

**For Immediate Release:**

## **AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR DEAF CHILDREN ANNOUNCES SIGNING TIME'S RACHEL COLEMAN AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**Washington, D.C. - February 5, 2018** - The American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC), the oldest national non-profit organization providing resources to parents of deaf children, announced today that its board of directors has selected Rachel de Azevedo Coleman as the organization's Executive Director.

"After a nationwide search we are thrilled to have Rachel as our new Executive Director," said Board President Avonne Brooker-Rutowski. "We are confident that Rachel's experience raising a deaf child and giving her child access to both English and American Sign Language, her history of taking action to better her daughter's life, and her passion for her work will bring ASDC to the next level."

"Rachel has gained a deep understanding of the importance in empowering parents to communicate and connect with their Deaf children through American Sign Language," continued Mrs. Brooker-Rutowski. "Together we will advance our mission by empowering families with deaf children to reach their highest potential."

The selection of Coleman caps a six month nationwide search by the board for someone to lead with vision and direction.

"ASDC has been a resource for me since 1997 and I am honored and excited to lead its growth," said Mrs. Coleman. "I know the challenges parents raising deaf children face. It can be a daunting task to not only raise a child, but to learn a new language, become versed in cultural nuances, and incorporate a visual language system throughout your home and your life. I have spent my entire career developing real solutions for families like mine and I am eager to apply these skills at ASDC."

After learning that her 14 month old daughter was profoundly deaf, Coleman was told not to have high expectations for her child. Coleman refused to accept that answer and for the past 20 years has been influential in creating a world where, through sign language, children can communicate their needs and be fully understood regardless of their abilities.

Coleman is the Emmy Award nominated host, and co-creator of "Signing Time!", the public television show and DVD series that teaches basic American Sign Language vocabulary to families in an engaging and musical way. The series has been broadcast

to millions of viewers through such platforms as PBS stations, Netflix, Nick Jr., and [mysigningtime.com](http://mysigningtime.com).

“Through “Signing Time!” she brought American Sign Language to the masses, but most importantly, to the communities that surround Deaf children,” said past Board President, Dr. Beth Benedict. “Her focus in this role will be creating national outreach programs to create greater awareness of ASDC, and to give families the tools and resources they need to raise successful Deaf children.”

Coleman’s production company, Azevedo Studios, and her YouTube production company, SKYVIBE will continue to create educational and value based children’s programming such as Rachel & the Treeschoolers and FuntasticTV. The SKYVIBE network garnered 1.8 Billion views in the last 12 months.

In 2015 Coleman launched [mydeafchild.org](http://mydeafchild.org) providing an innovative online American Sign Language curriculum, free of charge, to parents living within the U.S., raising deaf children ages 36 months and under. To date she has raised more than \$1.5 Million dollars to produce and create content, curriculum, and additional resources for families raising deaf children.

### **American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC)**

American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC) is the oldest national non-profit organization founded by and governed by parents of children who are deaf and hard of hearing. ASDC was founded in 1967 as a parent-helping-parent organization.

For the past 50 years ASDC has provided support, encouragement, and information to families raising children who are deaf. Offerings include American Sign Language Learning Opportunities for parents and caregivers to improve ASL proficiency and Annual Family Conferences. The 26th Annual Family Conference takes place June 21-23, 2018 in Salt Lake City, Utah and features keynote presenters Roberta “Bobbi” Cordano, President of Gallaudet University and Nyle DiMarco, winner of “Dancing with the Stars” and “America’s Next Top Model.” For more information visit [deafchildren.org](http://deafchildren.org).

### **For more information contact:**

Lindsay Stephenson, SisterUp: Phone: 310.404.6284: Email: [lindsay@sisterup.co](mailto:lindsay@sisterup.co)