

**Gallaudet University
Colloquium Lecture Series
November 22, 2019**

Dr. Paul Dudis

Alright ladies and gentlemen, welcome. We are going to get started. I would like to welcome you to today's lecture. My name is Paul Dudis. I am the interim chair of the Department of interpretation and translation here at Gallaudet University. Today's event is part of our colloquium series. This year we have a total of four. We have a total of four series and this is sponsored by the Department of interpretation and translation and the center for advancement of interpreting and translation research.

All of our previous presentations and this presentation will be posted on the web so you can go online and take a look at any of our previous talks and there is no cost to you to do so.

I would like to also thank our sign language interpreters, Joe McCleary and Amanda Jenkins. And our CART writer. You can see we have CART being provided, and our CART writers name is Sheri Kochman.

After our presentation today, we will have the opportunity to gather in the cafeteria to have lunch where our audience members can have a chance to speak to our speaker Dr. Gina Oliva who will be available for a more intimate discussion at lunch.

At this time, I would like to bring up Dr. Brenda Nicodemus who is the center for the advancement of interpreting translation and research. She runs that center.

Dr. Brenda Nicodemus

Wow, it is good to see everyone here today it's nice to see everyone is in one area to speak to. As Dr. Dudis mentioned this is the second in our series of four so I would like to take a moment to advertise the next two presentations that will be coming up in our lecture series. On March 6 we will have David Quinto-Pozos who will talk about simultaneous interpreting of pronouns. And how interpreters interpret those in various settings, it should be interesting, and then later in the spring, it feels very far off but it will be here just very quickly, Chris Tester will be talking about interpreting and deaf interpreters in court.

So, providing a variety of different perspectives on the field of interpreting.

Today's agenda first we will hear from Dr. Oliva who will talk for about 40 minutes and then we are lucky to have Dr. Cindy Officer here with us too and Dr. Officer will come to facilitate some question and answer session about educational interpreting. I would like to thank Dr. Officer for coming and she has also volunteered to advance the slides for Dr. Oliva. We certainly appreciate that.

As Paul mentioned when we are done we will have the opportunity to go up to the second-floor cafeteria to have a conversation with our presenter.

Also, those of you who are interested in CEU's on the last slide Dr. Oliva will show a website where you can go to enter your information in order to get CEU's for today's lecture.

With that it is my pleasure to introduce Dr. Oliva. She is my friend; my colleague and we have known each other for a long time. Dr. Gina Oliva. And just to give you a bit of background. Dr. Oliva's well-known advocate for deaf children and has been her entire life. She worked here at Gallaudet University for 37 years, as a professor, so she has had a long, distinguished career. She has also been involved in a variety of advocacy organization for deaf children and schools and is currently the secretary of the American society for deaf children and you of course are familiar with some of her writings. She has written two very popular books about deaf education in the mainstream and the experience deaf children have while being educated in the mainstream.

Those two books establish Dr. Oliva as a leader in the advocacy world for deaf children and we certainly appreciate that.

Also, through our department we know Gina in a different way. She has been on our board to help develop a code of professional conduct and a student code of professional conduct and to make sure that our students are making good ethical decisions so we appreciate the work she has done specifically for our department. And the last thing I must mention is that she is an avid pickle ballplayer. She has enjoyed that sport very much and she is good at it and she likes to talk about it. With that I would like to introduce Dr. Gina Oliva. Please come to the stage and welcome her.

Dr. Gina Oliva

Am I standing in the right place? Hello. And good morning. Thank you all for coming. And thank you for being willing to move to the middle so that you are all in the same place. When I first arrived, there was nobody here and I did a practice run and it was

kind of odd because I did not have anyone in the seats to have someone to talk to. Out there when I travel and typically talking to parents, that is my audience. But as I look upon you today as educational interpreters and other professionals, allies for the deaf for our deaf children, as I get to my main point today I want to be able to do so by giving you a vision, you know?

A 10-20 year vision that we can all get behind to make life better for our deaf kids who are mostly mainstream alone in America, those solitaire. That is my purpose here today.

I already thanked you so many times this morning but Brenda Nicodemus thank you so much for inviting me and thank you for your support getting me here today.

In thinking about preparing for today, it really felt like I was putting my entire life history to share with you, to share with my audience. This is the cover of my book here and I have identified this certain paragraph where I talked about four acknowledgments that I felt needed to be made.

And those acknowledgments are the same people and I want to thank today. And these acknowledgments will begin on a journey that will lead to my vision.

My parents were both children of immigrants. My mother was Greek, my father was Italian and they both were born to poor families in New York City. They both married and they had a pioneering spirit. They did so by leaving New York City and moving to the suburbs. It was about a hour drive to Connecticut. Greenwich, Connecticut, is where my family settled. Part of that town was called Cos Cob which was known for the Italians, for the blue-collar sort of tough families and that girl, that girl that came from Cos Cob there is a little bit in me today. The point is I have to thank my parents for their pioneering spirit to be brave to move us to the suburbs for a better life for me and my siblings. And that connection to my parents is still very strong in me even though both of my parents have now passed. This is a photo of my dad.

My first deaf role model was my father. We had the same type of hearing loss. To honor him I have chosen one of his paintings.

My dad was hard-of-hearing, technically. But in his words, he said "I just cannot hear too well." That is how he would describe it. My father and I had very few conversations where we talked about hearing loss. Even though we both had the same type of hearing loss and both wore hearing aids.

