



DEAF/HH TEENS

2025 • ELEVENTH EDITION

Voices are not always heard, but strength within speaks volumes.

CENTRAL NEW YORK

HEARINGLIKEME.COM

HearingLikeMe.com is an online community for people whose lives are affected by hearing loss. We bring together people from all around the world to share stories that inspire hope in almost any hearing loss situation.

We created this site with a simple idea: Sharing our hearing loss stories with one another is a powerful thing. Together, we can learn to live with hearing loss more successfully and advocate in a more meaningful way.

www.hearinglikeme.com

NTID- NATIONAL TECHNICAL INSTITUTE FOR THE DEAF

Deaf and hard-of-hearing students at RIT/NTID receive a world-class private university education at a public college price, unparalleled educational support services, dynamic academic programs that reflect the needs of the marketplace, and unmatched support in starting a career.

www.ntid.rit.edu

CROS SYSTEM

The CROS system is designed for single-sided deafness. It wirelessly sends the sound from the side where you cannot hear to your better hearing ear.

www.phonak.com/us/en/hearing-aids/phonak-cros-ii.html

THE CLERC CENTER

The Clerc Center is thrilled to announce that the K-12 ASL Content Standards are ready. On the website, you will see Anchor Standards, grade-level standards, the glossary and more.

www.gallaudet.edu/k-12-asl-content-standards

SUPPORTING SUCCESS FOR CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS

Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss began in 2011 and was created by Karen Anderson, PhD, with the goal of creating an 'umbrella website' for teachers of the deaf/hard of hearing. Karen had many practical materials that were frequently requested and had developed a personal website of these tools. Supporting Success built on the concept of making practical information readily available, resulting in the current resource-packed website.

successforkidswithhearingloss.com

CAMP MARK 7

Camp Mark Seven (CM7) offers an array of recreational, educational, leadership and spiritual programs for deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing individuals of all ages. CM7 offers many waterfront and outdoor/indoor activities such as swimming, canoeing, arts & crafts, lawn games, basketball and various ball games. There are many nearby trails for enthusiastic hikers. Located on Fourth Lake in the Adirondack Mountains of upstate New York.

www.campmark7.org

DESCRIBED AND CAPTIONED MEDIA PROGRAM

We're here to educate students with sensory disabilities, along with their parents and teachers. Our major network-produced, educational content is carefully customized to serve the needs of K-12 students, as well as adult students studying to meet the needs of blind and deaf students.

dcmp.org

ACCES-VR

(Vocational Rehabilitation)

Assisting individuals with disabilities to achieve and maintain employment and to support independent living.

www.acces.nysed.gov/vr

LIVESCRIBE 3 SMARTPEN

Because the Livescribe 3 Smartpen captures everything you write and hear, you can focus on engaging with your peers and instructors during lectures rather than frantically scribbling notes.

store.livescribe.com

DEAR READERS

We are proud to present the 11th edition of Central New York Deaf/ HH Teen magazine.

The creation of this publication followed a similar process as the previous magazines: recruiting interested students, having those participants complete an extensive questionnaire, drafting and editing their personal stories, edition photos, and crafting pages. This process involves extensive collaboration with students, to produce this diverse educational resource.

Our purpose for publishing our own magazine is to highlight the talented Deaf and hard of hearing teens from across New York State, as well as to expand ones knowledge regarding deafness. Students come from different family, educational and hearing backgrounds, letting our readers get a diverse experience.

This magazine's primary focus is to support Deaf/HH students, their families and educators.

BEST WISHES, SUPERVISOR:

*Lisa Phinney, Teacher of the Deaf/ HH • Lphinney@citiboces.org
The Center for Instruction, Technology & Innovation (CiTi)*

STUDENT EDITOR: Mellonie Mein (Jinx)

A special "Thank you" to:

*Shelley Majka who put her valuable time and effort into making this magazine come to life!
Erin Joyce-Simmons for supporting this magazine and helping student's stories be told!*

**If you have a senior who you think would be interested in being in this magazine, please contact Lisa Phinney for more information.*

*Want to learn American Sign Language? Oklahoma School for the Deaf has a wonderful resource:
<https://courses.osd.k12.ok.us/>*

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Find a digital copy of the Central New York Deaf/HH Teens magazine online at:
www.CiTiboces.org/ExceptionalEducation

DOMINICK BRISTOL

MY NAME IS DOMINICK BRISTOL. I LIVE IN DEKALB JUNCTION IN THE COUNTRY WITH MY DAD AND SISTER. I AM 18 YEARS OLD AND IN THE 12TH GRADE.

EDUCATION

I go to the New York State School for the Deaf in Rome, NY. My school is small with all Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students. First, I went to public school, but I could not hear so I came to the school for the deaf. My favorite classes are ELA and math, because I think they are interesting and easy. Some electives I took in school were yearbook, theatre, and I went to BOCES for CTE. Some extracurricular activities I have done are soccer and basketball. I didn't like that we didn't have football. If I could change one thing about my school, I would wish for more deaf people to socialize and be friends with. At home, I am just about the only deaf person in the area. Since I cannot hear, I need to use the phone to text people. I also have to write and rely on ASL to speak. I don't use any form of amplification; not even hearing aids. I am Deaf and proud of it. I have received many awards and achievements in school such as honor roll, participation in the school's science fair and egg drop competition. I won first place in the egg drop competition and have taken 2nd place for my project "Color Changing Flowers."

