



Central New York **Deaf/HH Teens**

Third Edition 2017

*"Like the changing seasons,
new knowledge nourishes blossoming comprehension."*
~C. Hall

Dear Readers,

We are proud to present the 3rd edition of Central New York Deaf/HH Teens magazine. The creation of this publication followed a similar process as the previous magazines: recruiting interested students and having those participants complete an extensive questionnaire, drafting and editing their personal stories, editing the photos and crafting the pages. This process involves extensive collaboration in order to produce this diverse educational resource.

Our purpose for publishing our own magazine is to highlight the talented deaf and heard of hearing teens from Central New York, as well as to expand one's knowledge, regarding deafness. This magazine's primary focus is to support deaf/HH students, their families and educators.

Best Wishes,

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



Jordan
Poné

**“Hello, I live in Constantia,
New York, and I’m 17 years old.
All my life I have lived on
Oneida Lake with my
family of four.”**

EDUCATION:

“I attend Paul V Moore High School in Central Square, New York. I have always attended a public school and have never really had an urge to attend a separate program for the deaf or hard of hearing. Paul V Moore is a somewhat large school, with an average of 1,200 students and a graduating class of around 300 students.”

“My favorite subject has to be either history or PE class. I really enjoy the rich history surrounding events, such as the fall of the Roman Empire or World War II. While those are my favorite classes, math has to be that one class I’ve always disliked.”

“I have focused my high school electives in the business wing. I have a goal of possibly starting my own business or investing my money in stocks and mutual funds. I want to build the best future for myself and the generations of my family to come.”

He has a natural athletic ability, which lends him to participate in several school sports.

“While having a full schedule during the school day, I also have a full schedule after school. I wrestle and play football for Central



“I can wear hearing aids and feel confident, that I won’t have listening problems in school or in the community.”

Square, as well as possibly doing track and field this spring. I am proud to represent my school, whether it’s in the classroom, on the field/mat, or in the community. Unfortunately, I can’t wear my hearing aids when I wrestle, but I can when I play football. Either way, it presents a lot of struggling to hear others or my coaches. Fortunately, I have responsible teammates who help me if I don’t hear a football play, or who will teach me hand signals for wrestling.”

“If there was one thing I could change about my educational setting, it would have to be the reliability of my FM microphone. It doesn’t always work the best, and has often had problems connecting to my hearing aids. However, when I do use it, and it’s fully functioning, it runs great. By far one of the most valuable tools I’ve had was the ability to use the FM system.”

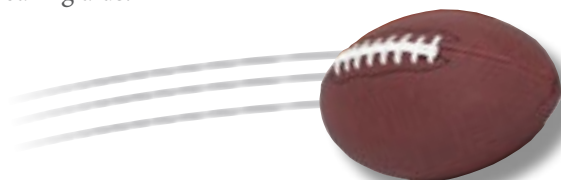
“I have achieved many awards, but I choose not to display them, only because I feel as if awards don’t fully define me as an individual. People may not always remember me for being a high honor roll student, but they will remember me for how I presented myself as an individual to others. You could have found a cure for cancer and people will remember that, but they will also remember if you were a toxic individual with no respect for others, but yourself.”

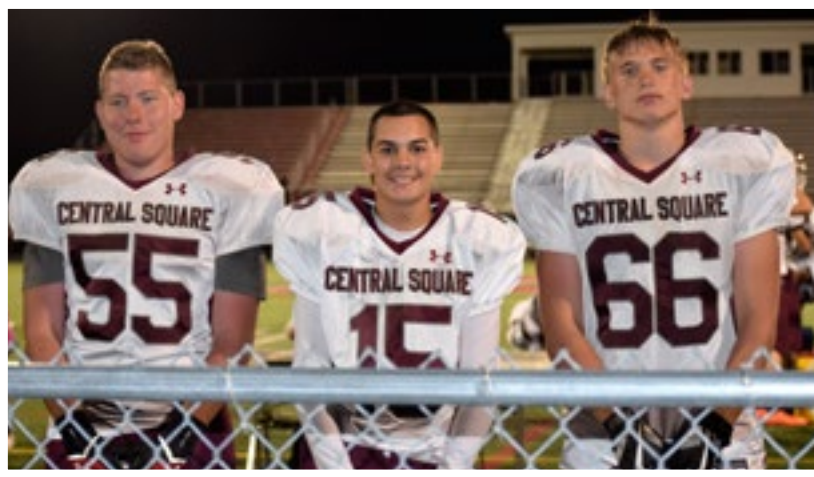
FAMILY:

“My family has supported me endlessly, from buying me new hearing aids, to trying to get the best available technology to support my hearing loss. As a result of this, I can have great conversations with my family and friends. I can wear hearing aids and feel confident, that I won’t have listening problems in school or in the community.”

HEARING LOSS:

“At the age of five, I suddenly lost my hearing. Doctors from hospitals in Syracuse and Boston couldn’t figure out what caused my bilateral sensorineural hearing loss, so the best option was to purchase and use hearing aids. At the age of five, I obtained my first set of hearing aids and instantly fell in love with them. Nothing made me happier than being able to hear the birds sing again in the morning. My hearing aids are a part of me and always will be, however they don’t define me. I am still a human; I just use hearing aids.”





COMMUNICATIONS:

“Some of the ways I communicate are by lip reading and oral communication. I don’t know ASL and I have no wish to use it anytime soon, however I think it’s a great choice for individuals who struggle with oral and lip reading communication.”

STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES

“Some challenges I have faced in my life that I feel have been caused by my hearing are issues in school as well as outside of school. I have struggled with hearing teachers and understanding what friends and family are saying. I have struggled with my self-esteem and confidence due to issues with my hearing. I have questioned if people view me differently and if people change emotions or thoughts about me when they find out I have a mild to severe hearing loss. I have wondered if I would be deemed unattractive to someone because of it. I feel like there is a great deal of stigma, that people with hearing loss are different and aren’t intelligent individuals. Seeing people with glasses is seen as normal, but many people I have met seem to act like they have never heard of a hearing aid before. In a way, are they not the same thing, but for different body parts? I have great friends, and I have had them for all of my life, but even still, I sometimes wonder what my friends think of my hearing loss. I get a sense of guilt when I ask someone to repeat what they said, because I know when it happens frequently, it can get annoying. However, it makes me who I am, and I can’t change what has happened to me. I have found that it takes a great deal of strength to do things out of your comfort zone and being a part of the deaf/ hard of hearing community. Many of us have multiple areas we wouldn’t want to enter. But that’s what makes us great as individuals. We step out of our comfort zones to seek more adventure, and find out there’s more to life. Sure our path isn’t always smooth and

for some, it’s bumpier than others, but we are choosing to do more than live a life without really living.”

SUPPORT SERVICES:

“Over the years I have had many TOD’S. They have all been great and have always worked for improving my hearing assistive technology (HAT) and helping me to be successful. I used FM technology in elementary up through middle school. When I entered high school, I got introduced to Roger technology. [Roger](#) has been pretty good, but personally it doesn’t come near FM technology. I like to have closed captioning for videos in school and always have them on at home. My parents also enjoy closed captioning, because you don’t have to have a hearing loss or be deaf to struggle with hearing television programs and movies.”

ADVOCACY:

“I believe that while my hearing loss can impact my ability to learn in school, the technology introduced has helped me have an equal chance at life and a quality education equal to peers in my classrooms. Part of that is also that I advocate for myself. If I need closed captioning, I let a teacher know. If I need something repeated, I make sure I ask for things to be repeated. There is so much you need to advocate for yourself. You don’t even have to have a hearing loss to have to use this skill. If you are sick, and you miss a day, it’s your responsibility to make sure you get all the homework given that day.

“Advocacy is a skill everyone needs.”

GOALS:

"I have many goals to achieve after high school. I want to start my own business, whether it be athletic training, plumbing, or AC/ Heating. I'm also looking at the stock market. I want to make tons of money, not for myself, but to donate to disease research or building better schools and housing, in poverty-stricken communities. I don't want anyone to experience the feeling of hunger every day and night, or have families worrying if they can afford to purchase quality hearing aids for their children. I want to be generous with my money. Currently, I have aspirations to go to Syracuse University or possibly Cortland, to pursue a degree in business or possibly a job that involves athletics. Will that change? Possibly, I have no idea, so I might just go with the wind and see where it takes me."

ADVICE:

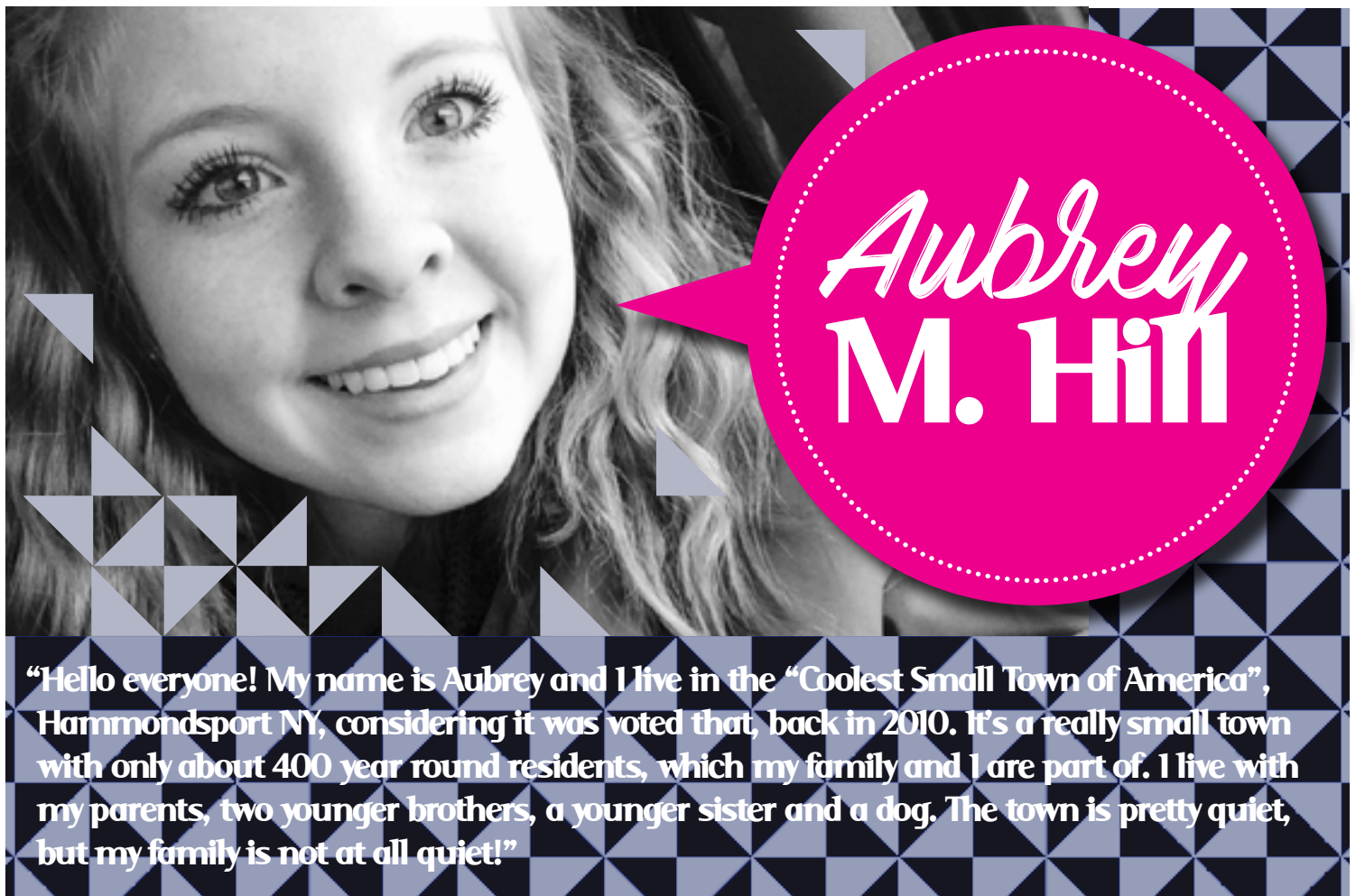


"I want people to know that setting goals is important and that you should never give up, because someone tells you to, or that you won't reach them because of your hearing loss. Dream big and step outside your comfort zones.

