

Agency produces aids for the deaf

By Greg Wees

The Specialized Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing has become the only federally funded agency in the United States to produce visual aids for children of preschool through high school age, according to Robert Stepp, director.

The Specialized Office gained that distinction Sept. 1 after a nationwide search by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) revealed the UNL facility (then called the Midwest Regional Center for the Deaf) was the best qualified among other universities.

The Specialized Office, located in Nebraska Hall, does not conduct workshops for teachers of the deaf or conduct media institutes as the Regional Center did. Instead it produces overhead projector transparencies, slides, motion pictures and videotapes to help instruct the deaf, he said.

Then the materials are distributed by an HEW-sponsored agency in Indiana to schools across the United States, Stepp said. Two other nationwide units in Kentucky and Wisconsin produce materials for the blind and mentally handicapped.

Under the September reorganization, school counseling services, workshops, institutes and other instructional services, which the Media Center had provided for the region, will be transferred to 26 resource centers created by HEW, he said.

Stepp said the 26 centers will be divided into 13 Regional Resource Centers, which will diagnose young handicapped children, and 13 Area Learning Resource Centers, which will supply instructional materials.

The reorganization of programs for the handicapped eliminates the need for separate centers servicing the blind, deaf and mentally handicapped, he said.

Stepp described the two stages of testing that existing materials, when collected by the staff, must go through.

The first stage, called developmental testing, determines the suitability of educational materials. Small, local groups of deaf children, for instance, view a soundless motion picture.

If the results are satisfactory, the movie is field tested. During this step several test groups throughout the United States view the movie and eventually it is distributed nationally.

Stepp said the 16-member staff is divided into three task forces: media research, media design and production, and media accountability and evaluation.

The staff includes a professional photographer, animation artist, motion picture director, media specialist and three certified teachers of the deaf, he said.

The Specialized Office a three-year HEW project and has a \$337,976 budget for 1974-75, he said.

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short stuff

Gerald Frank, Oklahoma State University professor of organ and music theory, will present an organ recital at 8 p.m. Monday in Kimball Recital Hall. The recital is part of the 1974-75 faculty exchange series being conducted by the two universities.

ASUN is forming a Legal Rights Committee to help the student lawyer in planning seminars on assisting with research office tasks. Anyone interested may contact the ASUN office, 472-2581 or Jim Say, 432-4766.

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