HEARING LOSS

I have bilateral severe-profound sensorineural hearing loss. My parents didn't realize it until I was three years old. I tried hearing aids without success. Now, I just sign to communicate. I do have one cochlear implant, but I do not wear it because I don't like it. I started wearing hearing aids after my parents found out I was deaf. Then I got a cochlear implant. I didn't like it, so I stopped using it. I feel proud to be Deaf.

COMMUNICATION

I communicate in a lot of ways, especially with my teachers. My favorite is using ASL, however, I will resort to drawing pictures or acting out (miming) what I am trying to say. I depend on my phone and texting family to communicate.

STRENGTHS/CHALLENGES

I have learned to be patient with other people. It isn't easy. Sometimes I have to step away and refocus myself or ask someone for help. It is okay. I have learned to be patient and that I can figure out other ways to communicate.

SUPPORT SERVICES

In school, I had a language lab that helped with my writing. At BOCES, I had an interpreter. I think the interpreter was important because she told me the information the teacher was saying. I use closed captions on everything. School, home, computer and cell phone allow me to do it, so I can use them everywhere.



ADVOCACY

I think I have equal access at school. I go to a Deaf school for Deaf and Hard of Hearing kids. I do avoid running out of batteries and keep a power charger with me every day in case I need to use my phone for communication.

GOALS

I want to go to University of Miami to get a Real Estate license in Florida. I dislike New York in the winter. I worked with my uncle and grandpa as a carpenter before my grandpa retired. I will be moving to Florida after college and make money doing real estate. I like very beautiful Florida. I hope to go to the U Miami Outdoor Adventures for a camp summer trip.



FAMILY

My grandmother, grandpa, aunt and uncle are the best! We communicate by texting, and they have really supported me.

MORE INFORMATION

I would like to teach people ASL. It's a beautiful language.

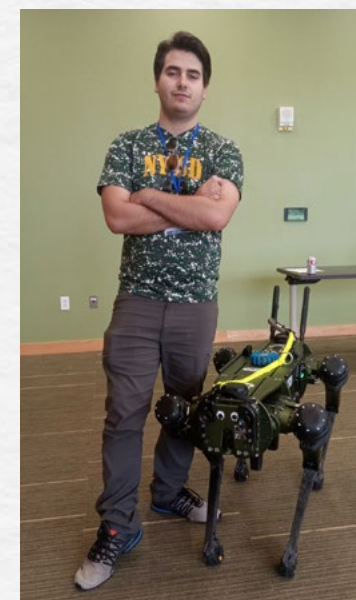
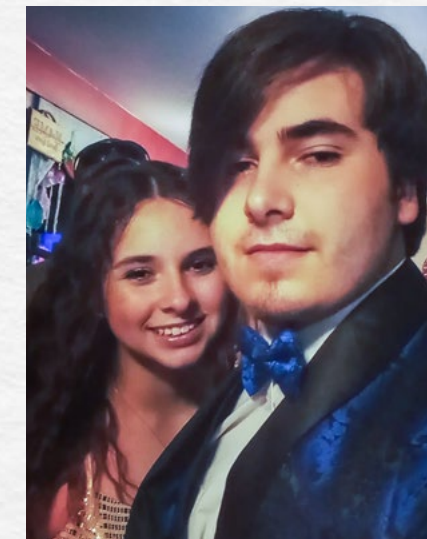
MY ROLE MODELS ARE

Connor, Jahtavious, Nick, Christy, Chris Kimball and Erin

ADVICE

I wish families would learn sign language for their deaf or hard of hearing child.

***I WOULD LIKE
TO TEACH
PEOPLE ASL.
IT'S A
BEAUTIFUL
LANGUAGE.***



NICK DICARLO

MY NAME IS NICHOLAS DICARLO. I LIVE IN A VILLAGE 20 MINUTES FROM SYRACUSE KNOWN AS CENTRAL SQUARE. I AM 18 YEARS OLD.

EDUCATION

I attend the New York State for the Deaf (NYSSD), located in Rome, NY. It only has 12 high school students.

My favorite class is Auto Collision. I take this subject at BOCES, which is located in Verona, NY.

Some electives that I take are theater, maintenance, sculptures, art and yearbook.

Some of the extracurricular activities I do are soccer, basketball, baseball, softball, Battle of the Books club and Academic Bowl.

AMPLIFICATION AT SCHOOL

I use cochlear implants everywhere I go, even in the water because I have waterproof casings for the implants.

LIST AWARDS/ACHIEVEMENTS

I have been on the honor and merit roll at school.



HEARING LOSS

I have a profound hearing loss. My hearing loss was detected when I was born. I was amplified at the age of three. I first had hearing aids then got cochlear implants.

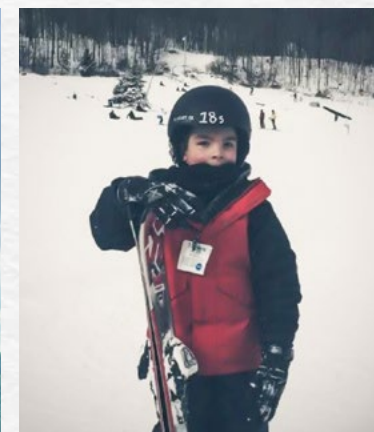
My hearing loss sometimes frustrates me because it has prevented me from working in the Air Force as a pilot.

COMMUNICATION

My best type of communication is speaking, sometimes signing when I need to. My speaking abilities are clear enough to confuse people into thinking I'm hearing. Also, I use American Sign Language to communicate with people who are hard of hearing.

STRENGTHS/CHALLENGES

I was a lifeguard for the past two summers. My hearing loss prevented me from performing certain roles as a lifeguard. Recently, I got my waterproof casing which allowed me to fill those roles as a lifeguard.