Don't waste what precious time you have. Go out and do something. Live your life - really living. Also, attend your IEP meetings. Attend your annual reviews. Inform yourself and obtain knowledge. Make friends and don't be afraid to seek help if you need it. This will all help you in life, I promise. You might not realize it now, but maybe sometime down the road, you will. Finally, ●



"I know some people are uncomfortable with their devices, such as hearing aids or their FM. Don't be! Go out and show the world who you really are, and never let it extinguish your light."



EDUCATION:

"I am currently a senior at Hammondsport Central School, which is an extremely small school. HCS is a mainstream, public school, which combines three different towns of students into one. My school has about 430 students from pre-k through 12th grade. My graduating class consists of 27 students and I am one of three deaf or hard of hearing students. There have been other students with hearing loss in the last few years, however they are no longer there. I have attended Hammondsport since kindergarten all the way up to my senior year. Nursery school was held at another building in the same town. My favorite subject would have to be any form of art class. I love just being able to get creative or just zone out and draw or paint. I have taken many art classes over my high school years that were electives: drawing, studio art, ceramics and advertising and design."

"I would have to say the only thing I would change about my school, would be to have a larger population. I do not really enjoy having to know everyone's business throughout the school and would prefer to associate with a variety of different people with diverse interests. I used to use an FM system, but I decided it was not benefiting me, and stopped using it when I was in 8th grade. I haven't used it since."

AWARDS:

"I have always maintained either honor roll or high honor roll in school. In 11th grade I was inducted into two different honor societies; National Honor Society and American Sign Language Honor Society. For three years I was involved in an ASL online distance learning course. The third year I was eligible for the ASL Honor Society, which is basically an honor society for the ASL class. I had to maintain a high GPA and since my grades were acceptable; I was given an application to fill out. The application asked about the different classes I was taking and what community work I have participated in, along with extracurricular activities. The members of the ASLHS were myself and three other students in my ASL3 class from Watkins Glenn. I will be receiving honorary chords to wear during graduation for ASLHS, as well as for National Honor Society. In my high school years, I have pushed myself to take AP and ACE College courses, such as AP Drawing, ACE Theatre and ACE English. I've always struggled with learning the basics of English growing up, however in 10th grade I was eligible for English Honors, which I have continued to take. From then on I had wanted to achieve high standards in all future classes I would take. In the junior and senior high awards ceremony, I was given two scholarships; one from RIT/NTID and the other

from Wells College. I plan on attending RIT/ NTID in the fall of 2017. RIT/NTID has always interested me due to the sizable population of deaf and hard of hearing students attending, along with the diversity of students. Not only is the population appealing, the campus and programs are great, considering the major I plan on pursuing. I have attended several camps and events held at RIT/ NTID during the summer as well throughout the year.”

EXTRACURRICULAR

ACTIVITIES:

“I’ve participated in several different extracurricular activities throughout the years. Sports has been only a small part of my life. Tennis and cross country were my favorite sports. I’ve also played basketball and cheerleading. I’ve participated in drama club, whether it was part of the stage crew or actual acting on stage. I have acted in the “Wizard of Oz,” playing the character of Auntie Em; “Dracula Baby,” playing the characters of a Transylvanian and a hospital matron; as well as the play, “A Haunting We Will Go,” playing the part of a ghost. As far as acting, I have never been a main character, so I did not have to worry about speaking lines at the right time. But, during “Dracula Baby,” since it is a musical, I sang, but not as loud as I should, only because I cannot hear to self-monitor my own voice.”

“There have been some struggles playing sports and acting. At tennis matches, I would always inform my opponent that I cannot hear very well, and to please speak up, when announcing points or raising their hand when the ball goes out of bounds. Sometimes they forgot, and I would not know the game point had ended.”

“During my senior year I created an American Sign Language club to help other students understand what ASL is as a whole, along with teaching them to sign. Living in such a small community, there are numerous events I assist with, such as the Chamber of Commerce’s various events. Yearly, Hammondsport has a Christmas in the park event, and I help run a raffle booth. During the Halloween parade, I helped keep young children in line for the costume contest. I volunteered at Vacation Bible School during the summer and in the fall I collected canned goods for the food bank.”

FAMILY:

“My parents especially have guided me through several obstacles, from audiology appointments to surgeries to IEP meetings in school. They help in every way they can. I may not always be so easy either, since sometimes I won’t have

my ears in (CI), and they won’t know it until I tell them. I do feel I can communicate effectively with my family. Speaking isn’t an issue for me, but sometimes I do have to ask them to repeat. With my extended family, on my mom’s side, I have another hard of hearing step-cousin so they know how to react if I miss something. The other side of my family, however, sometimes doesn’t understand as easily. In order to improve the situation, asking to repeat and explain that I didn’t catch what was being said is the way to go.”

HEARING LOSS:

“When I was born, the hospital didn’t have the equipment for newborn hearing screening, so my parents never knew I had a hearing problem, until I was about 2 ½ years old. [Newborn Hearing Screening](#) I was not responding to noises, as well as not having my own language. I couldn’t hear others, or even my own voice, in order to make out words. After several visits to the audiologist, we were informed, that I had moderate to severe hearing loss in both ears. However, I kept losing my hearing, so more tests were done to figure out the issue. I was diagnosed with [EVA](#) (Enlarged Vestibular Aqueducts) which is when the vestibular aqueduct is larger than normal.”

“At 2.5 years old, when my hearing loss was diagnosed, I was given my first set of hearing aids. After my parents did some research, they decided digital hearing aids would work best in my situation, and then I received them. After about two years of having the digital hearing aids, an unfortunate accident happened. I fell, which caused me to lose more than half of the residual hearing I had left. [Residual Hearing](#) We then visited Strong Hospital in Rochester NY, and met with a surgeon who does cochlear implants. After hours of discussion, my parents decided a cochlear implant would benefit me, and that I was eligible for the implant. That summer I was implanted with the Freedom processor, a week before my 6th birthday. My parents always told me that if I wanted a second implant, it would be my decision. At the time, being so young, the surgery scared me away.”

“Years went by with having only one cochlear implant, one day as I was walking home from school, there was a truck noise behind me, it was faint, but as I turned around, the truck was right there and super loud. My ear with the CI had been facing away from the truck, limiting my range of noise detection. I experimented with turning my head back and forth realizing that I am missing so much sound with just one CI, and right then and there, I decided I wanted another cochlear implant. I got the surgery the following September, at the age of 14. Over the years, there have been lots of technical updates, so the CI I had, was soon to be

eliminated. I now have two Nucleus 6 Implants and they both work phenomenally! I guess, being deaf, goes both ways. I think it can be a curse, but a blessing as well. Sometimes it is a struggle to cope with not being able to hear everything, missing out on important information without even knowing it, along with other students making fun of me. But then, I would have never met some amazing friends, from deaf and hard of hearing camps. Some of the camps I've attended were; Techgirlz [Camp at RIT/](#)

conversations, it is hard to keep up with who is speaking. Overcoming the problem never really seemed to be an issue. In the classroom if the teacher is not facing towards the class, I would either ask the teacher a question or to repeat. Sometimes I ask the person next to me, what the teacher had said. In loud environments, it becomes more difficult, especially if the students do not understand that I cannot understand or hear the conversation. They also don't take into account, that



NTID, the summer of my 7th grade year, Explore Your Future (EYF) also from NTID/RIT, the summer of my junior year, and a math competition, which was a three day camp. I was eligible for three years of the math competition. In addition the opportunity to attend Camp Hero in Pennsylvania, during the summer of my senior year. As you can see there are pros and cons about being deaf.”

COMMUNICATIONS:

“I tend to speak all of the time. I had speech therapy since before I was in school, and continued to receive it, until I was in 5th grade. I spoke so well and I did not need the service anymore. I grew up in a hearing family. I use my oral speaking skills at home and in school, because there are not many deaf students to interact with. Plus, I didn't learn sign language growing up. With my hearing friends, I just speak. When I am at a deaf camp or seeing deaf friends in college, I sign and speak, or just sign, whichever is easier in the conversation.”

STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES:

“I have had a variety of typical struggles because of my hearing loss in school, especially when I only had one CI. I rely on lip-reading, so in the classroom I sit in the front, to be able to see and hear the teacher. If the teacher is facing the board and I cannot hear, it becomes frustrating. In loud environments, such as a group discussion, gym class or lunch, I tend to remain quiet, because there is so much going on. I try to keep up in the cafeteria or gym, but since there are so many different

I am missing information. Typically, [I would try asking the person next to me what is being said](#), but they usually did not give me the answers or would say “I'll tell you later”. We all know that is a lie. I've also learned, that trying doesn't hurt either. Occasionally, if I miss an important fact or the funny part of a conversation, I don't realize it until people either start writing down what the teacher said, or start laughing from the conversation. After knowing something was said or done, and I didn't or couldn't hear it, I would start with the person next to me. If unsuccessful, I would then ask the source directly. Even if it seems embarrassing, which it's not, it doesn't hurt to ask, or at least to try and ask. Sometimes, I will get my answer that way.”

SUPPORT SERVICES & TECHNOLOGY:

“I have had the same Teacher of the Deaf, since third grade. She is absolutely amazing and she has facilitated in a multitude of different ways throughout the years. I know that if I have any personal or educational issues of any sort, she will always be there to guide me. Since I do not use an FM system anymore, there is not a lot my school can provide to help me specifically. Teachers have access to add captions to a movie or film. At home, I have my own alarm clock. It vibrates my bed to wake me up. I also have an extremely loud smoke alarm, with a flashing light.”

