

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE

A New Program at
The University of Nevada,
Reno

INCEPTION

- Initial working group started in 2015
 - Andrea Juillerat-Olvera
 - Gary Olsen
 - Jennifer Montoya
 - Gina burnaugh
 - Evan Adair
- Proposal was brought to the Legislature and well received
- UNR's Speech Pathology Dept rejected the proposal

WORLD LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

- The World Languages and Literature Department at UNR took control of ASL in Spring of 2022
- The proposal was reintroduced and accepted with enthusiasm
- Other UNR administrative officials have expressed support
- Current program design spearheaded by **Andrea Juillerat-Olvera**
- **Professor Cal Adair** is also contributing to the effort and will be the first new instructor hired for the program.

CHALLENGES IN NORTHERN NEVADA

- The program is a coordinated effort to address challenges for Deaf Community of Northern Nevada:
 - Lack of sign language interpreters
 - Institutions public/private are non-compliant with ADA law (for lack of resources)
 - Deaf people face continual challenges to accessibility in daily life
 - No Deaf service center in Northern Nevada
 - Washoe County School District struggles to provide adequate support

A TWO-FOLD MISSION

- 1. Train a cadre of interpreters to work in our communities
 - Homegrown resources to meet local demand
- 2. Engage the Deaf Community as part of the program's implementation
 - Work force development for Deaf and HoH individuals
 - Tutor-Trading with K-12 dDeaf students to improve transition to higher ed
 - Create a locus of support for Deaf people on campus
 - Inspire new/emerging leadership in the Deaf Community of Northern Nevada

PHASE ONE

- First, we must implement **a minor in ASL/Deaf Studies:**
- Demonstrate student interest with enrollment numbers
 - Currently, there are 60 ASL 4 students enrolled in Spring 2023 (8 on waiting lists)
 - One summer session in ASL 4 will post to recruit more interested students
 - Once minor courses hit the course catalog, our PR campaign can begin
 - Navigate software system for directed email blasts
 - Social media
 - Fliers and outreach
 - predicted enrollment for minor? 25 – 30 students

PHASE ONE, CONTINUED...

- Prove our ability to educate effectively with completion rates
- Post-program evaluation (ASLPI through Gallaudet University)
 - Four students will be chosen to take the ASLPI to demonstrate effective instruction
- Establish a connection with the Deaf Community on campus
 - Begin the Deaf Community Participation Initiative
 - Dependent upon grant funding
- Garner data for the future of the program
 - First year stats we can build on

DEAF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION INITIATIVE

- Cultivate and maintain a strong working relationship with the Deaf Community in Northern Nevada.
- Rationale:
 - There is no “Deaf Country”
 - Immersion experiences must be generated locally
 - The Deaf population is extremely diverse
 - Variety of sign systems, consumers with co-occurring disabilities, immigrant influx
- Native sign language user are necessary to provide exposure and guidance to our students.

DEAF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION INITIATIVE

- A Jobs Development Program
- Funding is sought for the following positions/projects:
 - Deaf Teaching Assistants (TAs)
 - Deaf Tutors
 - Deaf-lead immersion weekends every spring
 - The creation of a video library of Deaf perspectives, stories and insights
 - Deaf consultation on curriculum and implementation

PROGRAM BUDGET (ROUGH)

- **Fall 2023**
- *Deaf Tutors/TAs – two or more part time workers*
- 40 hours a week @ \$20/hour = \$800/week
- 13 weeks x \$800 = \$10,400
- University F&A cost = \$4,888
- *Spring Semester Total = \$15,288*

PROGRAM BUDGET (ROUGH)

- **Spring 2024**
- *Deaf Tutors/TAs – two or more part time workers*
- 40 hours a week @ \$20/hour = \$800/week
- 13 weeks x \$800 = \$10,400
- University F&A cost = \$4,888
- *Spring Semester Total = \$15,288*

PROGRAM BUDGET (ROUGH)

- **Video Library Development Fund for Academic year 23/24**
- \$50 for Each video that meets all formatting and standardization requirements: 3-5 minutes in length, studio quality lighting/editing, adhering to one or more of the topic categories. Our goal is to collect an average of 40 videos each year for the first several years of the program.
- Goal: 40 videos x \$50/each = \$2,000
- University F&A cost = \$940
- *First Year Total = \$2,940*

PROGRAM BUDGET (ROUGH)

- **Immersion Weekend**
- Two or three Deaf Coordinators @ \$250/each = \$750
- Lodging for 12-16 people @ \$500/night x 2 nights = \$1,000
- Students who participate will be asked to share costs for food, transportation and extracurricular activities.*
 - *final cost to be determined closer to the date when head counts can be verified.
- Base cost estimate for program dispersal = \$1,750
- University F&A costs - \$822.50
- *First year budget for immersion weekend = \$2,572.50*

PROGRAM BUDGET (ROUGH)

- **Guest Presenter Stipend**
- One Deaf presenter @ \$500/each = \$500
- University F&A costs = \$235
- *Presenter first year Total = \$735*

- **ASLPI Student Assessment Interview**
- Four student interviews to evaluate proficiency @ \$165/each = \$660

PROGRAM BUDGET (ROUGH)

- **Total Grant Request for First Academic Year:**
- **\$36,823.50**

PHASE TWO: INTERPRETER TRAINING PROGRAM

- Pending a successful first year with our minor, we will propose a major that bestows a Bachelors degree in American Sign Language Interpretation.
- Continued grant seeking activities to support and grow our Deaf Community Participation Initiative.
- The program will request funding for a full-time teaching position for a Deaf instructor.
 - Ideally a CDI or otherwise qualified individual to assist with the interpreting program.
 - Source: soft funding or departmental budget allocation

RECIPROCITY

- Service Learning and General Reciprocity is the guiding principle of our program.
- The Deaf Community helps train our interpreters
- Our interpreters volunteer to assist the Deaf Community
- Service Learning is a require component of the course work in each phase.
- An agreement with Washoe County School District has already been reached.

BRIDGE BUILDING

- This proposal aims to build working bridges between several entities:
- From the program to the social service sector
- From the program to the Deaf community
- From the Deaf Community to campus in the aim of improved transition/retention of students in higher education...
 - and for the cultivation of emerging leadership.
- Benefits are aimed at Deaf and hearing people...
 - on and off campus.

OUTCOMES

- Create local jobs for Deaf and hearing alike.
- Build social capital within and between communities as we work toward a common goal.
- Act as a locus of support for the Deaf community by example, and in practice.
- Relieve the burden of many public and private institutions that struggle to provide interpreting accommodations.
- Providing ASL/Deaf Studies as a minor for Special Education, thereby increasing the pool of TODs (Teachers of the Deaf) who are fluent in sign *and culturally sensitive*.
- Improve education for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children in Northern Nevada

SERVING NEVADANS WELL

- The challenge for Northern Nevada is justifying excellence for a small population. Even one person is worth serving well.
- The Deaf Community has fought long and hard to have a “voice”
 - to get services
 - to be educated
 - included
 - respected

DEAF NEVADANS

- Growing up here I felt a sense of limitlessness, I bring that vision to you now.
- I know that if we work together, we can make the lives of Deaf Nevadans better.
- We CAN
- We SHOULD
- We WILL!