SUPPORT SERVICES

At school, I had a speech therapist, audiologist, counselor, and Closed Captions (CC). The speech therapist was my most important service because it allowed me to speak English more fluently as a Deaf person.

My iPhone and the FM's have helped me a lot; my phone allows me to connect my cochlear implant to my phone. It makes it so much easier to hear phone calls and music. FM systems helped me during my time at public school for two years when I was younger.

ADVOCACY

I have had equal access like everyone else because it's a Deaf school, and everyone understands sign language. Also, Closed Captions are used all the time. If I run out of batteries, I go to the audiologist to get more batteries. If I missed an important piece of information, I ask the teacher to repeat what they said. I ask others not to talk over the conversation that I'm having with another peer so that I can hear better.

GOALS

My goals after high school are to get a Welding Certificate and my CDL Class A license. I would also like to be financially comfortable.

FAMILY

My parents got me implant surgery when I was a baby; then when I was older, they would bring me to my cochlear appointments. Also, my parents had help when I was three before entering the deaf school. I'm able to communicate with my family members with no issues at all.

QUOTE

"It's hard to wait around for something you know might never happen, but it's harder to give up when you know it's everything you want."

My Grandmother is my role model. She has helped me with so many issues. If it wasn't for her, I wouldn't have amazing grades like I do now.

ADVICE

A wise woman once told me as a deaf or hard of hearing person, you will have work 10 times harder than regular people to be successful.

MY GOALS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL ARE TO GET A WELDING CERTIFICATE AND MY CDL CLASS A LICENSE.

MADYSEN HANSON-DEAN

HELLO MY NAME IS MADYSEN HANSON-DEAN, I LIVE IN FULTON. I AM 17 YEARS OLD AND IN THE 12TH GRADE. I GO TO G. RAY BODLEY HIGH SCHOOL IN FULTON, NY.

EDUCATION

My favorite subject is chorus because I love to sing. I have taken art and Work Keys, and I play unified basketball.

I use hearing aids and a microphone; I wear my hearing aids at home. I have been on high honor roll and have perfect attendance.

HEARING LOSS

In my right ear, I have a normal sloping to mild sensorineural hearing loss. In my left ear, I have normal to moderate sensorineural hearing loss. The right ear hearing loss was just diagnosed in September of this year, even though I have failed hearing tests my entire life.

I feel better knowing about my hearing loss. At school, I use a mic and at home I just use my hearing aids. I feel good about my hearing loss.

School supports have been a Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing this year. I like TOD because I didn't know about my hearing loss up until now. Currently, I used Closed Captions, my laptop and my phone.

When having conversations, I say "HUH" a lot if I didn't hear what was being said.

In the future, I am planning to go to college. I want people to know I am kind, funny and helpful.

ADVICE

Get checked early not late for hearing loss. Make sure to tell your parents if you can't hear well.

My role model is my mom because she is the best.



**MY ROLE MODEL IS MY MOM
BECAUSE SHE IS THE BEST.**



**IN THE FUTURE,
I AM PLANNING TO
GO TO COLLEGE.
I WANT PEOPLE
TO KNOW I AM
KIND, FUNNY
AND HELPFUL.**



EMILY HIPPLE

MY NAME IS EMILY HIPPLE. I AM FROM PULASKI, NEW YORK AND I AM 17 YEARS OLD. I AM A SENIOR AT PULASKI HIGH SCHOOL. I AM IN A MAINSTREAM, PUBLIC SCHOOL AND I HAVE ALWAYS GONE TO THIS TYPE OF SCHOOL.

EDUCATION

My favorite subject is Art because I like to create different things in that class. I also did Band, Chorus, Family Consumer Science, AP Lit and Comp, AP English, Health, and Spanish.

I have been in Art Club, Game Club, Book Club, Creative Writing Club, internship at the high school library, school plays, Odyssey of the Mind (church meetings), Deaf Club.

If I could change one thing about my educational setting it would be that I wish I would have had more friends at school with hearing loss and had more time to learn ASL.

I wear my Cochlear Osias all day at school and I do rely on them because without them it is a lot harder to hear people. I also use the FM at school only and just have my Osias for when I'm at home.

Some awards that I have earned are:

I'm in National Honors Society and I got the John Ben Snow Award in 9th and 11th grade and this year got an award for good grades last school year.

HEARING LOSS

My type of hearing loss is Enlarged Vestibular Aqueduct Syndrome and is bilateral, worse in my left ear than my right. I passed my newborn screening tests, so my parents first noticed when I was between a few months old and one that I didn't respond much and that I had a limited vocabulary, but the pediatrician just said to try talking to me more, but by one and a half I was the same and sounded like a deaf person, so I got tested and was diagnosed with hearing loss.

I got my first hearing aids made at one and a half and received them at two. It was a huge change and I didn't want to take them off because I really liked how louder and clearer everything was. I currently use Cochlear Osia implants that I received in January 2024.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR HEARING LOSS?

When I was younger I didn't really think much about it, but as I entered middle school I began to fully notice how hard it was to hear and understand multiple people at once, and I also couldn't play certain sports or instruments because too much head pressure could lead to full deafness, so I had an aid in PE that I could do other stuff with. I did wish that I had a friend at school with the same type of hearing loss as me, but mine is really rare, and in general there aren't a lot of kids with hearing loss at my school. Still, I do like the accommodations of

having extra time on tests and going to my Teacher Of the Deaf's room during tests, and I am usually able to get a good night's sleep due to how quiet it is without my devices.

