

20:07:35 . And I was mainstreamed in public  
20:07:38 school.  
>> Recording in progress.  
>> Excuse me, guys, it  
20:07:42 looks like we are recording this. Okay.  
20:07:46  
I was raised with oral listening and spoken language. My  
20:07:49 family did not learn sign language and I was the only  
20:07:52 deaf person in my family. I became really  
20:07:55 good at face reading and lip reading  
20:08:00 and when I went to college, I made the decision  
20:08:04 to learn American Sign Language. And so after  
20:08:08 college, I wound up at Gallaudet University so that  
20:08:12 I could pursue a degree in audiology.  
20:08:16 And that was the first time in my life where I  
20:08:19 met a lot of other people that were kind of like me,  
20:08:22 that were deaf and hard of hearing. And I learned how  
20:08:25 to really get a little bit more proficient at sign language.  
20:08:29 So today I am a pediatric audiologist in  
20:08:32 northern Virginia and I now have a cochlear implant in  
20:08:35 one of my ears. I'm married and  
20:08:39 I have a 12-year-old son who has normal hearing  
20:08:42 . I joined the  
20:08:45 Virginia Hands and Voices in 2017 and  
20:08:49 I am what we call the communications manager for our team  
20:08:52 , which means I handle all of Facebook  
20:08:56 and Instagram. So that's a  
20:08:59 little bit about me. And I'm going to  
20:09:02 move on over to Gideon.  
20:09:08  
>> Hello, Jill. That's  
20:09:11 a great introduction here. And thank you for welcoming me.  
20:09:14 My name is Gideon. And my sign  
20:09:17 name is G on the forehead  
20:09:21 . I am deaf and I come from  
20:09:25 four generations of deaf family  
20:09:28 members on my mother's side. On my father's side, he was  
the  
20:09:31 only deaf of six children.  
20:09:34 He was the only one that was deaf  
20:09:38 . So while my father was being  
20:09:41 raised, he didn't really have any real communication.  
20:09:44 He had to depend on oral communication. He had -- really  
struggled  
20:09:50 . And he wasn't very successful with the oral method.  
20:09:53 He kept trying. He went to a deaf  
20:09:56 school  
20:10:00 in Fremont  
20:10:04 and that's where he began to identify  
20:10:07 as a deaf individual, learn the language, and

20:10:10 pick sign language up and that's how  
20:10:14 he began to identify within himself as a deaf  
20:10:18 individual. Now, he went there  
20:10:21 but I can tell you, for me, oral is not a  
20:10:25 way to go for me. I just couldn't work  
20:10:28 with hearing aides or anything. For me, I love sign  
20:10:32 language and being able to communicate that way. Now,  
20:10:35 I am one of four children.  
20:10:38 I'm the second child. My -- the  
20:10:42 first child and the fourth child in the family though are  
hearing  
20:10:46 . Let's see  
20:10:50 .  
I mean, we have been in  
20:10:53 , you know, all kinds of worlds, you know, with deafness  
20:10:56 , with spoken language. We've gone to Gallaudet  
20:10:59 . Have degrees in biology and  
20:11:03 a minor in theater.  
20:11:06 And I just enjoy so many different things  
20:11:13 . And health communication specialties, working in the  
20:11:16 lab.  
20:11:24 I was a Fulbright scholar. I got a  
20:11:27 Fulbright scholarship  
20:11:30 and I stayed in India for a month.  
20:11:33 And I just got back  
20:11:36 two months ago back to America. It was  
20:11:40 an amazing experience and in India I studied sign language  
20:11:43 there for a month  
20:11:47 .  
20:11:53  
There were many different people from many different backgrounds there  
20:11:57 and I'll talk about that  
20:12:00 a little more later. I am  
20:12:03 married to Colleen. We have been married for about two  
years  
20:12:06 now. She's a hearing interpreter and I really  
20:12:10 just love analyzing language, getting into different  
language  
20:12:13 s, different people,  
20:12:16 different walks of life, you know, learning how to  
20:12:19 understand each other. That's one of my passions.  
20:12:22 That's what I enjoy. So thank you, Jill, for having me  
here  
20:12:26 .  
>> Jill:  
20:12:29 Let's go on to Laura.  
>> Hi, I'm Laura.  
20:12:33 I was born deaf.  
20:12:36 Back in 1987 I started with sign language and  
20:12:40 then hearing aides didn't work for me so I switched over to