ADVOCACY:

"I do believe I was given "equal access" academically, but not so much socially. I was given options to choose from. The ones that benefited me most were the ones I chose to help me be successful within my classes. Interpreting, captions and note-taking were all different options I could choose from to help with receiving verbal information. I never learned sign language until later on in life so an interpreter wasn't an option. Captions are something I do ask for because it helps with understanding and absorbing the information, particularly if lip-reading is not available. I did have note-taking for one year, but I decided I did not really benefit from it, mostly because my school has implanted electronic devices into every classroom, thus all of the notes were on the board or on computers. The Nucleus 6 came with rechargeable batteries along with replaceable batteries if needed. If for some reason, the rechargeable battery did not last the school day, I do have extra pieces and batteries that I carry around with me or store in my locker. If they were in my locker, I would simply ask the teacher and he or she would allow me to switch the batteries. If I missed something previously said, I would either ask the person next to me, or the teacher."

"Socially, I did not feel I was invited into groups of friends, especially groups, because of my hearing situation and not being able to keep up with the conversation. Typically I would keep nagging the person next to me by asking them what is going on, and what is being said. After a while, I'm sure they would get tired of repeating themselves, so I would either ask the person speaking or if nothing works then I would just leave the situation and wander to a different group."

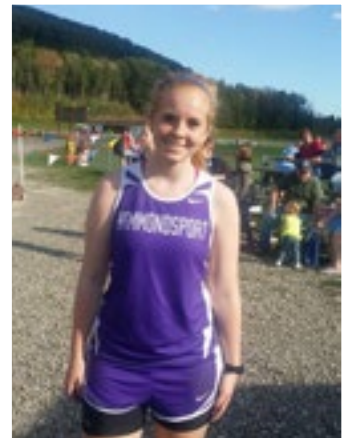
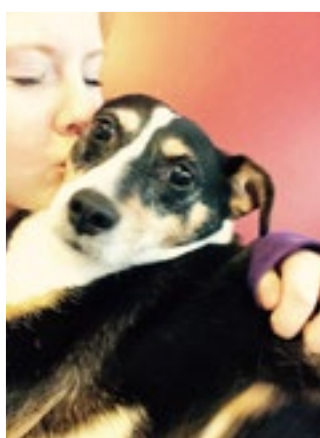
"In the community, if I was speaking to someone new, or someone I don't typically talk to, and they show some 'symptoms' of not knowing I am deaf, such as looking away or speaking softly, I would mention that I am deaf, and ask to please look at me while they are talking. Reading lips, is the number one thing I count on to receive verbal information. Since I speak so well, people, including teachers and students, sometimes forget I am deaf, and I have to remind them."

GOALS:

"After high school I plan on attending RIT/NTID, majoring in art and design. Then I want to become a high school art teacher."

ADVICE:

"The best piece of advice that I find beneficial in sharing, would be to find the people who care and will help you through your hard times, related to hearing or not. Only certain people have your back, especially when it comes to deafness. If you are struggling to understand what someone is saying, and your




friend ignores you, but another friend explains what is being said, pick that person to be your friend, the one who helps.

"Lots of people come into your life for a reason, make the ones worth it, stay."

MORE INFORMATION:

"Random facts I would share with everyone would be that I am someone who is always open to conversations and making friends. I'm a movie lover, hugely obsessed with Grey's Anatomy, and chocolate is the way to win me over. I am probably going to be that crazy lady that will have 3,490 dogs because dogs are my spirit animal. "Strangers think I'm quiet, my friends think I'm outgoing, my best friends know that I'm completely insane!" is probably one of the most relatable quotes to my personality, in a good way. My best friends understand me very well and I have become comfortable to be myself around them, unlike friends I see once in a while. However, the quote I believe in the most, is "Just Keep Swimming", by Dory. It is a reminder for me, that more will be coming. My role model would have to be [Marlee Matlin](#), whom I've actually met. She overcame her own barriers and obstacles to become the strong woman she is today." ●



Tori Lynn Carlisle

Tori lives in the “North Country”, in a rural town called Antwerp. It is referred as the “North Country, because it is located in the northern part of New York State. Antwerp is in Jefferson County, northeast of Watertown. It is a small town with only a few businesses.

EDUCATION:

Tori attends Indian River High School, located in Philadelphia NY. The high school has 924 students in grades 9-12. The school district has five primary schools, one intermediate school, and one middle school. The district is adjacent to Fort Drum and is located mostly in Jefferson County, though portions of the district extend into St. Lawrence County.

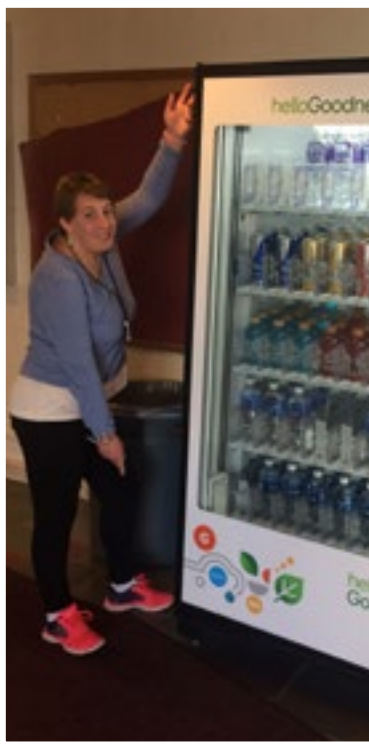
“The high school is large and some kids get lost on their first day of school. I have always gone to this type of school. It is a public/mainstream school. (One of my) favorite subjects is English because I love to read books about history. I just read “My Side of the

Mountain” and I really liked it. (I enjoy) art, because I like to draw, paint and color. I like to make jewelry, too. We make copper and silver charms to put on bracelets. (Another favorite subject is) science because I like to learn about animals and how they live in their environment, and also about the weather. (I like) social studies because I like to look at maps and symbols. Math (is great) because it’s easy for me and I like working through packets. I’m also good at multiplication facts. (I enjoy) independent living because I love to sew and make things for the holidays that we can give to our parents. Some other things we do in independent living are, learn the value of money and how to count it. We learn how to cook things like cornbread, gingerbread and

different types of sponge cakes (red velvet, lemon and strawberry).”

“I am enrolled in the [Hospitality Management Program](#) at Jefferson-Lewis BOCES. The hospitality program teaches us about cleaning, cooking and how to work in places such as a hotel or restaurant. We learn how to do laundry, how to cook and we learn business skills. We also go off campus twice a week to Dry Hill and sometimes the Hilton, where we do our internships. We practice working in these businesses. We clean, cook and take food orders.”

“Sometimes I like to go outside and play. I enjoy dancing and singing outside. If I could change one thing about my school, I wish there would be



more students who used hearing aids, so maybe I could help them. I do not have any other D/HH friends at school, but my sister is D/HH and she's in sixth grade. I use a personal FM system at school and wear my behind-the-ear, hearing aids all the time.

"I use my hearing aids all the time, everywhere I go."

I am CPR/First Aid certified and have made the Honor Roll before."

FAMILY:

"My family has always supported me and my hearing loss. They encourage me to always wear my hearing aids at home, at school and everywhere I go. They keep me safe from things that might be loud. I feel good, happy and awesome, that I am able to communicate with my family, aunts, uncles and my grandparents."

HEARING LOSS:

Tori has a bilateral moderate conductive hearing loss. She doesn't know how old she was when her hearing loss was

detected. She was 12 years old when first amplified with behind-the-ear hearing aids. "I don't remember what it was like when I first got my hearing aids. Now, my hearing aids help me hear better. I wear them everywhere."

COMMUNICATIONS:

Tori prefers to communicate using her oral skills. I talk with everybody and sometimes lip-read. Sometimes, with my deaf friends, I use their interpreter. I don't know sign language, but, I can use the other person's interpreter to translate what the deaf person is signing to me. I just talk to whoever I am with, I use my hearing aids and the Roger Pen at school."

STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES:

"Sometimes, I don't understand what's going on and I can't hear people when they talk quietly. When this happens, I ask them to repeat themselves or I turn the volume all the way up on my hearing aids. For example, when I'm

in my hospitality class and there is a presentation or project going on, I just turn up the volume on my hearing aids."

SUPPORT SERVICES:

"I did not have a Teacher of the Deaf when I was in elementary school. In 6th grade, I got Trudy as my first Teacher of the Deaf. Having a TOD is important, because they can teach you about parts of the ear and how hearing aids are a tool to access verbal communication. TODs also help with homework and projects.

"My Teacher of the Deaf and my audiologist, Dr. Amy, help my teachers understand my hearing loss and teach them how to use my hearing assistive technology (HAT)."

I have a [Roger Pen](#) that I use to improve my access to verbal communications. I point the Roger Pen toward who is talking and I wear a receiver device that connects to the Roger Pen. Every day at school I plug my devices in to charge overnight for use the next morning. These devices support me, so I can hear the teacher or the students in my school or in my classes. I do like using my Roger Pen. It is different, because I just have to point it to whomever's talking and I can hear what is being said."

ADVOCACY:

"I advocate for myself and my hearing needs at school and in the community."

For example I go shopping with my family to buy more batteries for my hearing aids, so I can hear. I will also raise my hand and ask my teacher or peers what I missed. They will repeat

what they said to me so I can hear it. I use the Roger Pen in small groups, in my classes and when I'm working with my teachers. It helps me hear more clearly. If I am in a social situation where I cannot hear well, I will turn the volume on my hearing aids all the way up, and tell my peers I can't hear what the other people are saying to me."

MORE

INFORMATION:

"I am a good singer. I write countless songs in my songbooks, about everything. Then I sing them"

"I Wish that I Could Be the Sugar Queen"

By: Tori Lyn Carlisle

*"I wish, I wish, I wish, I wish,
I could be the sugar queen.
And if I was, I would have
some sugar powers*

*From someone because she doesn't
Want it anymore so when I got
The sugar powers I turn my castle into
Sugar and I turn everything else
into sugar*

*But when I touched my guards
They became sugar*

*But they were still moving around
And then I touched the sky
And then there was lot of different
kinds of sugar falling from the sky
And everybody loved it. "*

"I love pink; it is my favorite color. I have a favorite pink pillow that keeps my dreams safe at night. When I wake up, the dream stops, but then the dream picks back up when I hold my pillow at night. It's kind of like pretend, I made it up. If something were to happen to the pillow, I won't have any more dreams. I love many kinds of animals; cats, dogs, pandas, lions, monkeys, tigers, leopards, penguins, unicorns and cheetahs. I am a "social butterfly", because I love to talk to everyone. I love to read while I listen



to music. I love to color. I love stuffed animals. My favorite teacher is my social studies teacher, Mr. Maphey. I love social studies. He's really nice. He knows I like food, and sometimes he gives us food. He's also very funny."

A quote that best sums up Tori's personality is **"Keep Calm."**

GOALS:

"My goals for after high school are that I will get a job and earn money so I can pay for bills and other things. I want to work in a hotel because the skills needed, are the types of skills I'm good at, like doing laundry and cleaning rooms."

ADVICE:

"The advice I would give to students with a hearing loss, is to always have a lot of batteries with him or her when they are at home or at their school." ●



Amy Christian

“I live in the suburbs of the city of Syracuse. My house is in a rural area surrounded by cornfields and wild animals. I am deaf, but people don’t realize that. My speech is improving and when I am not in school I do not sign very much. I really enjoy talking and want to work hard to improve my speech.”