COMMUNICATION

I do know some sign language, but I always just talk and lip read. I also have a captionist that types out notes in class so that I can follow along with teachers in case I miss anything or don't fully hear something.

Communicating with hearing friends and Deaf/HH friends is the same, we use our voices.

STRENGTHS/CHALLENGES

In the school plays there have been times where I'd be backstage and the director would say something in the audience or on the other side of the stage during rehearsals that I didn't understand. I also have a hard time hearing people in loud school hallways.

I have overcome the challenges of having a hearing loss by asking other people to repeat themselves or asking people backstage what was said by the director. I learned that I don't need to feel bad for asking others to repeat because of my hearing loss.

SUPPORT SERVICES

I have a Teacher of the Deaf / HH (TOD) and a captionist. I've had a TOD every year at school and only got a captionist in middle school and still have one while in high school. The services that were most important were the captionist because she types up everything the teacher says and that helps me understand what is going on.

I use my microphone and Osias at school and at home I solely use my Osias. I also use Closed Captioning for videos and movies at school and at home. These devices help support me so that I am able to follow along with discussions and what is going on.

ADVOCACY

I feel that I have had equal access at school. What could be improved on is more awareness about people who have disabilities and also have speaker systems so that way students don't have to hand a microphone to a teacher for every class.

I advocate for my hearing needs by making sure I have the equipment that I need and making sure my TOD and audiologist know if there is something I need or if there is a problem with my equipment. There was



“BEING DIFFERENT ISN'T A BAD THING. IT MEANS YOU ARE BRAVE ENOUGH TO BE YOURSELF.”

Luna Lovegood from Harry Potter book series.

one time that I was in class and heard another voice through my hearing aids and microphone. My TOD and I investigated and it turned out that my microphone was synced and programmed to another student's microphone, so I was hearing that student's teacher.

In social situations I ask people to speak up or repeat something if I did not understand.

GOALS

I plan to attend Nazareth college and do a career in writing someday. I'm excited to be able to learn more about that at college.

FAMILY

I currently live with my mom and dad, and I plan to go home during breaks in college to see them for holidays or other events. My family has always been supportive of my decisions and have helped me become a self advocate and stand up for the things I may need. My family supported my decision to get Cochlear Osia surgery a year ago, and we both have worked together to gather as much information beforehand as we could. I have been able to communicate effectively with all my family members, there are just sometimes that I may not

always understand what was said and may ask to repeat, or I may be speaking too quietly and I may need to repeat and speak up.

I want people to know that I am a hard working individual with a passion for writing and reading and someone who was very kind and accepting towards other people.

QUOTE

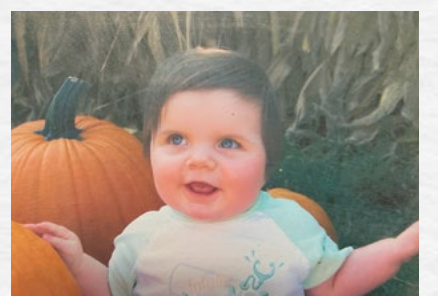
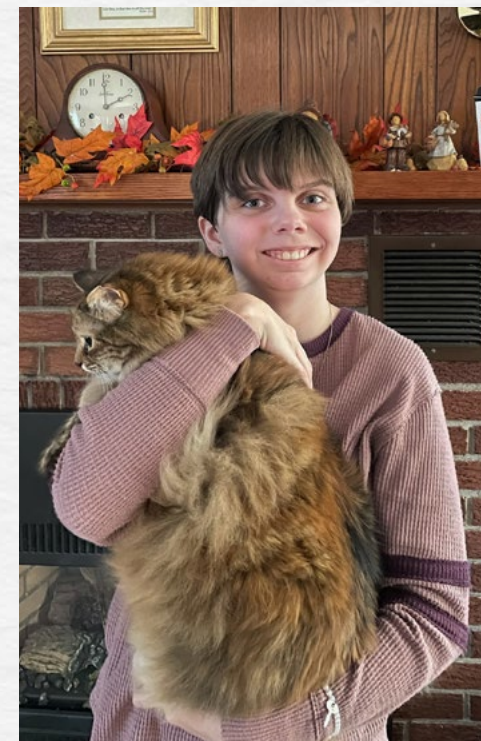
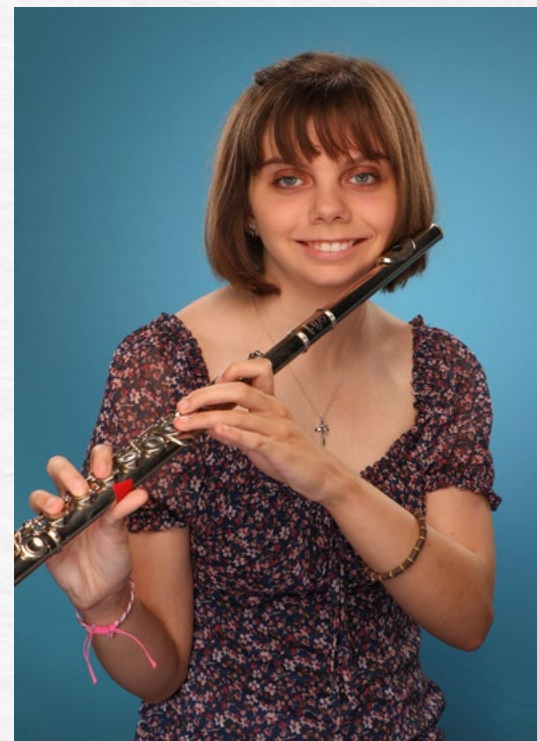
“Being different isn't a bad thing. It means you are brave enough to be yourself.” Luna Lovegood from Harry Potter book series.