20:12:43 cochlear implant in  
20:12:47 1990 and so then my parents decided to learn  
20:12:50 how to cue and so I used that from  
20:12:53 , you know, three years old until  
20:12:57 now. And I also talk to --  
20:13:00 I use a trans ltra  
20:13:03 ter from preschool to the first year of  
20:13:07 high school and I stopped  
20:13:10 . Right now I use American Sign Language, cued speech  
20:13:13 and spoken English. In  
20:13:16 fact, my husband is deaf. I'm deaf, and my  
20:13:19 daughter is deaf. And I'm also expecting a second child  
20:13:23 who will also be deaf or hard of hearing.  
20:13:27 So at home we use ASL  
20:13:32 . Use cued speech and spoken language. However,  
20:13:35 I got my second cochlear implant in  
20:13:40 20,008th because back in the day it was only one. You  
couldn't get  
20:13:44 two at the same time. It worked well for me. However, I  
20:13:47 know like I said earlier, I use sign language  
20:13:50 for a while and I stopped  
20:13:53 when I got my first cochlear implant. Back in the day it  
was like you pick  
20:13:57 one and that was it. So I learned ASL in  
20:14:00 college because I wanted to work with deaf and  
20:14:03 hard of hearing children. So I became a teacher of the deaf  
20:14:08 . I did have burnout 12  
20:14:11 years. Now I'm a stay-at-home mom because my daughter needs  
a lot of support,  
20:14:15 like audiology appointments,  
20:14:18 speech therapy. And I'm sure y'all know this.  
20:14:21 And then of course with the second baby on the way  
20:14:24 I'm getting stuck doing this for a long time. So any way  
20:14:28 , it's nice to be here with you all.  
20:14:31 I'm going to turn it over to Riley  
20:14:34 .  
>> Thank you, Laura. Okay, Riley.

20:14:37 >> I'm Riley. I was born  
20:14:41 with a virus that left me with a progressive hearing loss  
20:14:44 . So for  
20:14:47 my first, six, seven years of life, I had  
20:14:51 hearing aides and I started using cued speech in preschool  
20:14:54 . And  
20:14:57 Still use cued speech to this day.  
20:15:01 By the time I was seven I lost all my hearing and then I got  
cochlear  
20:15:04 implants and I  
20:15:07 tried. And then I didn't get my  
20:15:11 second implant until I was in middle school but

unfortunately for me it didn't work out  
20:15:15 as well with my second implant. So I  
20:15:18 really only just wear  
20:15:21 one.  
20:15:26 And I sometimes wore FMs back then but  
20:15:29 I didn't really like them so I didn't wear them.  
20:15:33 Yeah.  
20:15:39  
>> Jill: Thank you, Riley  
20:15:42 .  
All right. Thank you guys for introducing yourself. I'm just going  
20:15:45 to go ahead and  
20:15:49 remind our participants that if they are here to go ahead  
and  
20:15:52 turn their cameras off and mute their microphones  
20:15:56 so that all we hear is just what's coming out of our  
20:15:59 panelist and my microphone.  
20:16:02 Okay, so if you have not muted your microphone, just go  
ahead and do that for me, please  
20:16:06 .  
All right.  
All right  
20:16:09 , it's time for our first discussion. So the first question  
20:16:12 we have this evening is tell us about where  
20:16:16 you went to school, which some of you already did  
20:16:19 , tell us about what accommodations you had to use in your  
20:16:22 school and tell us about a time when  
20:16:26 you or your parent had to advocate for you in  
20:16:29 the educational setting?  
20:16:34  
Does anybody want to tackle that first?  
20:16:40  
>> All right, Laura.  
>> I'll go ahead.  
20:16:43 I don't know if I said this earlier, probably didn't. I  
grew up in Maryland near lockville.  
20:16:47 So I started in the deaf and hard of  
20:16:50 hearing program in elementary school, actually preschool and  
20:16:54 then, you know, from that  
20:16:57 time from preschool to elementary I was in the program, but  
20:17:01 I think about second grade I was mainstreamed with some  
support  
20:17:04 with the deaf and hard of hearing teachers on site and then  
20:17:07 middle school and high school I went to my neighborhood  
20:17:11 school and I had a cued  
20:17:14 speech trans late  
20:17:17 ater. I had you I  
20:17:20 EP all the way because I had support  
20:17:23 and an SOP.  
20:17:28 I use a lot of accommodations, like sitting up clough close

