1946: A Need for a Meeting Place
At the Utah Association of the Deaf convention, an idea surfaced to have a designated meeting place for those who are deaf. For years, the Utah Deaf community gathered for social and activities, but always had to “beg for time and space.” This would eventually become a reality in later years.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”
—Margaret Mead

1962: Establishing an Office
Driven by the inaccessibility of services and the need for the State of Utah to improve in services, these early leaders established an office to serve deaf people.

1963: Addressing Barriers
The Community Services Council (now known as the United Way) reported several barriers for deaf adult trying to receive services including:
- Communication barriers with family, friends and professionals.
- Limited freedom of communication in counseling services.
- Lack of skills working with those who are deaf.
- Communication barriers at social activities.

1965: First Deaf Coordinator
Dr. Robert G. Sanderson was appointed as the first state coordinator of services for people who are deaf in Utah. It was also the first position of its kind in the nation. While working in this position, he led advocacy efforts to establish a community center and develop a specialized rehabilitation unit for those who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Beth Ann Campbell
Program Specialist for the Community Center in Bountiful
Campbell became the first American Sign Language interpreter in Utah to be nationally certified, and interpreted the local nightly news on TV. She also interpreted for Dr. Sanderson and W. David Mortensen as they lobbied the legislature.

1965: Successful Lobbying
At the Utah State Legislature session, the appropriation for services for the deaf was eliminated. Utah Association of the Deaf President G. Leon Curtis and his officers campaigned intensively to successfully reinstate funding.

Additional Milestones:
- 1958: U.S. Congress created the Captioned Films for the Deaf
- 1965: Rehabilitation Services Administration removed economic need as a federal requirement for vocational rehabilitation services.
- 1966: Services for Deaf Adults in Utah was created.
- 1968: Utah Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (now known as UTRID) was founded.

1966: Increased Workload
In previous years, the Utah Division of Rehabilitation served an average of 11 clients who were deaf or hard of hearing. With Dr. Sanderson’s skill, caseload increased to 94 clients by bridging communication barriers.