ROLE MODELS

My parents are my role models because they have both helped to teach me all I know today and have always been supportive and there for me.

ADVICE

The advice I would give to students is to not be afraid to speak up about any issues you have regarding your hearing loss. For families, it is important to include your child in discussions and help advocate for them so that they can have a happy life at school and at home.



KATHLEEN KENT

HELLO, MY NAME IS KATHLEEN KENT, I LIVE IN ROME, NY IN A 2 BEDROOM APARTMENT WITH MY DAD. I AM 19 YEARS OLD AND IN THE 12TH GRADE.

EDUCATION

I go to the New York State School for the Deaf in Rome, New York. It is a big school with a small number of students. I enjoy all of my academic classes such as: English, Living Environment, Deaf History and Government. I also take specials such as: music, gym and art. I am also in the Yearbook Club.

I am not sure if I would want to change anything about my school. I liked everything about my school and educational experiences.

I use my hearing aids at school and at home. I also help my teacher with the FM system.

I have been on the honor roll, and I have been working hard to improve my English skills.

HEARING LOSS

When I was three years old, I had a moderately severe to profound hearing loss in both my right ear and left ear. My case was unusual because some of the tests I was given, I passed, while other tests I was given, I did not pass. I was given hearing aids when I was three years old; about the same time, I was finally diagnosed with hearing loss.

I feel good about my hearing loss, because I don't have to listen to people screaming or yelling or talking too much, and I can take my hearing aids off so I can't hear people screaming or yelling in the classroom.

COMMUNICATION

At school, my teachers sign and voice, but at home, my family communicates with voice only. I always sign with deaf people, but I always talk to hearing people.

STRENGTHS/CHALLENGES

When I don't understand someone, I sometimes ask them to repeat. If I can't hear, I ask to turn up the volume. I rely on my hearing aids, and I can hear well. I think the hardest part for me was reading and writing. I have a great set of teachers who are willing to help me. They allow me to redo my assignments to improve my grades.

SUPPORT SERVICES

I had speech when I was in elementary school. In middle school, I continued with speech. My teacher's name was Hannah. In high school, "speech" became a language lab.

In school, we used an FM system and closed captioning for videos.



***"IF YOU CAN BELIEVE IT,
THEN YOU CAN ACHIEVE IT."***



ADVOCACY

People at NYSSD use ASL, so school is accessible to me. If my hearing aids are dead, I will ask my teacher to call the audiologist, Erin Lopata, and I will go to her office to get hearing aid batteries from her. I can talk with teachers and with my peers via sign language.

If I am in a social situation with my peers and I cannot hear well, I can write notes or text on my phone.

GOALS

After high school, I want to go to college to become a nurse.

FAMILY

My dad and mom always supported me and my hearing loss. Some of my family does not use sign language. They enjoy communicating with me, and laughing with me, because I am always joking around with them.

MORE INFORMATION

I am a caring and friendly person, and I like to hang out with my friends. I am a hard worker and never gave up on myself. The quote that best sums up my personality is: "If you can believe it, then you can achieve it."

My parents are my role models, because they want me to be successful in school. They want me to be a hardworking person and have a better future and life for myself.

I want to thank my parents for supporting me through school and life, and I love you Dad and Mom. I really appreciate everything you have done for me.

ADVICE

I want people to know that they should never give up and be you and be yourself and don't change for anybody else.

MELLONIE MEIN

MY NAME IS MELLONIE MEIN, BUT I ALSO LIKE TO BE CALLED JINX. I LIVE IN ROSE, NY. IT IS A SMALL TOWN IN WAYNE COUNTY, NEW YORK. WAYNE COUNTY IS RURAL; WE HAVE LOTS OF FARMLAND. I AM 18 YEARS OLD, AND I AM A SENIOR.

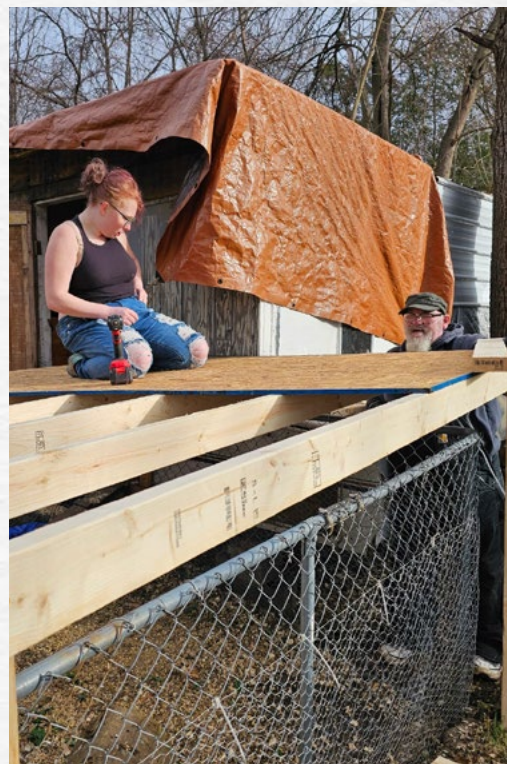
EDUCATION

My home school is North Rose-Wolcott, but I go to the Stepping Stones Program in Fulton, New York. Stepping Stones is a part of Hillside and The Center of Instruction, Technology & Innovation program also known as CiTi. Also, I do a work-study program through CiTi. Currently, my work sites include the CoCo Cafe in Fulton and the State Street Methodist Church in Fulton. My favorite subjects throughout my high school career have been forensics, ASL and any type of math class.

