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The Child Tax Credit is here to help families!

by PAT NEMIA, MASS FAMILY VOICES PROJECT DIRECTOR

In 2021, the American Rescue Plan increased the Child Tax Credit from \$2,000 per child to \$3,000 per child for children over the age of six and from \$2,000 to \$3,600 for children under the age of six and raised the age limit from 16 to 17. All working families will get the full credit if they make up to \$150,000 for a couple or \$112,500 for a family with a single parent. A qualifying child is

under the age of 18 at the end of 2021 and has a valid Social Security number.

75-100 words

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Announcing Access for Families Who Speak Languages Other than English

By PAT CAMERON, DIRECTOR OF Family TIES

The Federation is pleased to announce we have acquired the use of a language line to help us provide needed services for families and professionals who speak a language other than English. In addition to our staff who speak Spanish, Haitian Creole, French, Mandarin, Cantonese, Portuguese, and Russian, we realized the need to contract with an organization that can connect us to all the languages spoken here in Massachusetts. With the language line, we can access 250 languages!

We have changed our incoming phone message to reflect not only the languages our staff speak but now have access to a language line which can provide translation and join on 3 party calls with a family.

Please spread the word that we have increased our capacity to serve diverse families!

150-200 words

Full page with small image

Welcome to Commissioner Ope of the MA Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

FROM ALL OF US AT THE FEDERATION

We are so pleased to welcome Commissioner Ope who joined the MA Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in March 2021. We are committed to working with Commissioner Ope and his team to support families of children who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Below is the announcement of Commissioner's appointment.

"BOSTON - Today, the Baker-Polito Administration announced the appointment of Dr. Opeoluwa Sotonwa as Commissioner for the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH), effective March 1, 2021. Dr. Sotonwa brings over 20 years' experience as a lawyer, advocate, and accomplished public official who has improved access, accommodations, and quality of life for individuals who are Deaf, Late Deafened, Hard of Hearing and Deafblind. He is fluent in English, American Sign Language (ASL), Nigerian Sign Language, and Yoruba (Nigerian).

Most recently, Dr. Sotonwa has served as Executive Director for the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Earlier in his career, he was the information and advocacy programs coordinator at the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Dr. Sotonwa's work on the national level includes the National Black Deaf Advocates where he was vice president and then a member of the board, and he currently serves on the board with Telecommunication for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc (TDI).

"Since embarking on a search for MCDHH's new Commissioner in the fall of 2020, we have focused on hiring a leader who is grounded in the issues important to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community, who understands the diverse needs of the community and promotes a culture of inclusion. Dr. Sotonwa is the right person at this time to lead the Commission," said Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders. "He is an accomplished leader who will connect positively with staff, constituents, and the broader community. I am grateful to Acting Commissioner Ford for providing the interim leadership and will ensure a smooth transition. I deeply appreciate the engagement, advice, and support from the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. I look forward to welcoming Dr. Sotonwa to this position during the celebration

of the agency's 35th commemoration."

Read more...