to the  
20:17:31 teacher, asking for help, try to remember,  
20:17:34 it's been so long. I don't know. It's been a long, long  
time  
20:17:38 . But using closed captioning, but back  
20:17:42 in the day as you know many of these were not captioned  
until  
20:17:45 very recently. And my parents always had to advocate for  
me,  
20:17:49 especially when I was younger because  
20:17:52 I was the first child who had a cochlear implant where I  
grew  
20:17:56 up in my system  
20:18:01 where my parents didn't have to accommodate for all of my  
accommodation  
20:18:06 . Ring back then they tried to tell my mom, oh, no, she  
can't go into  
20:18:09 the main stream. She needs to stay  
20:18:13 in the program. And she's like no, she's ready. So  
20:18:16 that was at time when she advocated. I know  
20:18:19 when I got older, probably middle school, even  
20:18:22 fifth grade, I started advocating for myself.  
20:18:25 Asking for more main stream classes  
20:18:29 . Reducing time with the teacher of  
20:18:32 the deaf. And the SOPs. So really  
20:18:35 they were always there to advocate  
20:18:39 but I'm glad I learned how to advocate for myself  
20:18:42 at that time.  
20:18:51  
>> Gideon:  
20:18:56 So that question, it's very interesting for me  
20:19:01 because I never really had to ask for advocacy  
20:19:05 or really kind of extra accommodation  
20:19:08 s, like tempters and that kind of thing  
20:19:11 because I went to a school for the deaf.  
20:19:14 So I grew up in California and later moved to Maryland and  
20:19:17 I did attend both deaf schools in both  
20:19:21 states and I have full access to sign language  
20:19:24 in my environments growing up so I never really thought of  
myself  
20:19:27 as different or deaf because I was around everybody  
20:19:31 else looked the same as me: I know my brothers could speak  
and there were other people  
20:19:34 who spoke but really for  
20:19:38 me I never really  
20:19:42 thought like focusing on language development or social  
20:19:45 sation or vocational rehabilitation, that kind of exposure  
20:19:48 , like and all the casting that deaf  
20:19:52 people have to go through when I was growing up because I  
wasn't in

20:19:55 an environment and I used sign language.  
20:19:58 I had access to everything around me. And I did take  
American  
20:20:02 Sign Language classes. Let me go back a little bit.  
20:20:05 So I am a native signor,  
20:20:08 meaning that I have been signing from the time that I was  
born.  
20:20:12 I never really had to learn the language formally until I  
was like in middle school  
20:20:15 . And then we started learning grammar and that kind of  
thing and start  
20:20:18 ed learning more about the structure  
20:20:21 of the language, syntax.  
20:20:25 Like pronouns and the rhythm of a sentence and that  
20:20:28 I understood casino of thing and how that  
20:20:31 maps on to the physical language  
20:20:36 but I have always been signing my whole life. Definitely  
20:20:39 been a self advocate. Particularly an IEP meetings when  
they're always  
20:20:43 talking with my parents about the kinds  
20:20:46 of things I might have been struggling with at school, et  
cetera,  
20:20:49 and my parents would talk with the teachers and  
20:20:52 IEP coordinator and  
20:20:56 they would all try their best, you know, to make  
20:21:00 sure I had the proper things I needed at school but I  
20:21:03 never really  
20:21:08 -- it was never really a priority or big issue  
20:21:11 that I had to struggle with advocacy. Because I was really  
20:21:14 blessed to be in that kind of environment  
20:21:18 . And I did use interpreters later on during my education  
once  
20:21:21 I was done with my primary schooling  
20:21:24 for doctors appointments, those kinds of things  
20:21:27 when I would have appointments with different professionals,  
I would request interpreters for  
20:21:31 those. And it was a  
20:21:34 learning process for that.  
20:21:37 I had an internship where I had to work with an  
20:21:40 interpreter and that's how I communicated primarily  
20:21:44 , but growing up I never really thought of myself  
20:21:47 as someone who needed to do self advocacy really until  
20:21:51 I was in the professional world and that's where I really  
start  
20:21:54 ed to understand, but I never missed anything growing up.  
20:21:58 I was good because of my background and I trusted that  
20:22:02 I was getting what I needed but every once in  
20:22:05 a while, like later on I would need an interpreter or I  
might need like  
20:22:08 more explanation of