My dad was sort of a split type of person. Part of him understood, knew and felt what it meant to be Deaf and I know that because of two distinct conversations I remember having with him. The first one occurred when I was 16, you know, that sweet age of 16 where you are growing up and thinking and planning for your future and what you will do as an adult. In my father's words he only spoke very formally. His exact words were to me "why don't you do something to help those who cannot hear?" I was a 16-year-old girl in 1966, a long time ago. But that comment struck me and stayed with me. Later I would say probably 10 or 12 years later I was working in the office of the president here at Gallaudet University under Dr. Merrill. One of my jobs was to read the Federal Register. It was a book published by Congress on a daily basis and it let us know what was happening in Congress. This is not still happening today but my job was to scan this information and if anything had to do with Deafness or disability I was to bring it to Dr. Merrill's attention.

And I remember reading an article Monday and having a very strong negative reaction to public law 94 142 which later became the IDEA which outlined and defined with the least restrictive environment would be. Immediately I had a vision of deaf children alone, these solitaires alone in their school programs throughout the country. My dad's response surprised me. He said this would crush their spirit.

So, my father knew that. Now with the same time my father had that foresight he also had internalized audism and there were several instances where he showed me that. For example, the Deaf president now, movement. My dad's reaction to that was negative. He said a Deaf person cannot be president. Did not want to hear that from my dad. I did not want to know that he felt that way. And before I move off from this slide I have to mention because this last point ties into another story I have about my father. He was a printer. He worked at the New York Daily News and was part of the national association of stereotypers. It was a union alive at the New York Daily News which was a newspaper and there were a lot of Deaf printers who worked at the daily news. I found out later, many people for example Steve Weiner's father works there. I never knew. Because my dad never told me.

I found out on my own and I thought to myself how interesting that is. Now keep that in mind that my dad never told me he worked with other Deaf folks.

Now me on the other hand, I am the middle child. I was the youngest until my younger sibling was born when I was six years old and then my final sibling, the youngest, was taken care of by my mother, and my father took care of me. So, all of my sports, all of my physical activities I have a love of because of my father. Our philosophy those are all gifts he gave me.

All of these wonderful things and yet still my struggle, my internal struggle today is a direct result of my dad's influence on me and his own struggle being Deaf. I remember being 17 and sitting in the Washington college cafeteria, a hearing University. I did not know sign language at the time and growing up my experience was that I was always alone and I continued that experience at this college. But there is one day sitting in the cafeteria eating lunch with my hearing friends who were all talking across the table and I had no idea what was going on because I was not privy to the conversation. There was no access for me so I was just eating and something caught my eye across the room and I thought to myself who is that? I was struck because I saw a bunch of boys signing, using their hands and I immediately thought to myself those were my people. And I wanted what they had. What I was seeing was the Gallaudet soccer team, the boys soccer team came to play Washington College. What a gift. What a blessing it was for me to learn of a place like that.

From that experience I made my way and my journey continued as I thought what I wanted to do with my life. I decided I was going to go to Gallaudet and learn sign language and become a part of that community, and at that time I made a decision, I was 19 years old and had been a junior at the hearing college.

You know what, let me ask, what time do I have to stop?

So, in my acknowledgment I thank my parents for giving birth to me, feeding me, clothing me, for raising me in a good neighborhood. Secondly, I have to acknowledge and thank the Deaf community, for without the Deaf community I am nothing. I am nothing. I am still just a defective hearing person.

But because the Deaf community exists and I have a place in it, I have a thriving Deaf identity and I have a dual identity that I have to recognize as well so I want to thank the Deaf community. This book was written 2004 and you can see some of my notes here. Because I wanted to add a point about the Deaf community. And when I say the Deaf community I mean culturally Deaf individuals, Deaf individuals that have had the privilege and honor of passing down American sign language throughout the generations so that the Deaf community could thrive. That is actually who I wanted to thank and single out, and who we should all thank.

ASDC being a member of any organization is so important to be able to support children and I wanted to acknowledge that yes, we are learning from culturally Deaf people and we are taking that knowledge and trying to impact the lives of those who are not culturally Deaf, so they can have better lives.

I want to take a moment and show you how important it is you know as educational interpreters who want you to be aware of what the Deaf leaders are doing. I wanted to bring an example. Here on the left side of the screen Beth has worked here for many years. And pretty interesting, her family, 50+ years ago I would say, lived near a hearing family. Beth Benedict, from an all Deaf family and they lived near a hearing family who adopted a Deaf hearing girl. That is Leah Katz. The woman who was adopted went on and had a daughter who was Leah Hernandez who became a star in the deaf community so what a beautiful story of a culturally Deaf family really becoming the epitome of what we mean by a Deaf mentor Liz was able to grow up with Deaf friends and she has her own story about that experience. But to me that is the heart of a beginning. A beginning of a Deaf child's journey when they are born to a hearing family and how beneficial it is to have Deaf role models. So, I wanted to thank the Deaf community for their support and I feel honored to be a part of that.

Jeff Bravin here on the right needs no introduction. Actually, limit go back to Beth for a moment. Beth has also on her own gone to EHDI conferences. You need to learn about the EHDI conferences because some of you may become early interventionists. That would be great working with children from birth to five. That is the audience the EHDI conference serves.

Here are more examples of culturally Deaf leaders who are very strong in their fields. Jodee Crace is a Deaf mentor and trainer. I want to tie in some history.