EDUCATION:

Amy attends Solvay High school and is a part of the BOCES Deaf/HH program. She has always attended a [mainstream](#) school. Solvay is a small to medium size school. The school offer many clubs activities and sports. Soccer is her favorite.

“My favorite subject is math, because I like solving-problems with numbers. Word problems are very hard for me. My elective classes are mostly technology and art. I enjoy taking photography the most. I have a passion for working with cameras and love when people model for me. If I could change one thing about my educational setting; I’d wish I could be surrounded by hearing people who were interested in deaf culture. I like to talk with both hearing and non-hearing people. I sign and talk to my family, friends and teachers.”

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & AWARDS:

“I do many activities outside of school, such as volunteer work for my church and playing soccer. I also love being on stage; I am a part of my school’s drama club. I am also a part of Key Club where I was given the opportunity to travel to Albany for three days and attend workshops about leadership and volunteering. I also competed in the Gallaudet Academic Bowl for two years.” Amy has been on the honor roll. **She was the first deaf person to perform in a school play or musical at Solvay HS.**

FAMILY:

“My family supports me by repeating sentences when I don’t understand. They talk slower to me and try to do it in quieter places. My sister has been taking ASL at college. Sometimes it is very hard to communicate with my family. When they talk at the same time it makes it hard to focus on the conversation. If all my family and friends knew ASL, it would be a little



easier for me to understand them.”

HEARING LOSS:

“I have a cochlear implant in my right ear. I have worn a cochlear implant for as long as I can remember. I also have an FM system at school that helps me hear my teachers better.”

COMMUNICATIONS:

“My preferred mode of communication is oral. I talk with my friends, teachers and family. I only use sign with deaf friends. My Cochlear processor helps me hear when someone else is talking.”

STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES:

“There are challenges in high school for deaf and hard of hearing kids. They need to work extra hard and sometimes get extra help to finish projects at the same time as hearing students, but it is very individualized. Not all deaf need interpreters or more time to complete tasks.”

SUPPORT SERVICES:

“My support services at school are speech, an interpreter and FM equipment. FM is a tool that helps me hear the teacher. The interpreter helps me understand the discussions and to know what to do.”

ADVOCACY:

“To insure I receive the services and accommodations I need on my IEP, I go to my CSE (Committee on Special Education) Meeting.”

“I ask my school to provide the services I need. I also go to my community audiologist to get help with my CI.”

TECHNOLOGY:

“The technology I use outside of school, is mainly my cellphone. I like to use the speaker on my iPhone, because it helps me hear voices more clearly. I also use texting technology on my iPhone it helps me understand my friends. When T.V. and movies are on, I like to use captions to help me better understand what is said.”

ADVICE:

“Parents, my advice to you, is to make sure your child gets an education with mainstream classes. The more mainstream classes they take, the better prepared they will be for college. Students, I encourage you to take part in clubs and sports. This will help you make new friends and have a connection with the mainstream environment. I want you to stay true to yourself and personality. Make friends with hearing people and teach them how to sign using ASL.”

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

“My role model is J.K. Rowling, because she makes the readers feel like you’re in a fantasy world. I love the Harry Potter books and movies. I can’t wait to ride the Hogwarts Train at Universal.”

“That’s how it’s supposed to be ‘Living Young and Wild and Free’, but wherever you go, go with all your heart and enjoy yourself, these are the good old days that you’re going to miss in the years ahead.” ●



EDUCATION:

Avian is a senior, at the New York State School for the Deaf (NYSSD) in Rome, NY. All students at NYSSD are deaf or hard of hearing. [NYSSD](#) has students, ages 3-21, on campus and a teacher of the deaf who works with babies in one of the wings. "We have 23 students in our middle and high school. I get more work done in class with the teachers because the class sizes are very small. Some classrooms have a teacher and a teacher's assistant. Teachers use both sign language and voice, which helps me understand better. At NYSSD, we have a workshop where students learn the skills needed to get ready to go out in the real world and work. NYSSD also has a dorm, because a lot of students live so far away, and it is hard for them to travel back and forth that far every day."

Avian has not always attended a school for the deaf. She started in a public school in Oswego, and in 2012, transferred to NYSSD, she was 15. "Yes, since I had to stay in the dormitory during the week, it was a hard transition for me to leave my friends and family during the weekdays. I missed seeing my family every day. It is still hard for me to leave my parents. My mom still gets emotional when I leave for school, and when I get back home."

"I like workshop because I enjoy learning things that will help me be successful in the real world. In workshop, I have learned how to fill out applications, worked in the kitchen cleaning tables, helped teachers in classrooms and I am currently taking a babysitting course."

"I have also taken a music class, but my culinary class is my favorite. I get to learn how to cook things I have never cooked before. I learned how to make desserts better, like cookies. We've recently made what NYSSD calls, "speech crackers." They are really good. They are oyster crackers with a variety of seasonings on them, and you cook them until they become golden brown. I also take academic support class to help me learn information about science and social studies."

If Avian could change one thing about her educational setting, she wishes there were more students at NYSSD. She also wishes more deaf or HH students in public school would visit and maybe join NYSSD!

"I use one hearing aid on my left ear. I wear it all the time. In school, the classrooms also have soundfield systems that teachers use to help students hear their voice more clearly."

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & AWARDS

Avian plays on the school's soccer team. In the past she was also a manager for the girls' basketball team. "Soccer was my favorite because I can communicate with my friends and it is fun to play with my friends. Some schools we played were close, but a lot of them were far away from NYSSD. We have an annual Friendship Soccer Tournament at NYSSD. Many deaf schools participate, some even from Canada!"

2013: Attorney General's Triple "C" Award, Dormitory Citizenship Award, Excellent Attendance Award, Humanitarian Award, Principal's Award.

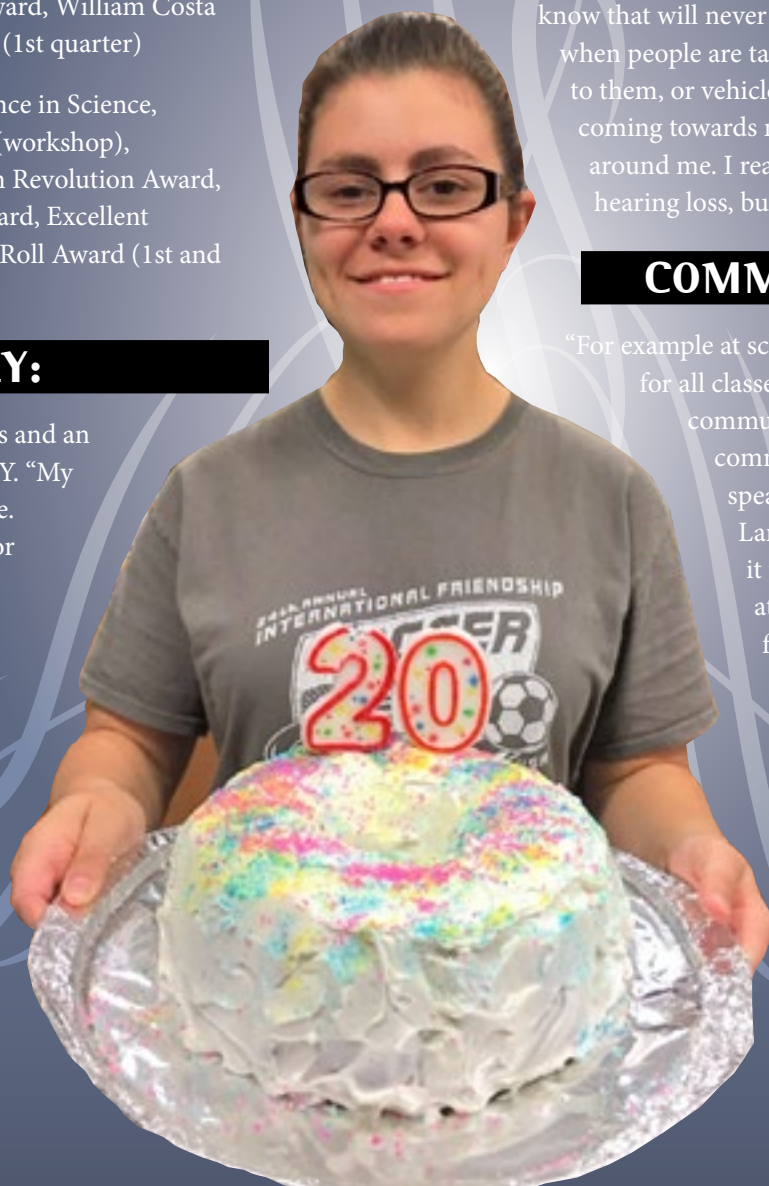
2014: Excellent Attendance Award, Humanitarian Award, Most Improved Student Award

2015: Academic Perseverance in Math, Academic Perseverance in Reading, Excellent Attendance Award, Most Improved Signing Award, William Costa Speech Award, Honor Roll (1st quarter)

2016: Academic Perseverance in Science, Campus Company Award (workshop), Daughter's of the American Revolution Award, Dormitory Citizenship Award, Excellent Attendance Award, Honor Roll Award (1st and 3rd quarter).

FAMILY:

Avian lives with her parents and an older brother in Oswego NY. "My parents help me all the time. If I need an appointment for my hearing aid, I just have to ask them to set up the appointment and they will. They will bring me to the appointment and help with any problems I have. Communication with my family is easy most of the time. If my hearing aid is working, I can talk and listen, so it's easy. If I am having problems with my hearing aid, communicating with anyone is hard!"



"My biggest role model is my mom. She always helps me, when I was younger and now. She is a helpful, nice person. Another role model is Nicole. She is my brother's girlfriend and I look up to her. She is learning ASL and she can communicate with me by speaking or using ASL."

HEARING LOSS:

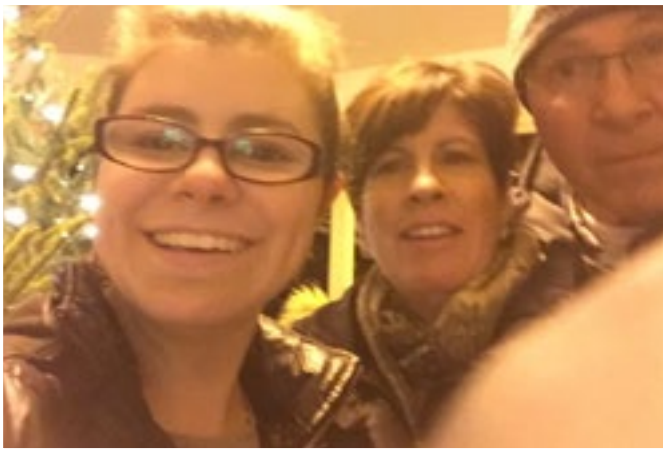
Avian has a profound sensorineural hearing loss in her right ear and a mild to moderate conductive hearing loss in her left ear.