I am a part of the Vocational Education Program Club as the treasurer. I sign a lot of paperwork.

If I could change one thing about my education experience would be that I would have found the Stepping Stones program sooner. I also would have liked to take American Sign Language throughout my entire high school career.

Something that has helped me throughout 11th and 12th grade would be my mini microphone that connects to my Bone Anchored Hearing Aid. I have achieved honor roll many times, received a patience award and so far, I have had perfect attendance.



HEARING LOSS

I have a unilateral sensorineural hearing loss. I had surgery to implant a magnet into my skull. I have a Bone Anchored hearing aid called the OSIA. My hearing loss was detected when I was 16. I had a virus, I couldn't hear, and my ear was in extreme pain. As soon as I told the doctors that I couldn't hear, they said I had the option of a steroid injection that had a one percent chance of working, or to get the OSIA implant, that had a higher percentage of success. My hearing loss is sometimes annoying, but I have gotten used to it. I like that I can stream music from my phone to the implant.

COMMUNICATION

I use my voice to communicate, however, I have learned some sign language and enjoy using and learning sign language.

STRENGTHS/CHALLENGES

I have a hard time hearing other people and often people will tell me that I am being loud. Overall, I have adapted to this, and teacher, family and friends will notify me if I am being too loud.



“WE FIGHT NOT SO THAT THE WORLD WILL REMEMBER US, BUT SO THAT THERE WILL BE A WORLD TO REMEMBER.”

Captain John Price

SUPPORT SERVICES

Starting in 2023, I started receiving Teacher of the Deaf services, where I learn more about my hearing loss, devices and other people who have hearing loss like myself.

At home, I sometimes use closed captioning to help with understanding; other than that, I have a HAT system that I used for my work-study placement.

ADVOCACY

In school, I have my HAT system to help me to hear better. If I do not hear someone, I always ask for clarification. I will look to my peers to see what they are doing, and sometimes I look to someone who knows signs.

GOALS

I would love to go to Rochester Institute of Technology to become a crime scene investigator (CSI). I love watching true crime.

FAMILY

My family is very supportive and understands sometimes it is difficult for me to regulate my voice volume. My dad is also hard of hearing and has two hearing aids, so he understands what I am going through. My brother also has hearing aids, but he doesn't like to wear them.

MORE INFORMATION

I want people to know that I am Autistic and have a hearing loss, but am very successful in the classroom and in the community.

ADVICE

The advice I would give other kids with hearing loss is to keep trying and to not give up.

“We fight not so that the world will remember us, but so that there will be a world to remember.” - Captain John Price

JAHTAVIOUS REED

MY NAME IS JAHTAVIOUS REED. I LIVE IN THE CITY OF UTICA.
I AM 19 YEARS OLD AND IN THE 12TH GRADE.

EDUCATION

I go to the New York State School for the Deaf in Rome, N.Y. It is a small school. I started here when I was three years old. My favorite class is Speech and Language with Rachel because she encourages discussions and presentations about the books we cover.

I also go to BOCES and take the Culinary Arts Program. Here, I get to learn about working in the kitchen, and I am cooking different kinds of food.

I also play soccer and basketball after school.

If I could change one thing about my school, it would be to have more deaf students to socialize with and more ASL being used. I also don't like using any hearing amplification because it is too loud. I prefer it to be quiet. At home, it is the same way.

I have received awards for playing soccer and basketball. I have also received honor roll for two years in a row.

HEARING LOSS

I have a profound hearing loss bilaterally. I also have been given cochlear implants, but I do not use them. I was diagnosed with hearing loss at four-years-old.

COMMUNICATION

In school, I use ASL to communicate. At home, my dad signs a little. My mom will write notes on her phone and show me. My brothers and sisters also communicate with me through writing.

With my hearing friends, we write back and forth on our phones. We also communicate through laughter and expressions. With my deaf friends, we communicate using sign language.

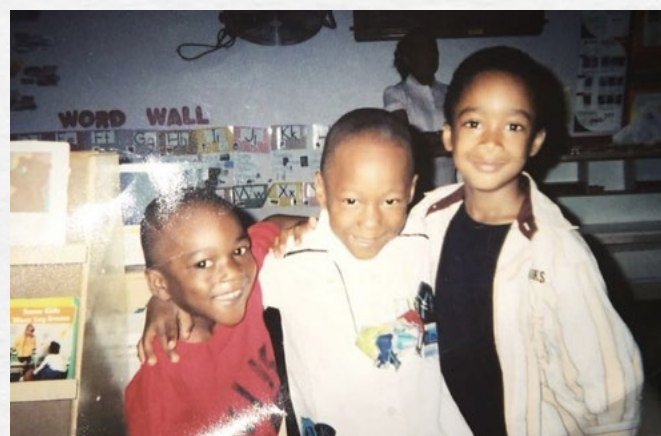
STRENGTHS/CHALLENGES

As a result of my hearing loss, I have a hard time communicating with my family. We use writing to communicate back and forth.

I learned that I would like to teach my family sign language. I also learned that I'm flexible with how I communicate.

SUPPORT SERVICES

In elementary school, I had speech, occupational therapy and physical therapy. In high school, our speech group became a language lab where we learned to write, and we wrote a lot! At BOCES, I use an interpreter to understand what is being said.



ADVICE

MY BEST ADVICE FOR OTHER STUDENTS WITH HEARING LOSS IS TO REALIZE NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE. EVEN THE WORD ITSELF SAYS "I'M POSSIBLE!"

I learned to use the CC on TV so I can watch movies. CC is on in school all the time, every day—the same at BOCES. I also turn the captions on my phone so I can watch videos and movies. I use my phone to communicate with my family by texting or writing notes.

