Working with Students with Disabilities

(Chaffey College DPS currently serves approximately 1,900 students)

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing

If you have never interacted with a deaf or hard of hearing student, you may be unsure how to best communicate or what to expect. Here is some helpful information and tips that may be useful when working with a deaf or hard of hearing individual.

- All deaf/hard of hearing students are unique and may require different accommodations when working or communicating with them. They may or may not communicate through a sign language interpreter, communicate through a captionist, and or be skilled lip readers.
- American Sign Language (ASL): is a separate language from English with its own syntax and grammar. It takes the same amount of study to become fluent in ASL as it does to master a spoken language.
- The student in your area might be using sign language interpreters. Sign language interpreters help bridge the communication gap by listening in class and translating lectures and discussions into sign language. They also translate the student's signed communication into spoken English when the student needs to communicate with any Chaffey College staff.
- Interpreters cannot answer personal questions about the student, interject personal opinions, or assist a student with schoolwork. They are there strictly to translate what is being said. Address questions or comments regarding the deaf student directly to the student.
- When communicating with an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing speak directly to them and not to the interpreter. A common mistake is to say, "Tell her...." or "Ask him...." Instead, make eye contact with and speak directly to the deaf person as though the interpreter is not present. This shows the person respect and helps develop the student/staff relationship.
- It is important to expect the same from deaf/hard of hearing students as you do other any other students here at Chaffey College.

IMPORTANT: If you intend to show movies, slides, or video, be aware that media, in accordance with Federal Law, must be captioned or subtitled. If you have any questions or need any materials converted into accessible formats please contact Jason Schneck (Alt Media Specialist) @909-652-6393 or Jason.schneck@chaffey.edu.