Types of hearing loss - <http://american-hearing.org/disorders/hearing-loss/>

"I think I was 2 years old when my hearing loss was first detected. It was before I started preschool. I received my hearing aid shortly after that. It is fine I can't hear everything, but I am happy I can hear most things with my hearing aid. When I take it off, I can't hear a thing. I wish I could hear without having to use my hearing aid, but I know that will never happen. It is nice to hear when people are talking to me or I want to talk to them, or vehicles outside when they are coming towards me. I enjoy hearing sounds all around me. I really do wish I did not have a hearing loss, but it is okay."

COMMUNICATIONS:

"For example at school I use an interpreter for all classes, but at home my family communicates with voice only. I communicate most of the time by speaking. I know American Sign Language (ASL), and I do use it to communicate to friends at school, who use ASL. My family knows a little ASL, but I prefer using my oral skills with them. I just talk with hearing friends, because they don't sign. I sign with deaf or hard of hearing friends, if they know ASL. At restaurants, stores, and other places in the community, I prefer using my voice. People understand me when I talk most of the time."



ADVOCACY:

“When I was in public school, I don’t think I had equal access. Well, I was given an interpreter, but it was hard for me to understand the interpreter. At NYSSD, I think I have more access, because the teachers often simplify things for me. If I can’t hear a person, I say, “Can you please talk louder, so I can hear you?” If I run out of batteries and I am in school, I go to the audiologist’s office or my speech language therapist’s office, and ask if I can have new batteries. If I am in class, and I need something voiced, sometimes I remind staff to voice it too. When I am with peers, I say, “Can you please talk louder so I can hear you?” I also need them to look at me when they talk, so I can try to understand what they said.”

STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES:

“Sometimes I miss what people are saying. If their back is turned and I can’t see their face and mouth, I don’t know what people are saying. In public school, my classes were very big and it was hard to understand what the teacher was saying with a lot of **noise happening around me.**

“I had to take a lot of notes and then if I was writing I couldn’t watch the teacher’s face. I played soccer in school. When it rained, I would have to take off my hearing aid, and then I couldn’t hear anything. It was very hard to communicate with my teammates and coaches. At restaurants, a lot of times I have a hard time reading menus. Reading is difficult for me. I get help with reading from my family and friends. When I don’t hear something, I have to ask the person to say it again. During soccer and other activities if I had to take off my hearing aid because it was raining I would watch my teammates to see what they were doing and copy them.”

“I keep trying. I never give up.”

SUPPORT SERVICES:

“I have speech-language therapy, small classes and an assistant with me some of the day. The assistant helps me write during classes and takes notes for me. I also have used Dragon Speak, which is a voice to text program. In public school, I tried using an iPad and it would have pictures for my vocabulary. It could read my notes aloud for me. Sometimes, it was hard to hear the iPad. Most of the time I would use it at home.”

TECHNOLOGY:

“I use my hearing aid and that supports me the most. I use it to hear and hate it when it doesn’t work! I also use texting on my phone. I have used a program, Dragon Speak. Dragon Speak helps me with my writing. If I speak into the microphone, it types what I say. I use FaceTime with my family and we talk and/or sign. I don’t use Relay Services, but I need to, I know. I can hear and talk on a regular phone a little too.”

GOALS:

Avian would like to work with kids in her home area of Oswego. “For a while, I want to live in Oswego with my parents. I like Oswego because I want to be close to family and friends that live there. In the future, long from now, I hope to be independent and not live with my parents! We’ll see about that!”

ADVICE:

“For students, I would ask a student how it was for them being deaf in school. If they go to a public school, I’d ask if they are comfortable being deaf there.

“I would tell families of young kids, to visit specialists, to explore the supports that are available for individuals with hearing loss.” ●



Shamani Small

Shamani lives in an apartment in Troy NY, from Friday night – Monday morning and in the dorm at NYSSD, Monday–Thursday nights.

EDUCATION:

Shamani is in 12th grade at New York State School for the Deaf (NYSSD). “NYSSD is a school for students with hearing loss. It is a small school. I am alone in some classes and there are a couple of students in my other classes.” Staff at NYSSD use sign language. NYSSD also has a dormitory. At NYSSD, there are about 25 students in grades 7-12. There are about 50 total students in the whole school.

“I used to go to the American School for the Deaf (ASD) in Connecticut. I started at NYSSD in July 2016. I changed schools because I moved. Before ASD, I went to public schools. My favorite classes are art and English. I like art class because I like to draw, paint and (work on) all things related to art. I want to continue to practice art because in the future I’d like to work at Disney and create art for movies. I like English because I like to read and learn how to write the stories I create. I took classes to help me get ready for work. At ASD, my core classes (math,

science, social studies, and English) related to the work world. For example, I learned about money in my math class. Also at ASD, I got some work experience, from working at a store called Marshalls. At Marshalls, I unpacked boxes and sorted the items the store would be selling. I also folded clothes to make them look nice and neat. Currently, I am also taking a cooking class. I learn how to cook and bake tons of different foods.”

“At ASD we had a regular dorm schedule for events. Monday – socialized, Tuesday – food run, Wednesday – gym, Thursday – watch a movie, Friday – went home. At NYSSD it is a little different, it’s not as scheduled. Monday – trip to Walmart, Tuesday-Thursday – sometimes watch sports, movies (DVD), or go on different outings. Friday we go home. At NYSSD, I do work in the print shop, which is on campus. I like to join activities in the dorm, like cooking and watching movies. I like the dorm; it’s better than being a day student! Home is too far away. I like cooking and socializing with my friends in the dorm. I go home on Friday and come back on Monday.”



“If I could change anything about my school, I wish NYSSD had a volleyball team to join. I wish I had more people here to be friends with too. NYSSD is a small school. I wish I had more art classes to take at NYSSD too.”

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & AWARDS:

“I used to play volleyball at ASD. At NYSSD I help manage the girls’ basketball team. I help get water ready and make sure other things are organized for the team.”

FAMILY:

“My mother learned ASL and communicates with me easily. I can sign with my mom. My sisters, brother and I hang out sometimes together. We fool around, play games and watch movies. Some other members of my family (sisters Ari and Asa, aunt and grandparents) sign a little, but not much. I use my phone to text/write back and forth with some family members, like my brother JC. I am fine just signing with my mom. It would



be nice if other family members signed more, but it’s okay they don’t!”

HEARING LOSS:

Shamani has a bilateral profound hearing loss. Her hearing loss was detected at 11 months of age, and was diagnosed at 13 months. “I was 15 months when first amplified with hearing aids in both years (little purple ones). I was 7 years old when I received my cochlear implant. I kind of wish I could hear more, so I could talk. I think I could learn easier if I could hear. But I am happy being deaf, too. I’m a little in between being happy to be deaf, and wishing I didn’t have a hearing loss. I use one cochlear implant on my left side. I have a Nucleus 5 by Cochlear America. I put my CI on when I wake up in the morning. I leave it on all day. I take it off just before I go to bed and I charge it all night.”

COMMUNICATIONS:

“American Sign Language (ASL) is my primary language. I use ASL to chat, learn and communicate in school. I do wear a cochlear implant, but it is mostly for hearing things around me. I like to hear things and people talking. I use ASL to understand what is being talked about though, and I use ASL to communicate. I don’t really have hearing friends. I have deaf friends and I use sign language to communicate with them.”

STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES:

"Sometimes I go to community events and there is nobody there that knows or uses ASL. I went to church before, but nobody signed and I just sat there. I decided to stay home instead of going to church. At big family get-togethers, people talk and I don't know what they are chatting about. At gatherings when people are talking, I try to wait and be patient. If my mom is there, she will sign to let me know what they are talking about. I learned that I need to be patient."

SUPPORT SERVICES:

"At school, my teachers are mostly all teachers of the deaf. I get speech and language therapy services to improve my understanding of concepts and vocabulary. If I need help with my cochlear implant, the school also has an audiologist to help me. I remember getting speech and language therapy when I was young too. I am pretty sure I had audiology services at school when I was younger too."

"I think having a teacher of the deaf is important."

Teachers of the deaf know sign language, and know how to teach me best. A hearing teacher doesn't know how to teach a person who is deaf, like me. I have used interpreters. I like to know what is going on around me! I have used a [video phone](#) many times. I have one at home so I can sign, and the interpreter tells the other person what I am saying."

ADVOCACY:

"I get the same opportunity to learn as a hearing person gets. In the community I try to explain to people who don't understand deafness that I go to a school where people use ASL to communicate. For some people who are deaf, ASL is a better way to learn. For me, ASL is visual and I do not have to rely on my hearing. I explain that I learn best with ASL. If I don't understand or miss something in a class, I ask for help. I take care of my own batteries for my CI. I also watch people to try to figure out what is going on. I can ask them to sign it, so I understand it better. If they don't know sign, it is hard for me."

TECHNOLOGY:

"I use Closed Caption (CC) all the time when watching television and movies. CC helps me because it tells me what is happening on the television. It also shows me words, which helps me learn how to spell and write. I use my phone for

texting/writing. At school all classrooms have [sound field systems](#). My phone helps me communicate with people who don't know ASL."

GOALS:

"I would love to go to Gallaudet University. I want a job that will earn money. I want to learn drawing in college. In the future, I want to move to California and work at Walt Disney Animation Studios! I have always loved Disney ever since I was a small child. I would love to create a movie and make the drawings for Disney!"

ADVICE:

"Try hard! Be patient! **For families, it's good to learn ASL if your child uses ASL. You should be able to communicate with your child.**"

MORE INFORMATION:

"I really enjoy my free time. When I graduate I want to go to Disney with my mom and family. I like drawing, watching Disney movies, looking at books, and occasionally reading. I love everything to do with Disney! My favorite character is Mickey Mouse. I wear Mickey Mouse clothing every day! I adore looking at books that have pictures and drawing of Disney characters. I also really like drawing, especially Disney pictures."

"A favorite quote comes from one of my favorite movies, Beauty and the Beast. Belle gives a mirror to Beast and tells him, "Take it with you so you'll always have a way to look back." It's my favorite part of the movie."

"My mom and people that study at Gallaudet, are my role models. My mom, because she is very helpful. People who attend Gallaudet are lucky, because they go to college with people who use sign language." ●



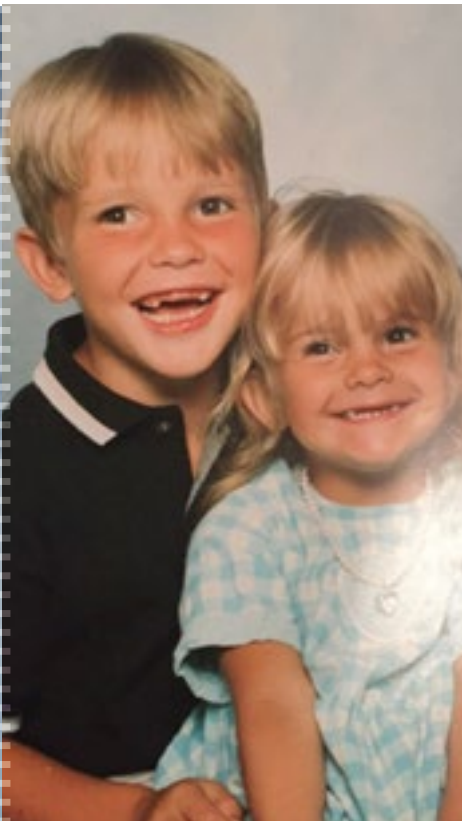
Snowy
Jenner

EDUCATION:

Snowy lives in Vestal, NY with her mom. She is a senior and attends New York State School for the Deaf, and will graduate in June. “The students, and some of staff there are deaf. Teachers use sign language throughout the day. I never heard about NYSSD when I was younger. When I visited NYSSD for the first time, I liked people using sign language and that the students were deaf like me! I liked chatting in sign language. I don’t like people just speaking to me because I don’t understand what they are saying. I love the sports’ teams too, because I can communicate and use sign language and/or gestures. NYSSD is a better school for me than a public school.”

