



Gary M. Bowers of Roanoke VA has been selected as VAD's Deaf Father of the Year for 2016. Gary is the husband of Emily Bowers who is currently President of Blue Ridge Chapter of VAD (BRCVAD) and the father of Christy Bowers, 27, who was Miss Deaf Virginia 2007-2009. Christy has been inspired by the dedication and passion his father had for the Deaf community ever since she was a little girl. She remembers attending many Deaf events as she grew up.

Gary has been an active member of the Blue Ridge Chapter (formerly Piedmont Chapter) and the Virginia Association of the Deaf for many years. He served as President of PCVAD for three and half years and on the Board of Directors for many years. Currently, he is the Vice President of BRCVAD. He also got involved in fundraising for his daughter, Christy Bowers during her reign as the Miss Deaf Virginia. In addition, he taught American Sign Language at Radford University. He was also a board member of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center (DHHSC) for four years.

Gary's passion for the Deaf community over the years has inspired his daughter, Christy, to become involved. She went on to receive her B.A. and M.A. from Gallaudet University and worked with Deaf children at several Deaf schools during her college years. She now works as a Human Resources Specialist with the Federal government, recruiting college students for internships with the Federal government. Christy strongly believes encouraging their professional growth is the key to successful leadership.