alliances on your campus*. Concurrent session at the Annual Conference of the Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), Dallas, Texas.
- Lefebure, H. & Thornton, M. (2002). *Make a difference: Tools for enabling faculty to teach students with disabilities*. Poster session presented at the Annual Conference of the Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), Arlington, Virginia.
- Lefebure, H., Queller, S., & Thornton, M. (2001). *Make a difference: Tools for enabling faculty to teach students with disabilities*. Concurrent session at the Annual Conference of the Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), Portland, Oregon.
- Queller, S. & Thornton, M. (2001). *Make a difference: Tools for enabling faculty to teach students with disabilities*. Concurrent session at the International Conference on Higher Education and Disability, Innsbruck, Austria.
- Thornton, M. (1999). *Intentional interpretation: Planting seeds of change*. Concurrent session at the National Association for Interpretation, Region VI Workshop, Hot Springs, Arkansas.
- Thornton, M. (1997). *An introduction to Deaf culture*. Invited presentation for the Annual Workshop on Interpretation, Petit Jean State Park, Morrilton, Arkansas.
- Best, J. & Thornton, M. (1996). *Access to Arkansas: Strategies for enhancing the accessibility of programs to people with disabilities*. Invited presentation for the Annual Workshop on Interpretation, DeGray Lodge State Park, Arkadelphia, Arkansas.
- Thornton, M. (1995). *Mental health and deafness: The need for a kaleidoscopic perspective*. Invited guest lecturer for the Highlight on Deafness series, Knoxville, Tennessee.
- Ketchum, H. & Thornton, M. (1994). *A partnership for life: A model of HIV education and outreach*. Concurrent session at the Innovative Partnerships in Recovery Conference, Kansas City, Kansas.
- Thornton, M. (1991). Peer support: A vital link for persons newly diagnosed as hard of hearing. Concurrent session presented at the Annual Conference of Self-Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc., Denver, Colorado.
- Pottenger, P. & Thornton, M. (1989). *Designing Bridges: Counseling Strategies to Empower Clients in Transition*. Concurrent session at the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association Conference, New York, New York.

\*Only presentations provided at a state, regional, national or international level are listed here. Descriptions of the nature of additional presentations is available upon request.

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**Grants**

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U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, *Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities a Quality Higher Education*, Supplemental Fund Request, \$47,619, Sole Author, (2001).

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, *Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities a Quality Higher Education*, \$701,391, Primary Author, (2002).

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**Affiliations**

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**Ark-AHEAD (Affiliate Chapter of national AHEAD organization)**, Little Rock, Arkansas  
Webmaster, 2004-2005; Immediate-Past Chair, 2003-2004; Chair, 2002-2003;  
Vice-Chair, 2001-2002; Member since 2000.

**American Counseling Association**, Alexandria, Virginia  
Member since 1994.

**Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)**, Boston, Massachusetts.  
Member since 2000.

**Gallaudet Alumni Association**, Washington, D.C.  
Lifetime member since 1987.

**National Association for Interpretation**, Colorado Springs, Colorado  
Member since 1995.

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**Current Projects**

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**Maple Seed Enterprises.** Developing a small consulting company to provide resources and consultation to parks, museums, and other agencies seeking to make their services and programs more accessible to people with disabilities. URL: [www.mapleseedenterprises.com](http://www.mapleseedenterprises.com)

**Intentional Interpretation: The Application of Universal Design in Interpretive Environments.** Developing a CD-ROM-based training tool appropriate for use by interpretive staff in park, museum, and nature center environments.

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**Recent Community Service/Volunteer Projects**

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**Multimedia Consultant.** Arkansas Association of the Deaf. October 2004. Developed PowerPoint presentation for organization's president.

**Volunteer.** Friends of the Ouachita Trail. Spring 2004 to present. Adopted a 3.5-mile section of trail.

**Web Developer and Interim Webmaster.** Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society – Arkansas Chapter. March 2004 to present. Organized content and developed multi-page interactive website for members of this state organization. URL: [www.rootsweb.com/~araahgs](http://www.rootsweb.com/~araahgs)

**Multimedia and Accessibility Consultant.** Arkansas State Parks. Spring 2003 and 2004. Provided consultation to Interpretive Services Director regarding accessibility of trails in two parks. Converted park slide presentation from 35 mm slides to digital media.

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## Honors and Awards

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American College Personnel Association, 2000-2001 Outstanding Student Affairs-Faculty Collaboration Award, Project PACE was "Runner-Up". (Project Director)

Director's Special Commendation for Exemplary Service to the Arkansas State Park System, April, 2000. (Agency Employee)

Southeast Museums Conference 1999 Design Competition, Silver Award for *Mounds of Knowledge: A Teacher's Guide to Visiting Toltec Mounds State Park*. (Lead Writer)

National Association for Interpretation, Region VI, 1999 Best Workshop Program Award for *Intentional Interpretation: Planting Seeds of Change*. (Presenter)

Walter G. Ross Award, 1987, Gallaudet University. (Graduate Student)

Margaret E. Fitch Award in Psychology, 1984, Hendrix College. (Undergraduate Student)

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## Languages

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Fluent in: English and American Sign Language  
Limited knowledge of: Spanish and French.

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## Technical Skills

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Operating systems: Mac OS 8-10, Windows 2000, Windows XP, Windows NT

Software applications: MS Office Suite, Word Perfect, Dreamweaver MX 2004, Acrobat Professional, HTML Kit, Adobe PhotoShop, WS-FTP Pro, PPT2HTML, various internet browsers, and various accessibility and HTML validators.

Course management: WebCT.

Assistive technology: Kurzweil 3000, WYNN, ReadingBar, ReadPlease, and TextAloud.

Scripting languages: HTML, XHTML, and CSS.