“I stay in the dorm, Monday-Thursday. Then I go back home after school, on Friday. I always stay in the dorm, because my home is far away. There are very few students who live close to Rome that stay in the dorm. Most of the students live far away that stay in the dorm. I have to try to be independent with homework but can get help from dorm staff with my homework if needed. I get to hang out with friends both in school and in the dorm. I like the dorm to hang out or when we go on trips, etc. I get to socialize with girls in the dorm after school. I can’t hang out with my school friends at home during the week. I miss my mom and home friends so much. Every Friday, when I get home after school, I hang out with my mom and friends in my home area.

“I am deaf and I always use sign language. I wear a cochlear implant sometimes, but it has problems. I used to go to public schools. I attended public schools in both Pennsylvania and New York. I started school at NYSSD in 2012 during the summer. I remember public school was hard for me. It was hard to communicate with other students. I had an interpreter with me for my classes, but the class information was very hard. The interpreter helped me understand some, but not all. In my public school there were a ton of students! At NYSSD, about 50 students. I wish new students would come to our school, NYSSD. I really like learning ASL and I wish I had more skills with changing ASL to written English. My favorite subjects are math, English, and PE. I love math because it’s easy for me.



FAMILY:

"I love my mom and family. My mom understands sign language most of the time. Some other family members know some sign language, but not a lot. They want to learn sign language with me and I like teaching them sign language. When I am at a restaurant, I try to communicate to the server what I want to order by pointing, but sometimes my mom will talk to them to let them know. I am able to communicate with my mom most of the time. But my dad and I have a hard time and don't communicate because he doesn't know sign language. My brother can use a little sign language but communicating is hard for me. I wish I could teach my family more sign language. I want people to know, school is not near mom's house. It is still hard when I leave for school and then when I get back home. I miss my mom so much every day. I don't see her every day, but I always will see her every weekend. I want to live with my mom. I'm proud of myself, because I am fully deaf. To help me, my mom learned some sign language so she can communicate with me. My biggest role model is my mom because she is a good person. She always helps people at her work and she always helps me. She is smart at her job, she has a lot of experience working in a home for the elderly."

HEARING LOSS:

"I have a bilateral severe-profound hearing loss. I have a cochlear implant, but I really don't use it. I have a dizzy feeling sometimes when I wear it, and I don't like that feeling at all. I tried wearing it before, but I would feel dizzy. I do wish I could use it again without that feeling. I should try it again and have it turned down so the sounds are very quiet. I was 6 months old when my mom noticed. I don't remember using hearing aids. I had cochlear implant

I have already passed Regents in both math and English. I love to play in gym class with other students."

"My current elective is a cooking class. In cooking class, I learn how to cook and bake a variety of things. As part of my CTE program, I currently volunteer at Runnings. Runnings is a store that sells farm supplies and parts, livestock equipment, hunting and fishing equipment, small appliances, housewares, automotive goods, plumbing, electrical, apparel, hardware, lawn and garden supplies, paint, pet supplies, sporting goods and tools. I volunteer Monday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons for about two hours. At Runnings, I unpack new items from boxes and sort them. I help the staff check inventory. I organize the items on the floor by making sure everything in assigned departments is neat. I often organize the shoe department by putting the sizes in the right places and order. I love my volunteer job, it's easy for me. I will do well with a real-paying job."

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & AWARDS:

I play two sports: soccer and basketball. I also have participated on the Academic Bowl team and in Yearbook Club.

- 2013:** Most Improved Signing Skills Award
1st Quarter. Merit Roll
- 2014:** Academic Perseverance in Reading Merit Roll Award
1st, 2nd, & 3rd Quarter. Merit Roll
- 2015:** Academic Achievement in Math
Academic Perseverance in Reading Campus Company Award
Peter Savino PE Award
1st Quarter Honor Roll
3rd Quarter Merit Roll
- 2016:** Honor Roll
1st Quarter. Merit Roll
2nd & 3rd Quarter. Honor Roll

surgery when I was 2 years old. I like being deaf more than being a hearing person. I am proud of myself because I can sign clearly to communicate. I like being deaf!"

COMMUNICATIONS:

"I communicate using American Sign Language (ASL). I can use my voice a little with my mom, family and some friends. I wish I could communicate with my family better. They seem to love sign language but communicating with them is hard. Hearing people write notes to me or I teach them sign language. When talking to deaf people, I use sign language."

STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES:

"I feel communicating was hard with friends and teachers at my public school. Sports in public school were also hard because I am deaf and use sign language. It was hard to know what was happening around me. To overcome some communication challenges, I correspond by using the notes section on my phone. I also show people what I write and then they understand. At NYSSD, all my sports teammates are deaf, and we use different ways to communicate with each other during games and practices. I continue to encourage myself to focus on trying my best."

SUPPORT SERVICES:

"I used to have an interpreter while in public school. I needed an interpreter, because I am deaf and cannot hear what the teachers say. I also had a teacher who taught me ASL. That was important for me. I have always had speech and language therapy. When I transferred to NYSSD, the staff there signed, so I didn't need to use an interpreter."

ADVOCACY:

"In public school, I had an interpreter for all of my classes, except during lunch, and a few other times when not in class. That made it hard to have equal access for social times and growth. At NYSSD, I have equal access. In public school, teachers used to speak to me and because I am deaf, I couldn't understand them. They didn't sign and I couldn't hear in class, so I will give you an example for what I do when I don't understand. I always ask for them to say it again. I needed an interpreter. I try to be patient, but I do get frustrated sometimes. I wish everyone knew sign language!"

TECHNOLOGY:

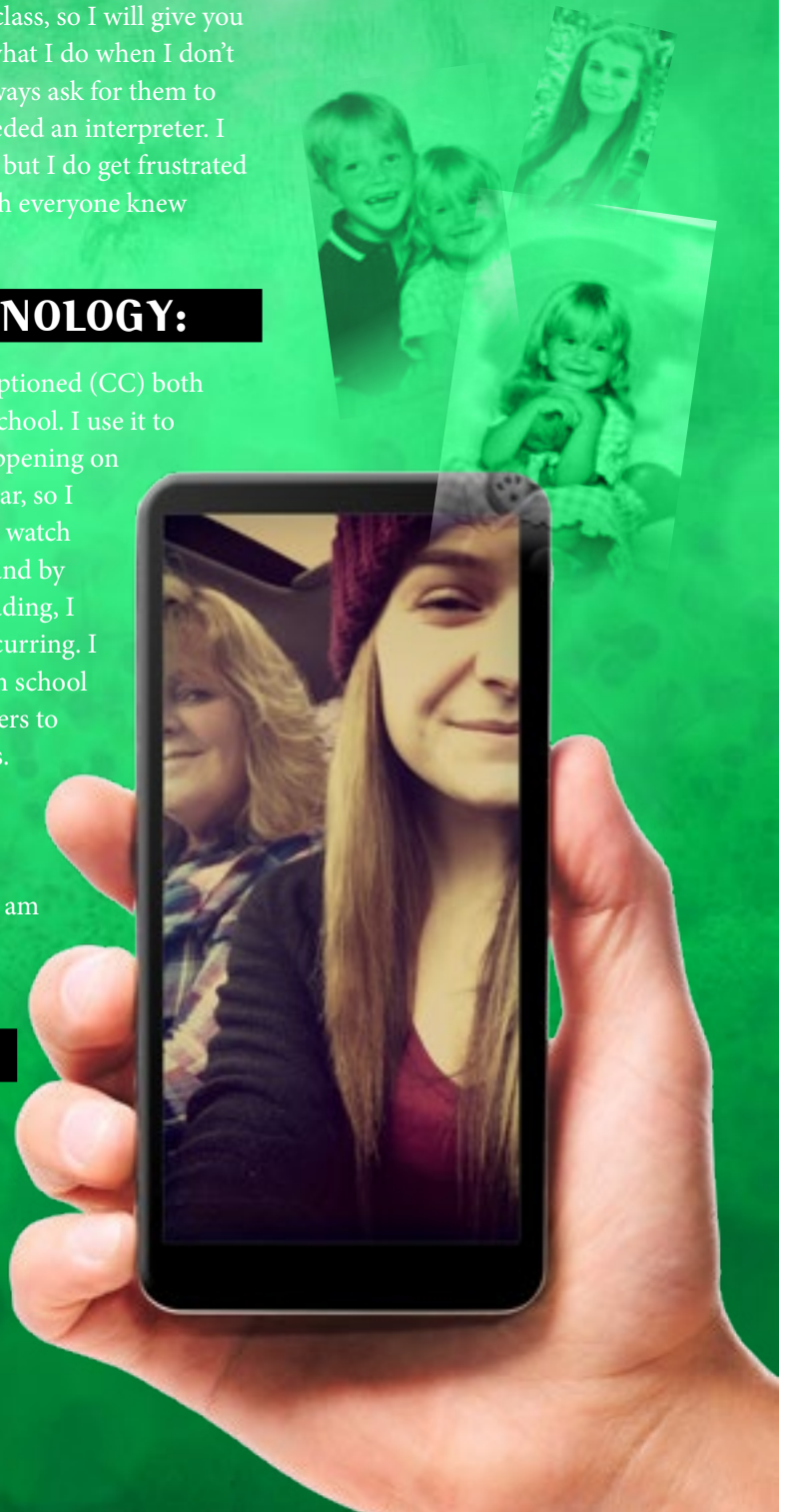
"I use Closed Captioned (CC) both at home and in school. I use it to know what is happening on the TV. I can't hear, so I read the words. I watch videos with CC and by watching and reading, I know what is occurring. I use technology in school by using computers to type assignments. I use my phone's typing feature to communicate with staff when I am volunteering at Runnings."

GOALS:

"My goal is to work at the shopping mall in Johnson City. I always love shopping for clothes. I want to live in the city with my mom."

ADVICE:

"I would suggest to learn sign language, even if you can hear with a hearing aid or cochlear implant. Sign language is fun and you can communicate with other people who are deaf! For families who have a child that is deaf, it is important for you to learn sign language too. If your child is learning sign language, learn with them!" ●



Lori E. Vandervoet

Lori lives with her family in an apartment building, in northern NY, called La Fargeville. La Fargeville is a small, rural town where there is not much to do. There used to be a river that ran through it, or by it, but the damn broke about a year ago.