The history of Deaf education to be more specific. In the beginning when I say the beginning I say really what I mean is before public law 94 142 because after that law was passed things began to change, but prior to, this on the left is what Deaf education looks like. They were Deaf kids like me who came from hearing parents who went to Deaf residential schools and learned from culturally Deaf people how to use American sign language and from those social interactions were able to develop. Positive self-images of themselves. But today the only places where this environment is still flourishing are places like Florida, Texas, Fremont, California, and Maryland. What is much more common, unfortunately, is what we see over here on the right. This is the present situation.

It is sad. The current situation is very unfortunate. I know as I look to you in the audience you are here because you care, people who are training to become educational interpreters or teachers of the Deaf, or in the Deaf related field you want to help but I want you to be aware of the current situation and how this system, how this system is running and how it needs to be changed and how you can help be a part of that change.

Going back to my acknowledgments. The third acknowledgment while working here at Gallaudet for many years my favorite job was to lead aerobics. I loved doing that. Anything related to movement or sport. And then I became a faculty member. I was in the PE recreation department. And over time I became aware of working in a more academic side of the environment here, learning about the different departments on campus, of history, philosophy, social work, psychology, all the different disciplines available here on campus at Gallaudet. And within my own department for example in the PE recreation department we had to follow specific curricula that were being used by PE and recreation departments throughout the country.

And some of the books that we were required to use, well I mean frankly were just terrible. [LAUGHING]. But we were required to use them.

And the research that was being done throughout the campus were often focused within just their own departments and then would be published within journals which is all fine. But, are we really reaching out to parents? Parents who need to be aware of what is going on. And that is sort of what I think is important. Now we need both. We need professional research being done and published in distinguished journals. All of those things important to academia but we also need a more practical impactful kind of work being done as well for parents so that is what I want to talk about today. Going into the second book that I wrote.

So, you saw in the previous slide a picture of Linda Lytle who was a co-author who worked with me on the second book that we wrote together, Turning the Tide.

So obviously to write a book it requires research. After I had completed my dissertation, I wanted to disseminate the research I had done and remember this is the time before email. I sent out surveys to people who had experienced being alone in the mainstream and people share their experiences with me. Total of 120 respondents responded to my surveys and they talked to me about their experience in public schools.

From there I analyzed the results, not just me but others on my team, analyzed the results and we came up with four themes. You can see those themes listed here on the left side of the PowerPoint.

From those four themes that were identified I sent out a follow-up to certain people who had responded in the first round and offer to pay them \$50 from Gallaudet research institute, thank you very much, to follow up on those specific themes. I got respondents a total of 60 respondents who talked to me about those four themes and how they

impacted their life so this was qualitative research I was doing. That was all part of my first book. That was back in 2004 after that book was published. And I realized time had come for another book. Because I thought that parents who read the book from 2004 would say well, that was all fine and dandy and applicable back then, but, it does not apply to now.

Some of that is true but the social deprivation is still there. For more kids now. So anyhow for the second book we convened a focus group, actually three focus groups. And through those focus groups had a variety of rich conversations in which we came up with three themes which are all listed here. And this was between 2010 and 2012. The research probably mostly was done in 2012 when the focus groups happened.

And the findings really found these three themes of women and friendships, struggles with identity, and honestly issues with interpreters. And how to address those issues. Those were the three themes identified through our focus groups.

Here are some quotes from participants in those focus groups.

I had friends, well kind of. I had to pick friends who were willing to put up with me. Those people were my friends.

I often eat lunch alone. One person said my best friend was the clock. Hurrying up, trying to get through the day as moving along through the day not understanding what was going on, daydreaming, just trying to get through.

Understanding a little bit but missing out on so many conversations with my peers.

So that is a really important point. If the teacher is talking for example in elementary school often people like me through lip reading and listening could understand. But the side conversations the other kids in the room, just completely left out on.

The third theme related to interpreters, people talked about how much they really were thankful to have interpreters. They cared about their interpreters, however there was always a "but". Imagine you are a kid but you always have this adult attached to you walking around school. Then there is the issue of interpreters making mistakes for example in a math class a teacher could be talking about a quarter meaning one-fourth, meaning percentage but then the interpreter would sign it as \$0.25. So not understanding the context in which the conversation is being had and then that is embarrassing to the Deaf child and not wanting to be associated with that.

And then also trying to discuss issues with adults about their interpreters and how basically that was an impossible task.

If you recall, the quote about being heartbroken and silenced, that is a title of a article on street leverage. Heartbroken and gagged is specifically the title. Another heartbroken and gagged. So, this is a concept of having educational interpreters working with Deaf children and seeing the oppression. Seeing the problem, hearing what is being said but having very little ability to make changes.

Feeling stuck. Feeling gagged.

Just last week, less than a week ago I received a note, an email from an interpreter with 20 years of experience, an interpreter whose parents are Deaf. And this is what that interpreter said to me.

The point of this, this actually was a message she sent me on Facebook she said Gina do you have any research because I am stuck in this situation where admin wants us to literally go with the children during recess and lunch where they would have no time by themselves, no time to socialize with each other. They would always have this adult around them. Is there research out there showing this is not the right thing to do? To be honest I did not know. And the answer is probably none. What she needed was something right away. Something that I could not provide.

So, if you all are thinking about going on for a Masters or PhD, this is an area that is ripe for a research.

With Deaf children and how they behave within a mainstream environment.

Three days later she responded and said well the decision has been made. Thanks anyway. I doubt anything will change. That was the end of our conversation. It is a shame. I mean, she is a CODA, her parents are Deaf she has a good understanding of the Deaf community.