ADVOCACY

I think I had equal access at school. At NYSSD, everyone signs. The closed captions are always on. We can all communicate. I don't use hearing aids, so I don't use any batteries. Most of the time, I understand what is said in sign. Sometimes, if I get confused, I will ask for help.

GOALS

When I finish high school, I want to be a cook at BOCES.



FAMILY

I don't want to bother hearing people. I prefer it to be quiet and don't like a lot of noise. I can communicate well with my family and friends. We always write to each other to communicate.

MORE INFORMATION

Erin is my role model because she encourages me to use what hearing I have and stands up for me. A quote that sums up my life is: "A true friend is one who overlooks your failures and tolerates your success." — Doug Larson.



CONNOR SCHOENER

MY NAME IS CONNOR SCHOENER. I LIVE IN SOUTH NEW BERLIN. I LIVE ON A FARM WITH GOATS, COWS, DONKEYS, HORSES, CATS AND DOGS. I AM 18 YEARS OLD AND IN THE 12TH GRADE.

EDUCATION

I go to the New York State School for the Deaf. I have been here since I was 2 years old. Our school is very small. I am graduating with four other kids this year.

My favorite class is history. My favorite teacher was Ralph. I like history because I get to learn about the past. Lots of people in my family were in the military, and I like learning about wars.

I have been going to BOCES for two years. I have learned Carpentry. I like BOCES because I've learned how to build roofs and houses, and I like to work with my hands.

I play soccer, basketball and softball. I was in Yearbook Club and the Academic Bowl. I helped with lighting for school plays, and I have signed stories for the younger kids.

If I could change one thing about my school experience it would be I wish I had more Deaf people to socialize with and I want to be more independent. I wish I had more time to hang out with friends! I also wish that people would improve their ASL skills and learn more about Deaf culture.

I have two Cochlear Implants (CI) but I only wear one. Sometimes I take it off to get a break from people talking. I wear my CI everywhere.

I was voted MVP in basketball, baseball and soccer. I have been on Honor Roll and Merit Roll. I have won a school TOPS award for taking responsibility and a certificate for improving my iReady scores. I was awarded the Student Achievement Award by the OMH School Boards Institute.

HEARING LOSS

I have a profound bilateral sensorineural hearing loss and have been since birth.

I tried hearing aids when I was one but they didn't work for me. When I was two, I got one cochlear implant, and then I got the other one later on. Right now, I usually wear one cochlear because if I wear both, it sometimes sounds weird.

I feel proud to be Deaf! I am at peace with being Deaf because I have great friends and I like when things are quiet! If I need to be active, I can take off my cochlear implants. I am happy that I'm Deaf.

COMMUNICATION

For modes of communication, I use both American Sign Language and Signed Exact English and I speak. I don't have a favorite way to communicate. If someone doesn't understand me, I can read lips, write or fingerspell what I want to communicate.

I speak with my hearing friends. I learned strategies in speech therapy to

help communicate with hearing people. I sign with my Deaf friends.

STRENGTHS/CHALLENGES

It can be hard to communicate with hearing people because they sometimes speak too quickly or have accents that can be hard to understand. If someone is speaking too fast, I need to advocate for myself and tell them to slow down or clarify. I learned that I am persistent and can overcome challenges.

SUPPORT SERVICES

I have had Teachers of the Deaf, and I worked with speech therapists, interpreters and an educational audiologist. I can't choose a favorite!

I have Bluetooth in my cochlear implants, so they connect directly to my phone! I can listen to music with them. I wish I had access to the new glasses that provide real-time captions in conversations! I sometimes like to use a sound field system in the classroom.

ADVOCACY

I think I had equal access at school, because I go to a school for Deaf kids.

I have to advocate for myself when my batteries are dead, I go to our audiologist, Erin, and tell her I need a new battery. I advocate for myself and my Deaf friends. One time, a hearing person was talking to my Deaf friend, and I told them they needed to sign to communicate with him.

If I do not understand someone, I would tell them to slow down or to please use sign language so I can understand.

GOALS

My goals for after high school are that I want to work in carpentry and fix machines, but I want to do other things too. I want to help sick animals and help them when they are hurt. I also want to help farm animals be healthy. I know how to fix cars, tractors and snowmobiles. I might want to work in the HVAC industry.

FAMILY

My family knows sign language so I can communicate at home. My parents come to my games at school and they have to travel far. My mom even brings snacks and drinks for my team!

I can communicate with my family easily because we communicate lots of different ways. We can talk, sign or text with each other. One of my brothers is Deaf too so I am not the only one in my family who is Deaf.



MORE INFORMATION

I am very helpful, and I am a good role model to little kids. They listen to me and respect me because I understand what they are going through.

The quote that best describes me is "Work hard, dream big, never give up! I want to see people be successful and not fail."

My role models are my mom and dad. I look up to my mom because she helps me a lot and she cares about me. She always supports me, and we like to travel together. She also taught me how to cook. I look up to my dad because he helps me with everything. I learned about carpentry from him, and he taught me how engines run. My family teaches me a lot.

Hearing people sometimes think that Deaf people can't do anything, and we can do lots of things. Sometimes people think Deaf people are not as good as hearing people. I want people to know that we are not dumb, and we have lots of different ways we can communicate.