Lori is originally from Canada. Lori moved to the U.S. around November of last year, 2016. She is from the Ontario area, a town called Gananoque. Gananoque has its own beach and park. They also have cannons from the War of 1812 and a boat museum. “Canada is beautiful. It has nice places to visit like Nova Scotia and Ontario.”

EDUCATION:

Lori attends La Fargeville Central School. She is a junior. It is a public, mainstream school. “I have always gone to a public, mainstream school, even when I lived in Canada. Classes here are short and the school day is long. My favorite class would have to be Mr. Seymour’s class. I receive the help I need there, and he is a fun teacher! I used to play soccer, but not anymore. If I could change one thing about my educational setting, it would be for it to be more like Canada. There we had more freedom. Classes were one hour long and we had hour long breaks. We could also go home for lunch. The classes had more hands-on

activities. I also wish there was someone in my school with hearing aids, like me, so we could be friends and get along. I use a sound field system, personal FM system, and my hearing aid at school. At home, I use my hearing aid.”

FAMILY:

“My mom and dad have done great at supporting me with regards to my hearing loss. My mom is good at repeating herself. I feel like I am able to communicate effectively with my immediate family.” Lori has 6 siblings; 5 brothers (Mike, Zane, Nick, Adam, Jacob) and 1 older sister (Georgia, in her 30s), 4



of her brothers are older than her (Mike, Zane, Nick, Jacob). Her little brother (Adam) is 15 years old and goes to the same high school as Lori. All of her siblings, except her younger brother, live back in Canada. Two of her brothers, and herself, are adopted. **Her family likes to do things together such as; taking road trips, rope climbing, going to movies, water parks and visiting zoos and museums together.** Lori's family plans on going back to Canada to visit, but it's hard right now, they are in the middle of transitioning between the U.S. and Canada. That involves a ton of paperwork and hassle getting all that information in order. It's been hard for the family not being able to visit one another.

HEARING LOSS:

"I have a unilateral, moderate to mild sensorineural hearing loss in my right ear. My hearing loss was detected at birth. I was first amplified with my hearing aid when I was about 5 years old. Currently, I have a purple behind the ear Oticon-Safari hearing aid. It has a dome, but I miss having an ear mold, because I could pick and change its color. **I use my hearing aid all of the time.** I don't use my FM system for lunch, and only use it sometimes for PE. I feel fine about my hearing loss. I would not change my hearing loss, but I would change needing glasses if I could."

COMMUNICATIONS:

"I am completely oral. I speak with everyone I talk to. I do lip-read a little. I did learn some sign language when I was in Canada, in 7th grade. I learned a little bit because there was a girl in my old school, in Canada, that used ASL. I have forgotten what I knew."

STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES:

"My biggest challenge is math. I don't think my hearing loss has had that much of an effect on it though. I've always had trouble with math. Distractions are also hard for me to ignore. If I hear something, it's tough to pay attention to the speaker. This has made sports kind of challenging for me here in La Fargeville. It's sometimes hard to hear people talk. It's also hard for me when there are a lot of people talking at once, to hear and to focus on what is going on and being said. Hearing a movie/ticket attendant, at the movie theater is also difficult for me. They are behind the glass and the speaker they talk into, makes their voice hard to understand."

SUPPORT SERVICES:

"In Canada, I had a Teacher of the Deaf and an audiologist, since the 3rd grade. I have both here now, in the U.S. It is important for me to have these services, because it gives me extra help and improves my hearing/learning skills. I do not like Closed Captions. They drive me crazy. I have my hearing aid that I wear all the time and a FM system that I use in school. These devices help me hear and help drown out the background noise."

ADVOCACY:

"I feel as if I have had "equal access" at school. Equal access to me is like being able to work on hands-on activities. I don't advocate for myself well - I am working on it. I'm shy. It is difficult for me to ask my teachers to use my FM system, but I have no problem just giving it to them. When I run out of batteries, I use the extras I carry with me. If I miss what a teacher or peer has said, I ask again. When I am in a social situation with peers, and I cannot hear very well, I ask people to be quiet."

GOALS:

"My goals after high school are to make videos games and go to college. I don't know where I would like to go to college, yet. I am currently working on a video game, I am drawing the characters."

ADVICE:

"The advice I would give to other students with a hearing loss and their families, is, they are not alone - there are others that know what it's like."

"I would like people to know I am nice, friendly, funny, and kind. I try to help others as much as I can. I love the show, *Criminal Minds*. I love playing all types of video games and long lunch breaks. Finally, I miss living in Canada. My hobbies include drawing, playing video games and talking to my friends in Canada (through Facebook, video chat on my phone, Skype, or Face Book messenger)." The quote that best sums up my personality would be **"Never give up."** ●



Kelly Burdick



Kelly Burdick, a working mom of two, resides in West Monroe, New York. Kelly lives with her husband and children, in a three-bedroom green house with a large front deck.

EDUCATION:

“I attended Oswego High School in Oswego New York from 1998-2001. This is a public mainstream school and at that time I was one of a very few deaf kids, who attended. There was approximately 1,100 students there at the time. My favorite subjects were Math and English. I liked math, because I didn’t have to remember as much, I just had to find the answers. English was enjoyable, because we were required to read and I’m an avid bookworm. I also liked the creative writing classes. I graduated with a regent’s diploma, because my Teacher of the Deaf, Stephanie Moretti would not let me have it any other way! She pushed me to get a regent’s diploma and I am now glad that she did.”

“The elective classes that I took in high school were: Computer Graphic Design and Advanced Computer Graphic Design. One of the things I would have changed about my educational

settings, would be to have had [C-Print](#) (Speech-to-Text Service). I really liked having access to C-Print when I got to college, because it helped fill in the gaps of what I may have missed. I also would have liked more exposure to skills that would have better prepared me for college life, living on my own, learning how to pay my bills, and learning how to budget.”

“In high school, I had to wear the loop, because I wanted to blend in with the other students. Looking back now, I don’t think the [loop](#) was a very effective listening technology at the time. I would have liked something more advanced, but also subtle. Right now, I wear the cochlear implant, and it was the best decision I ever made.”

“I graduated from RIT, with a Bachelor of Science Degree. I chose this college because it had a program for the deaf and already had all the necessary services that I would need for my classes. Also there were a lot of deaf students there that I wanted to become friends with, as I didn’t have any deaf friends to hang out with in high school, except on special deaf education trips. Nothing helped me to really prepare for college, except my TOD who taught me to keep track of my homework and when assignments were due. College was basically a huge life change for me. I would have liked more exposure to life skills.”

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & AWARDS:

"I was part of the technology club, which meant that we worked backstage for any shows that were done in the theatre. We ran the light board, spotlight, sound system, and moved items on and off the stage. At one point, I even got the chance to be the stage manager, which I found to be amazing, but incredibly involved in everything that was happening. I was so grateful to have an interrupter willing to work overtime in order to allow me to be part of the tech club. I also joined the yearbook club for one year and took tons of photographs. It was amazing to see my work featured in the yearbook in which thousands of students will keep as a memory for years to come. I have received honor roll and high honor roll recognition. I also received student of the month award."

FAMILY:

"Growing up, my mother was the only one who learned how to sign, although now, my husband signs somewhat. My middle sister knows some signs, but doesn't really sign, mostly because I can understand her verbally. My youngest sister and my father, never learned. I've had to adapt to my family in order to be able to communicate with them, which is why I got a Cochlear Implant. My daughter who is 3 years old has learned some basic sign language. She knows how to communicate with me when she wants to tell me something. She'll sign hungry, drink, more, or please. She loves to tell me when the oven is beeping. For the most part, she verbally communicates with me. My son is almost 1 years old, and I am currently trying to teach him how to sign milk. For the most part, I prefer to communicate with my family verbally."

HEARING LOSS:

"I have a bilateral severe-to-profound hearing loss. Although, now with the Cochlear Implant - my hearing is even worse when I do not wear my Cochlear Implant device on my right ear. I was 18 months old when my mother found that I had a hearing loss. She figured out that there was something wrong,

when I was sitting with my cousin who was two days younger. There was a loud noise that startled my cousin and caused him to start crying, while I was completely clueless to what was going on. I was fitted with a hearing device called, Phonic Ear box. It was placed on my back, so I could not play with it that age. I gradually changed to wearing hearing aids, and now I am currently wearing a Cochlear Implant."

"I hate being deaf. I have tried very hard to blend in, so no one notices that I am deaf, by trying to be more normal. I wish I could hear every sound and frequency of music when I listen. Although, I do like some the special perks that comes with being deaf like, getting front row seats when I go to a concert. But, I still hate being deaf, because I have to deal with missing out on conversations, or dealing with misunderstandings. I felt that I was being held back due to my disability."

COMMUNICATIONS:

"I communicate the best with Total Communication (TC), PSE and voice - PSE which stands for Pidgin Signed English which is a combination of ASL and English sign language. I prefer that people sign to me, but I won't sign to them, unless I know they are deaf. For the most part, I speak verbally to others in the community."

STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES:

"I have found that my disability acted as a barrier to getting what I want and I'd have to depend on other people to help me in order to achieve my goals. I also know that getting a job is difficult, because even though there is the ADA law, you can't really prove that they didn't hire you because of your disability. People often feel awkward about hiring a deaf person, because they often do not know how to interact with them. They are often uncertain that you are capable of doing the job position that they are seeking to hire for. I have found that most of the good jobs want you to be able to talk on the phone, so I had to figure out a way to be able to do my job on the phone. I was grateful to find out that I am able to speak for myself using the Purple Relay Program, so that clients/



customers never knew that there was an interrupter signing. People seem to be uncomfortable/uncertain dealing with that kind of stuff, so I am grateful for the [Purple Relay Program](#). I work for Counseling and Healing Arts of Oswego located in Fulton, NY as a Billing Manager and I am on the phone daily with the insurance companies.”

SUPPORT SERVICES:

“I had a TOD and an interpreter from elementary school to high school. Then when I got to college, I quickly found out all the available services that were provided at RIT. I found that I really liked having an interpreter, C-Print and a note taker. This allowed me to look down at my own notebook and not miss anything important. The C-Print was handy, because I could scroll back up and re-read information that I may have missed.”

TECHNOLOGY:

I have a strobe doorbell, it flashes whenever someone rings the doorbell, to let me know that someone is at the door. I also use a captioned phone, so if someone calls my house phone I am able to answer it, even though I prefer Purple VRS. I also use a Sonic Boom alarm clock to wake me up in the morning. The best part of this Sonic Boom alarm clock, is that it connects to a baby cry signaler, and wakes me up when my children are crying.”

“The first device I had was a Wyndell, which is similar to a pager, but was used for texting. It quickly accelerated to a Blackberry, then Sidekick, and finally to the iPhone. **I love my iPhone, because it really helps cross the barrier to the hearing world.** I am able to make phone calls on my iPhone using the Purple app. I am so glad that almost everyone prefers texting these days.”