So, this is kind of a sensitive issue. And for those of you here obviously you are at Gallaudet so I am sure you would get very good scores on the EIPA, four and five but if you look at the statistics 18,000 people took the EIPA test. Now you are here you are lucky you are getting exposure to language but many educational interpreter training programs don't offer the same level of opportunity and so as a result only 23% scored a 4.

So, we need more research about the facts, about the EIPA and papers that been done about that.

Okay. So, over the last couple of years I have presented to a variety of groups of pretty large audiences anywhere between 200 people including parents and educational interpreters for different states and cities including New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio. And Linda and I have gone to present a few times together, too. And each time we have like I said really good numbers in the audience out of 150-200 people we may only have a handful of Deaf people though.

And as I said I feel like I have that dual identity. So, although my heart is in the Deaf community, but I really want the people in the audience, the hearing people in the audience to hear from you directly. To hear my voice, to listen to me directly. These parents were hearing who have deaf children I want them to know what me as a 21-year-old girl may have thought. I think it is really important to show those parents especially as me with hearing aids and someone who can talk but also who is still a member of the Deaf community. As I mentioned before without the Deaf community I am nothing. So, to show that dual identity so they can see, wow, to illustrate that I'm going to switch now and use English to show the second part of my identity and have an interpreter come up and sign the rest.

It feels really weird to be doing this I have to say that. Here at Gallaudet University where if you know sign you should sign. And I agree with that. I agree with that. I am here and still here. But when I talked about identity especially parents, this presentation is televised. It will be on the web and Facebook. It is an opportunity for me to talk to parents. That is my audience. So, I am going to do this for a while until I feel like I done enough and then I will switch back. And I have a special shout out to my siblings, Bob, Lena, Steven and Kathy. I love you with all my heart and I pray that this presentation will show you even more than the books, to see that most important point which Cindy thank God has reminded me that the connection to your parents is always there. Is always there. So today even at this stage of my life, I still kind of go back and forth and back and forth, I go back and forth. I am not the only one. May be just brave enough to say so.

So, the point. You all know the point about sexism, racism, audism. We are going to move into talking about that. I am going to call your attention to a book called "Far from the Tree" by Andrew Solomon. We in the Deaf community, scholars in the Deaf community over the years have been trying to find analogies. Okay it is kind of like being black. Kind of like being gay. Finding analogies to help all those hearing parents understand their children. Far from the Tree was written by Andrew Solomon who was a

gay man, and growing up he had the usual struggles of being gay. He was assigned to do an interview. He was assigned to write a piece for the New York Times about Deaf people back in the 90s. And when he did that it was like a lightbulb slowly, a light started to realize this concept that came up which was so fabulous. And I think would be very helpful in helping people understand the issues of social deprivation and talk about vertical identity and horizontal identity.

The vertical identity is what you have in common with your parents. Same color, same race, culture.

A horizontal identity is something you have that is different from your parents. So Deaf, autism, criminal, Andrew Solomon has a chapter about each of these differences. And it is a wonderful way for people to look at that common situation of parents giving birth to a child that, that is not what I expected.

And so now this slide tells you I am trying to give you resources. I am trying to suggest what you should read. These dissertations were all conceived by individual who are Deaf and who grew up alone in the mainstream or some variation of that. So, the research idea that they come up with us from the child. From the child. And you might remember a presentation encouraging researchers, hearing researchers to always partner with the Deaf person because the questions you might think of as a hearing person could be different from the questions you might think of as a Deaf person and it is important that child, the child view and feelings needs to be brought into the research and the best way to do that is by including a Deaf adult. And I am going to start to speed up a bit.

Just to remind you my graphic that depicts the past versus the present.

What I would like to now show you is the system.

Take a look all of these different layers. Right in the middle you have a Deaf infant. They have a world born into with a mom and dad and family and as they grow their world gets bigger and bigger and expands to include more. As you can see neighbors and friends as this child gets older and enters schooling, elementary school, secondary school. Now watch what happens.

Now overlay on top of this child's family and this child's life is the system. These are individuals who represent the system. Special education directors, audiologists, speech therapists, educational interpreters, and teachers of the Deaf. When I go to present I

would say 90-95% of people in these positions are hearing and they do not know how to sign. Or if they do they know very little. That is the system. Now watch what happens.

These are roles held by Deaf people they are on the outskirts. There are Deaf mentoring groups. There are certified Deaf interpreters and the numbers are growing. There are Deaf ambassadors which is a new program actually called signs on connect we are kids in school can be seated in sort of a resource room and be given a laptop and can make a phone call to a Deaf adult and have a conversation for 30 minutes. Those Deaf individuals they talk to are called Deaf ambassadors.

But you see they are on the outskirts. They have not yet penetrated the system. They are trying. They are really trying. But there are barriers. What can we do about those barriers? I have some suggestions.

When we think about Deaf children between the ages of birth-five, those are the early years. Who was in the system? Unfortunately, from birth-five you have NCHAM the national Center for hearing assessment and measurement which is the federal body that gets tons of funding to train IEI which are early interventionists. They are trained to work with families after their infant has been identified as Deaf. Okay?

And on the outskirts of the system here for this age group there is the same dynamic. Remember I mentioned Beth Benedict? It is probably 15 years ago that she went to her first EHDI conference and there's only one or two other Deaf-like-minded individuals and now there are 62 every year and paid to ghost of their voices are heard. But they still face barriers. They are still not welcomed into the system.

Hands and voices are a state-by-state organization. Some states, chapters of hands and voices have more involvement with the Deaf community than others. I will leave that sentence there.

This is a must read. It is a must.