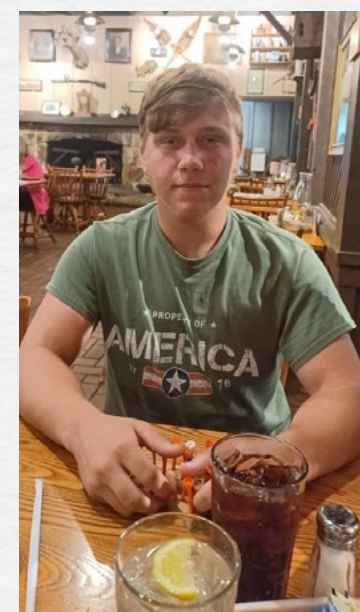
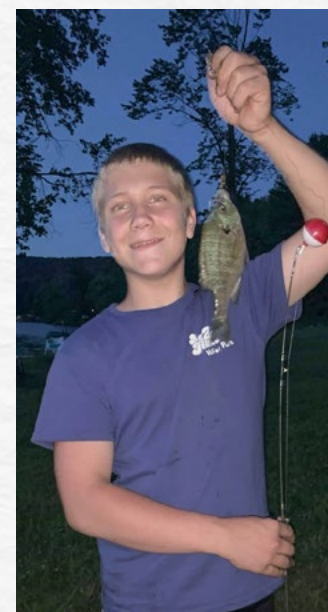
ADVICE

I want Deaf kids to know that it is ok to be Deaf and you can do anything! Be at peace with being Deaf. If someone is talking to you and you don't want to listen, just take off your devices and you won't hear them!

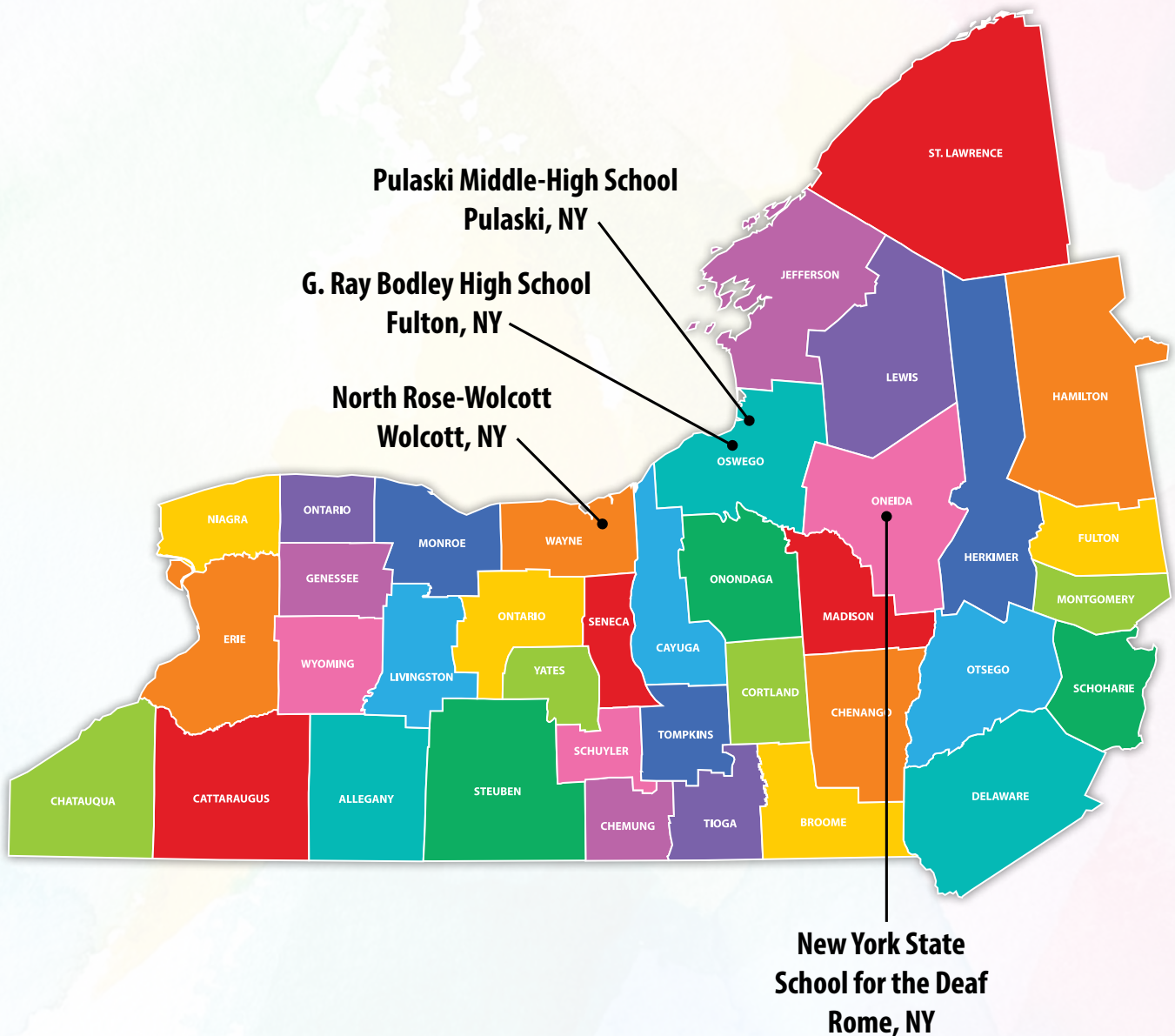
For parents of Deaf kids, they need to remember that it takes time and just take one step at a time. Accept your child for who they are. It's not a sad thing. I'm happy that I'm Deaf!



***ACCEPT YOUR CHILD FOR WHO THEY ARE.
IT'S NOT A SAD THING. I'M HAPPY THAT I'M DEAF!***



TOD/HH STAYING CONNECTED



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