ADVOCACY:

“I always look in advance to make sure that my needs are being met for classes or an event, because I want to know what is going on. I had already dealt with that frustration in the past so I learned my lesson. I usually carry several batteries with me, so when a battery dies, I will just tell the person to hold on, my battery has died, and switch batteries. If I missed something important, I will just ask someone about it. When I am in a social situation with peers, I do the best I can to lip-read and try follow the conversation, but usually I just limit it to one person instead of a group. I usually stand near a person that might be willing to fill in the gap. I find it tiring, and frustrating to keep up with a group, because there is just too much information that I am missing.



People usually assume, because you're wearing a hearing aid or a Cochlear Implant that means you can hear almost as well as they do.”

“I currently work for Counseling and [Healing Arts of Oswego](#) in Fulton as the billing manager. Some of the self-advocacy skills that I think are important is learning how to take care of yourself and making sure people know that you are just as capable as they are at doing your job. You will need to be able to prove yourself, that your disability won't hinder your ability to do your job in any way. When I first started looking for a job, people did not want to hire me because I was not able to talk on the phone, so I started looking for ways to be able to talk on the phone. I knew that I wanted to be able to speak for myself, so that people would talk with me and not shy away from me. People are usually afraid of what they do not understand and avoid it. I would definitely recommend getting an internship while you're in college, because this will help you get your foot in the door, and then you will be able to gain some much needed experience for your resume.”

ADVICE:

“When there's a will, there's a way. I was determined to be able to make phone calls and to be able to do my job. I did not want to work at a dead-end job. I didn't settle with the cards handed to me.”

“The advice that I have for high school students is listen to your TOD, they know what they're talking about. They are only trying to help you get ready for life past high school. Get your Regents Diploma and get all the help you can. As a deaf person, we need that leg up!” ●

Hearing Our Way:

A tool in the form of a magazine, to share with, kids and teens with hearing loss.

<http://www.hearingourway.com/>



Concentration Fatigue:

Many people don't realize how exhausting listening, concentrating, filling in gaps, guessing the subject, and deciphering body language, lip patterns and facial expressions, is." – Deaf adult

http://www.ndcs.org.uk/family_support/education_for_deaf_children/education_during_school_years/tiredness.html

<http://www.starkey.com/blog/2015/08/listening-fatigue-kids>

<http://www.yourhearingcenter.com/audiology-blog-hamilton-oh/do-you-have-hearing-loss-exhaustion/>



Latest Technology from Apple:

<http://www.cultofmac.com/407128/apple-wireless-earpods-hearing-aids/>



Mainstream News:

<http://www.clarkeschools.org/services/mainstreamnews>

TED Talks:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKKpjvPd6Xo&t=5s>

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=uKKpjvPd6Xo>

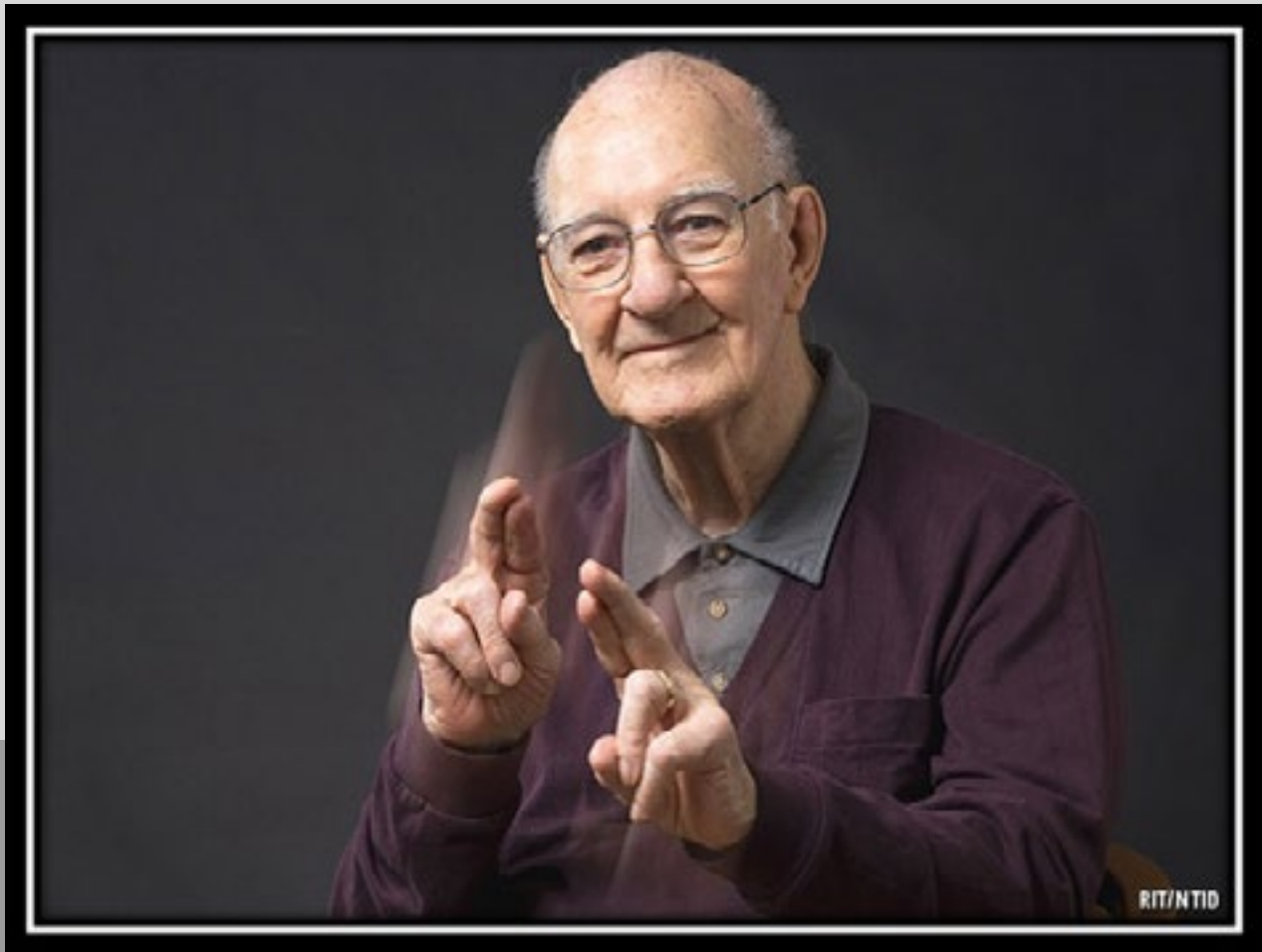


Connecting Deaf Teens:

<https://deafteens.org/>



Robert Panara Honored on U.S. Postage Stamp



Robert Panara, who was the first deaf faculty member at Rochester Institute of Technology's National Institute for the Deaf, knew no limits for what a deaf person could accomplish. Panara, who died in 2014 at age 94, joined the NTID faculty in 1967 and for two decades was an inspirational and innovative educator, as he had been previously at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C.

As a tribute to his achievements, Panara will be honored on a new U.S. postage stamp showing him signing the word "respect." It will be released on April 11, 2017.

<http://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2016/11/25/robert-panera-s-pioneer-n-deaf-eduction-will-be-on-stamp/94418266/>



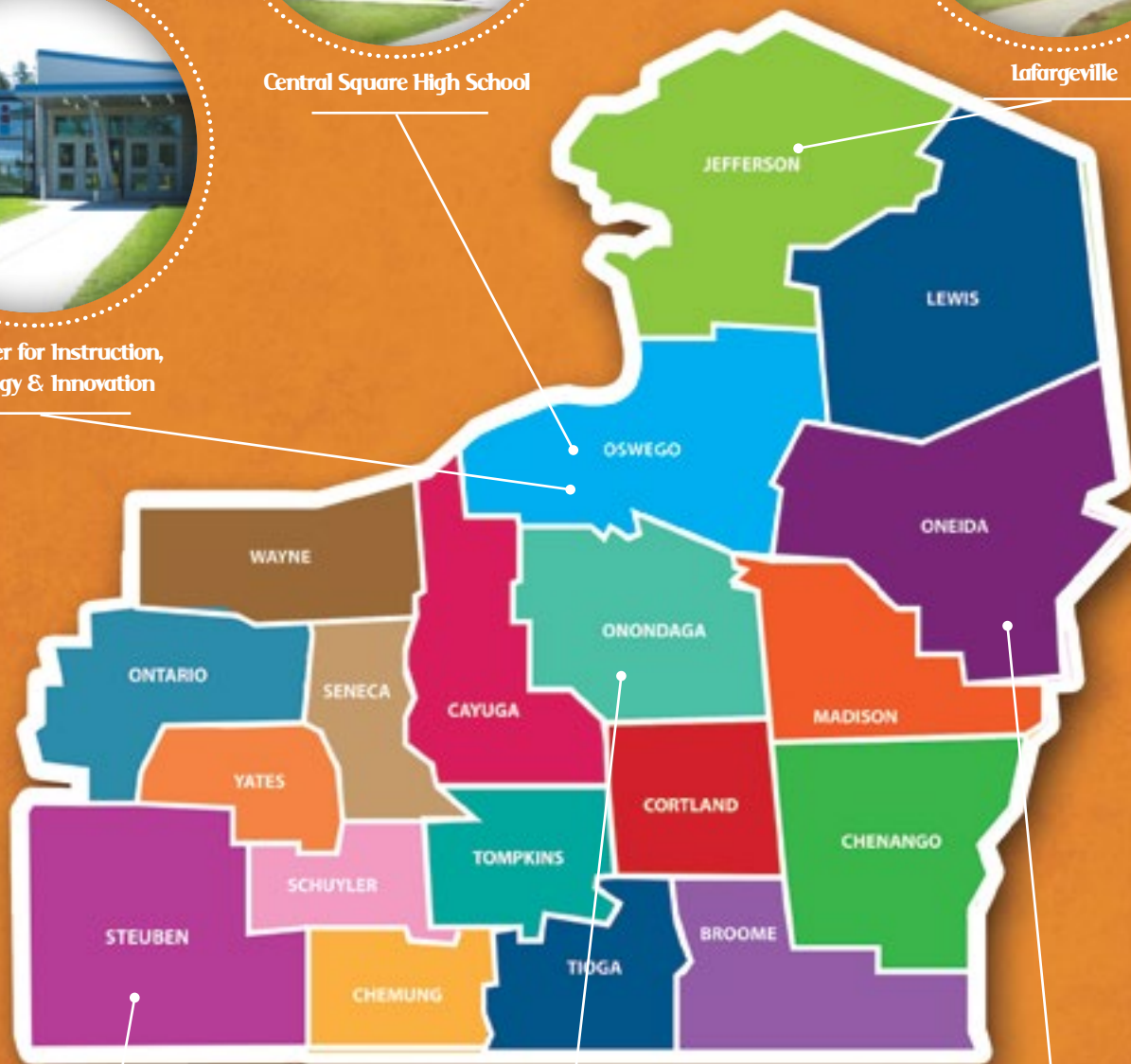
Central Square High School



Lafargeville



CTI: Center for Instruction,
Technology & Innovation



Hammondsport

Solvay

New York State School
For The Deaf