Laura Mauldin is an interpreter, psychologist and her dissertation was if I have the timeframe right, a one-year stint in a cochlear implant center observing, listening and just acknowledging how things go. I will give you a very brief synopsis of her book. But in short, nurses and other medical professionals when they are with the mother which is typically who shows up for their child, explain cochlear implants, how the mother could help. And the mother starts to feel very pressured and stressed.

And there are not professionals out there who could provide this service in ASL. And remember these babies are getting implanted sometimes before the age of one. We need a Deaf signing person in that system.

My research suggestion. Masters students, doctoral students in interpreting have to look at the product, yes but you cannot forget about the element of quality. Your research topic should impact Deaf children. In the short run, rather in the long run in my opinion, schools we need more research and we need more understanding of what is happening in these mainstream schools and it needs to be documented. That is what we need.

An interesting social media and its role. There something called parents of Deaf children who sign. Parents of Deaf children who have CIs and sign. These are groups where they post questions and there is a discussion. It is rich with information that could be analyzed. Parents are asking questions. There are questions being post about interpreting and interpreting issues so that is a very rich resource right there.

Now as an advocate what you can do both on the job and off the job. I see those as two different venues so on the job you are interpreting, and with any free moment use it to educate those who don't know about Deaf individuals and Deaf culture. Use what you know to educate others. Any moments that you can.

Off the job don't leave the Deaf community. Socialize, meet Deaf friends, hang out, volunteer in the schools you are working in. And this is the most important.

Hashtag. Is a hashtag I made up but instead bring in Deaf adults to Deaf education. Continue and promote mentors and the use of Deaf mentors. We need trained CDI and I will talk about that for a moment. This is a crazy idea. My newest crazy idea.

I think CDI can interpret from text to sign and from sign to text with technology, it will take the use of technology, but what I am saying is that there should be more CDIs in school especially when students are being asked to perform in both written English and American sign language. I am not saying they would replace hearing interpreters but there is a lot and several years from now I would like to see that shift where we see more CDI's in a classroom. But that is not going to happen without you here in the audience. You can help us, you can guide us to that.

I feel partly bad talking about CDI's because you are all CDI's but I am advocating for CDI's because they are already fluent and very comfortable in both languages. It also provides the Deaf student a role model. Not only does it provide the Deaf student a role model, it provides a role model for other adults in the school who may never have met a

Deaf adult. That is a huge benefit. That Deaf person can now advocate that CDI rather than can now advocate for that Deaf student.

And something new that is happening here at Gallaudet is more use of gesture and the value of gesture and Deaf gain. One of the examples of Deaf gain is gesture and Deaf interpreters know that. They are very comfortable gesturing and being that bridge to communication. CDI's can model that and share that with hearing kids and hearing teachers because hearing kids can learn how to gesture look, please slow down. It is so easy.

This gesture for please may be more easily understood and it is easy for people to remember. CDI's naturally have that. It is in their heart and that is why I recommend more CDI's in an educational environment.

11 o'clock on the nose. And Brenda is on her way down.

Dr. Brenda Nicodemus

Thank you, Gina, for your inspirational and touching and quite important talk about the education of Deaf children. It is a good topic for us as interpreters to consider. It is a heavy topic and your perspective is important. At this point I would like to ask Dr. Officer to come up and maybe have a few minutes, 10-15 minutes of a conversation between you and her and then open it up for questions from our audience. And then we will wrap things up at 11:30 AM. Dr. Officer?

Dr. Cindy Officer

Thank you so much for your presentation today. I think that was really a good representation of Deaf Heart. I did not know about Beth Benedict's family. What an excellent role model they were for their community and the Katz family. Is all of her family Deaf?

Dr. Gina Oliva

Yes, she comes from a Deaf family. The family I mentioned that adopted Liz, they are hearing.

Dr. Cindy Officer

Your work in ASDC, so there were two Deaf gentlemen who have gone across the country raising money for ASDC, can you talk to us about why that work is important?

Dr. Gina Oliva

Some logistics, I want to make sure I am in the frame for anyone who was watching online.

The story I told about Beth Benedict's family, actually pardon me it would've been Sonnestrahl, the family and then the Katz family. I think they may have met at a dentist. I cannot remember the exact detail but Beth's family was very willing to support this hearing family, the whole family and that was just such a perfect image of what a Deaf mentor could be because they were able to provide self-esteem to this little Deaf adopted girl.

And with this Deaf family they were able to show Liz a life without barriers. The two gentlemen who biked across the country I cannot say enough about them. They were just wonderful and part of me wants to share more, but ASDC has now disbanded and we're sort of now waiting for a more official response and I cannot share anything else. I hope to be able to do so in the future, perhaps at lunch.

Dr. Cindy Officer

Okay. So during my doctoral studies I had the opportunity to talk to adults so these are people between 18-28 years old who at some point had become acculturated in adulthood into the Deaf community.

In my group I spoke to six women and five men who came from a variety of backgrounds and my interviews were one-on-one interviews and I was able to talk to them different ages, different religions, different life backgrounds and cultural backgrounds. I tried to identify some themes they had in common. And when you look at a diverse group of Deaf adults who have become members of the Deaf community' what does that look like? That was really my question. And I found most of them are very positive, doing well. They had gained an identity as a Deaf person. But two traumatic things came up regardless of race, gender, cultural background. Two things that kept coming up over and over again that were related to trauma were this feeling of almost being like a ghost like not being present. The second trauma was a constant feeling of my fear of missing out. FOMO is what people say nowadays. Regardless of age even as people get older they feel they just are not there. They are always an outsider and the second feeling of did I miss something? What is going on? What is

happening? That constant anxiety that is there. Would you like to speak to either one of those?

Dr. Gina Oliva

Just to clarify that ghost thing they experience that when they are in the hearing world.

Dr. Cindy Officer

With lingering trauma from growing up and having that experience of always feeling like an outsider even though they may have friends, they get married to other Deaf people they have a healthy relationship. They are a member of the Deaf community but still have that lingering trauma.

Dr. Gina Oliva

Thank you for those questions and even asking those questions made me realize I did not mention enough the importance of the roles of advocates to be able to establish, learn, and support in any way summer and weekend programs for kids, specifically for Deaf kids to meet other Deaf kids. I think the best way to answer that right now is you know that is still the case. I have a few close friends, one in particular that is a young person who really struggles with anxiety, and their anxiety stems from growing up in a hearing family who did not know sign language and she never knew what was going on and that fear of realizing I never really know what is going on. It is an underlying sense, a part of one's being.

Dr. Cindy Officer

That is right. It becomes part of their identity. I agree.

Dr. Gina Oliva

I am not surprised that was a finding. Does that answer your question?

Dr. Cindy Officer

Yes I am thinking about the people out there who are in their 30s or 40s or 50s who continue to experience struggles with that, and how the Deaf community can be supportive of that, and I think it is important for hearing parents to be aware of that as they have Deaf children think about their child's future, that my child will become an

adult at some point, go through teenage years and have angst. They will have technology and grow up in the society. I mean there is so much for children out there now and so many areas of research to talk about.

Dr. Gina Oliva

I just got very anxious for a moment. Because I wanted to follow up on something you said. I am really talking about my experience once I became and embraced my identity as a Deaf person. But there are those who don't understand. There are those Deaf people who come from Deaf culture that have never experienced some of what we, who have not been born to Deaf parents, have experienced. You know? It is a difficult experience to go through and it is very common. Now I am not saying that culturally Deaf people don't suffer or have their own feelings of anxiety. I am sure they do. I am sure they are also different from my experience growing up in a hearing family who did not sign. And I think it is important for me in particular to feel comfortable sharing. Not to be embarrassed, not to feel stupid, not to feel like I am the only one who says this. But to feel that I can, that there is all of us are in this together. Does not matter if you are culturally Deaf or new to the Deaf community or an interpreter or what role you play. We all combined around the same goal of not allowing Deaf children to continue to suffer.

Dr. Cindy Officer

Right regardless of whether parents are Deaf or not, kind of coming together and having that conversation and learning from each other and I think your talk really talks about how hearing families need to see Deaf leaders and be inspired by that so that they can understand and learn about their child growing up. Anyway, I am done with my portion. I would really like to open it up to the audience for any questions.

Dr. Brenda Nicodemus

Okay so I would like to invite any people with any questions or comments to please come up here to the side of the stage so they can be seen by everyone as they address their questions and comments.

Audience Member (Name Unknown)

Hello. I really enjoyed watching you today. And I am happy you have come to talk to us today. I have learned a lot and something I see here is that you have asked what the world needs. Now do you focus mainly on outside of the United States or here in the United States?

Dr. Gina Oliva

No, my study was done with people in the United States by I think really it is an international focus.

Audience Member (Name Unknown)

I would like to know more about your goals or more about what is happening outside of America in other countries.

Dr. Gina Oliva

I think that question is an important one. There are Deaf history associations. There are organizations like the world Federation of the Deaf. So there are associations out there working on an international level and we should be working closer with them. But I don't know if I can specifically answer that question but really cochlear implants are becoming popular throughout the world and sign language deprivation is something that -- is affecting Deaf communities throughout the world. Where are you from?

Audience Member (Name Unknown)

Grenada. And in Grenada they are way behind. I just thought maybe you might have some ideas that might work in some foreign countries.

Dr. Gina Oliva

I think it is important to advocate for yourself. It is important to think about making life better for people all over the world.

Audience Member (Ricky Rose)

Hello Dr. Gina Oliva. You did a wonderful presentation and it is great to see you. My name is Ricky Rose. I am also a member of ASCD. That was a wonderful presentation. And I have four questions I wanted to ask, but bear with me. One powerful thing on the PowerPoint was that picture of the past, what we had seen with Deaf children and when they were at Deaf residential schools compared to what is happening in the present with Deaf children alone. I come from a Deaf family and I am one of the fortunate, I think maybe 6% of Deaf people in the world.

Dr. Gina Oliva

I think sometimes those numbers are made up because I think we don't really know how many Deaf families there are with Deaf children.

Audience Member (Ricky Rose)

Fortunately, I went to a Deaf residential school. All of my siblings are Deaf. All of us went to the American school for the Deaf in Connecticut. You were close to us in Greenwich.

I did not like Sundays because a lot of my friends came with their parents and they would say hey that is my dad, that is my dad and be very proud of my parents. A lot of other students would come up to my dad and say look this is my dad, this is my dad. Because they could communicate with my parents, you know my parents again they walked in with five different kids all of my brothers and siblings they were just I mean the other kids crowded them. I never really understood why until I grew older.

Dr. Gina Oliva

It is that identity piece.

Audience Member (Ricky Rose)

I did not understand this phenomenon until much later. It had a large impact. When you think about the idea of a Deaf mentor, it seems like this has been in place for quite a long time because I know my family would invite other children, my friends from the Deaf school who did not have parents who signed at home. These kids would come over to my house all the time. Every weekend we had like one, two, three, my house was like a party. Every weekend we would go to the swimming pool, do lots of different activities. This was an early example of what it means to be a Deaf mentor. You mentioned a program called Sky High that started in 1974 or 94 rather. It was some money that was given to the state of Kentucky to provide oral Deaf mentors pardon me, Tennessee, not Kentucky. And then they had role models in ASL that were given to families in Utah. They had asked me if I wanted to be a Deaf mentor. And I thought to myself okay. I met a hearing family and typically the families had children who are Deaf probably from birth to age 3 and I would talk to him about using American sign language and I would teach them signs. I would teach the parents signs that their children would know and be able to learn. A lot of times the parents were resistant and said no my kid does not have language and I would say watch. I would sit with their child and I would

model, and this is the power of a Deaf mentor, I would be able to model what they should be doing and would be if they knew ASL. I usually began with balls because kids love balls. I would grab the ball, sit on the floor with the child so I was eye level with them & sign ball and then we would play with the ball. I would have them push the ball back and forth and I would point to the ball again and I would sign ball and we would go through this activity and I would model for the parents what we could do, and then later on have a conversation with the parents about listen now your child knows what ball means. Now ask your son or daughter to give the ball and I would sometimes do this on my own and it was not the most agile thing because again these are toddlers, very young kids. They did not have language to respond, but they surely grabbed the ball and they were able to bring me the ball and parents were floored. They had no idea that their child could use language in this way. And this was an 11-month-old. Deaf mentors are so important, so critical. When that three-year program was done they found that ASL mentors were successful and even though ASL mentors were successful they cut that program. They cut that part of the program and kept mentors that would continue to provide oral services. Now Sky High, Gina just said is now up and running again. It makes me wonder... I have another challenging question.

I was impressed and puzzled by why you decided to switch languages during your presentation. Now if you have an audience of hearing parents and you have eight or so Deaf people in the audience, you look at those eight or so Deaf people and say I want to talk to the rest of the audience, is that a good role model? Are you being a good role model? Because now you are showing the hearing parents that a Deaf person can speak.

Dr. Gina Oliva

Right, that's not my intention.

Audience Member (Ricky Rose)

The hearing parents are going to say I want my child like you, someone who can speak.

Dr. Gina Oliva

My point is that right, I want to show that I can talk but I am still Deaf. But I understand your point of view and I do not have any problem with your comment. And from the green book I am sure what you have read, oh I am sorry, let me make sure people can see me, right? First let me just repeat what I was saying. Thank you and I appreciate that everybody could see that and that is a good example of what was talked about earlier with Deaf mentorship and having them be there and be yourself. I think that is

really critical. And I have seen that over my 30 years in this work. Let me think about what else you said. Okay. So, my decision to use English I mean really, I am still part of a journey. I am on my own journey and I think about my want to make sure that hearing parents can see me as someone who is their equal. And I have thought about that. I have also thought about not doing that. But my point is that if parents see that someone like me can talk, consign, have a hearing aid, can still be a member of the Deaf community, that is the message I am trying to convey because talking and a hearing aid is not enough.

Audience Member (Ricky Rose)

Now Dennis Coakley, I don't know why one time he gave a presentation and the presentation was on K-12 interpreters in mainstream settings, and my wife who actually now works as an interpreter and used to be K-12 interpreter... after the presentation that Dennis Coakley made my wife decided to leave the setting of K-12 interpreting. because your job as K-12 interpreters is to promote Deaf children there and that is why my wife decided to get out. She thought if the job of educational interpreters is basically going to lead to keeping Deaf children out of Deaf residential schools, she did not want to be part of it.

Dr. Gina Oliva

There needs to be some transition for interpreters and people this field to help transition children back into Deaf schools but quitting that job if everybody quit and there were no, no more educational interpreters I don't know if that is the right answer.

Audience Member (Ricky Rose)

But your graphic, you showed that who was in the system are those who are supporting oral methods. Methods that only teach English and that the Deaf individuals are still on the outskirts.

Dr. Gina Oliva

I think this is a good discussion, but there has to be a discussion about how. If you want to transition kids back into Deaf schools then there should be regionalized schools maybe. That is the model, right? So that parents can still have their kids at home. And have mentors available for families and then once kids get to a certain level of education may be fifth grade they move into a residential environment. I don't know what the answer is but coming up with some sort of transition too, but I understand what you are saying.

Audience Member (Jessy)

Hello I am Jessy. Can everyone see me okay? Actually, I have three questions for you. First, I just want to thank you because my son is in high school. He is alone every day. He is hard hearing and I am Deaf and, in my opinion, I think being hard-of-hearing is different from being Deaf. I want him to go to Gallaudet and I want him to graduate people keep saying no because he can hear and he can talk and I keep saying that is not enough. Because my son does not have full access in school especially when it comes to socializing with his peers. So, my son can pass as a hearing person and had gone to the PIP program here at Kendall school, and his struggles did not come up until later right around eighth grade because he started to miss out on the teacher. So, everything you said today really struck me because is helping me think about what to do with my son. So, thank you.

I wanted to ask you, I am not sure where the previous gentlemen went. I was going to ask the same question he asked. Why did you decide to speak in your presentation? So, if you want to prove that kids can succeed as signing Deaf people then present in ASL. I don't know that you need to speak. When you speak it looks like you are putting your ability to speak as a priority. Less of a question, more of a thought.

Dr. Gina Oliva

Feedback accepted. I hear you.

Audience Member (Jessy)

I just don't want hearing parents to want their kids to only be like you because I know there is a family from Pakistan close to me and there was another kid who went over to visit was hard-of-hearing and spoke. Now my friend's mom wanted her daughter just like that other child who can speak instead of someone, instead of recognizing and respecting the fact that you could be just as successful to sign.

Dr. Gina Oliva

I understand that perspective yes and I appreciate that. Thank you.

Audience Member (Jessy)

At the same time, I support you fully and wholly. What you identify yourself as? Do you feel culturally Deaf? Because I felt when you are role shifting you did not include yourself in that group.

Dr. Gina Oliva

Okay so first about your kid, your particular child. So, the subtitle of my book A Deaf Woman Remembers Public School, I wish I would have said a hard-of-hearing woman and not because necessarily I identify is hard-of-hearing now but your son is very similar to my story. They need that social access too. They need to be able to see themselves to identify, to develop an identity. Even if you have a hearing aid or not. So now as far as the labels that I use? Deaf, culturally Deaf, hard-of-hearing. I don't really use those labels. I am just me. I call myself a former solitaire. That is probably the best way for me to describe my identity. That is who I am. I am a former solitaire. I found my people, and now as far as addressing those two comments about me choosing to speak in English for a portion of my presentation. So, in my prayers and my conversations with the higher being, I remember asking God for help, hear me. But in an audience like this I understand that feedback you are saying. And I appreciate it. I appreciate both of your comments about that. It is something for me to really consider and I don't want parents to think of me as, oh well maybe my kid can talk like Gina can talk one day. I don't want that to be the impression I leave with parents.

Audience Member (Jessy)

Can I ask my third question? I didn't know if you wanted to answer more about my second question. Finally, my third question I wanted to ask is that we have Deaf residential schools, we have mainstream settings, mainstream settings with several Deaf kids or only one Deaf kid. But when we talk about Deaf day schools, I feel that you have this experience where there is only one Deaf student in a program. But if you had a day school with several Deaf kids I think that would be a different experience because they do have the opportunity to socialize and they are not the only ones at lunchtime or recess. They would have friends to communicate with so that would be a different experience.

Dr. Gina Oliva

That kind of concept you are talking about is like self-contained but the issue goes back to the public law I mentioned before. Having self-contained classes or Deaf schools. That used to happen but as Deaf schools have closed, self-contained classrooms have become smaller and smaller because the goal has been to put kids with cochlear implants into mainstream schools. I might be exaggerating a little bit but honestly, I have

read and seen where people have said that the cochlear implant is a tool to get kids out of Deaf programs and get them mainstreamed so you can push them to the ultimate goal thing in the least restrictive environment that was set up by the law. So now people are realizing that is not working. So, there may be more of a switch to going back. But it maybe a day school program that would work.

Audience Member (Jessy)

I am just worried that people would forget about that as an option.

Dr. Gina Oliva

I appreciate you bringing it up. Thank you.

Audience Member (Name Unknown)

Hi. Do you remember your question about readiness, Oh recess. This is what we signed growing up in school, recess. Okay. Interpreters often feel they have a need to interpret everything. Like I have to sign something because I heard something spoken or I have to speak something because I heard something signed and that is a boundary that does not necessarily need to be steadfast. You know even facilitating communication just in a way of like saying, hey Tommy did you tell Joe this? Use this, as a sign or something. And that whole concept is an emerging signer, it's a model that is used here at Gallaudet University for Deaf people who did not grow up signing and now are in an ASL environment. It is a way to get them immersed in that environment, up to speed as quickly as possible. Someone else asked about culturally Deaf, not culturally Deaf. I feel that is a medical model used to divide the Deaf community. Used to say you are hard-of-hearing, you are Deaf but not the same as the other Deaf person but really honestly, we all have the same experience. We have all experienced oppression from hearing societies so these words and labels and I know we will continue to discuss them until no one is on this planet anymore but I see no difference between Deafness and hard-of-hearing or those labels.

Dr. Gina Oliva

So, with my work with ASDC there's been several times where we have had discussions about how we want to describe children in our articles or on our website. Should we use a lower case "d" or a capital "D". Personally, I always think we should capitalize the D. Always. But I think your point is valid too and I like what you just said about also that discussion about recess and interpreting. Really facilitating interactions, encouraging those kinds of things like discussed earlier with gesture. That is a really good role for an

interpreter to take and then to really be able to lead as a first step getting more CDIs in the system because just like Mr. Rose was up here talk about his experience. I think those models that we are putting out there need to be incorporated more into our schools.

Dr. Brenda Nicodemus

Thank you everyone.

Thank you, Dr. Oliva. From the department I want to say thank you. This type of discussion I'm sure could go on and on. Throughout the months, weeks, years but for now we would like to continue the discussion over lunch which is in the cafeteria on the second floor. Everyone can join us. When topics like this that we care about that are sensitive, I am always apologetic when time runs out because I know they were more people with questions that they wanted to ask and I hope everyone can join us for lunch. I also have a small gift I would like to present you with.

Dr. Gina Oliva

Let me just say thank you. I appreciate the feedback about the comments I got especially about me using English and I appreciate that because I am curious to see that putting that into practice and seeing the response I get too, from families. Everyone I really appreciate that. Both the people what come up and asked me questions about my decision to speak in English.

Dr. Brenda Nicodemus

I appreciate your openness. All of us need to be careful and make sure that we are really willing to have discussions and not get defensive and close minded so I really appreciate how you modeled that for us here today.

All right if you need CEUs I will go ahead and put the link on the monitor. Copy on the link and if not, one final thank you for a beautiful presentation Dr. Oliva, and we will see all of you in the spring for our next language in colloquium lecture.