20:22:12 language gestures, that kind of thing, but that's my story  
20:22:16 .  
20:22:21  
>> Riley: So I went to elementary  
20:22:24 school which had the  
20:22:28 program here in Fairfax county. I started there pit time  
20:22:31 I was two years old and I learned how to cue.  
20:22:36 And I was mainstreamed and  
20:22:39 sometimes I would get pulled out for certain subjects, like  
math  
20:22:42 or language arts, but for the most part I was in the  
20:22:47 main stream with a CLT with me every day and I  
20:22:51 learned through like my -- the teachers I  
20:22:54 had how to advocate for myself, they would  
20:22:57 give me the microphone and have me passion  
20:23:00 it on to the other teacher and have me do  
20:23:04 small groups or just through projects, we would go out  
20:23:07 in the hall with my group, my partner and we would work in  
20:23:10 the hall or in another  
20:23:13 room I would have my microphone with me.  
20:23:17 So they really taught me from a young age how to start  
advocating for myself  
20:23:20 and to recognize what works best for me and to  
20:23:23 understand when am I hearing things and when  
20:23:27 am I not hearing things. So that was a really big piece for  
me was to  
20:23:31 understand koi hear my group better if I was  
20:23:34 in the classroom or in the hall? Which way worked best  
20:23:37 for me? So I started really young  
20:23:42 with advocating  
20:23:49 but the biggest advocacy for me was get  
20:23:52 ting to know that I can speak up for myself and making sure  
I'm  
20:23:56 heard and I remember when I was in middle school  
20:24:01 , it was hard because I had to wake up at  
20:24:04 at 5:30 to go to middle school. It was an hour bus ride.  
And  
20:24:08 in eighth grade I wanted to go to my base school  
20:24:10 for high school. And my mom was like all for  
20:24:15 it but I was the one, she wanted me to tell the IE  
20:24:18 P team  
20:24:21 that I wanted to go to my base school and  
20:24:25 that I could handle it and that I was ready and that was a  
big step for me to do that  
20:24:28 and I remember that. It was very intimidating  
20:24:32 meeting but I get it. And  
20:24:35 so that was big.  
20:24:43 And accommodations I've used like other accommodations when  
I was in  
20:24:47 college it always varied depending

20:24:50 on the classroom that I was in and situations I was in  
20:24:54 and they were always really accommodating  
20:24:57 . I would have a COT virtually  
20:25:00 . I would have a note taker.  
20:25:05 Testing centers and all that. It just always depended  
20:25:08 where I needed and when.  
20:25:15  
>> Jill: I wanted to add just a little story here because Riley  
20:25:18 , you made me think about this, that  
20:25:22 I remember when I was in elementary school  
20:25:25 and I would get pulled  
20:25:28 out of classes to go see the therapist  
20:25:32 s and it was a person that would  
20:25:36 work with me on my listening skills and  
20:25:40 I remember they would pull me  
20:25:43 out of my classes.  
20:25:47 It was always my favorite subjects that they pulled me out  
of.  
20:25:50 And I just remember being pulled out of  
20:25:53 PE and art. I mean, those were the  
20:25:56 best subjects in school and so  
20:25:59 I remember complaining to my mom that this  
20:26:03 school was pulling me out for the best subject, even  
20:26:06 though it was probably the most convenient time to pull me  
out.  
20:26:09 It was also my favorite part  
20:26:13 of the day. And I remember just getting really upset  
20:26:16 that that was happening and was missing out on all the  
20:26:19 fun. So my mom had to advocate for me and go to  
20:26:22 the school and tell them to stop doing  
20:26:25 that.  
20:26:29 So that stuck with me a lot. Kind of funny. I wanted  
20:26:32 to be pulled out for my least favorite subject, like, you  
know,  
20:26:35 math and reading and science and  
20:26:39 so any way, that was just kind of funny.  
20:26:42 All right, let's go to the second question here  
20:26:46 .  
All right.  
20:26:49 How can parents help empower their deaf or hard of  
20:26:52 hearing child? Either socially, emotionally, and education  
20:26:57 ally.  
So we may have answered some of this  
20:27:00 already, but did you guys have anything that you wanted to  
add for that particular question  
20:27:04 ?  
20:27:09  
>> Gideon:  
20:27:14 I would like to  
20:27:20 emphasize something about my father. He is is the reason



why I

20:27:23 am today. I am so grateful for my parents. They gave me  
language

20:27:26 and I never experienced any kind of language deprivation

20:27:29 deprivation or interruption at home. I always was

20:27:32 included. And I was never

20:27:35 left out or dismissed.

20:27:39 I was just a regular kid in my family and my mother

20:27:43 as well. She was a big advocate for the deaf

20:27:47 community

20:27:51 . So like she was in

20:27:55 deaf president now back in 1998.

20:27:58 One of the four student leaders at that time and so

20:28:01 I've left side looked up to my mother as an activist

20:28:05 as someone you know who's like a rule breaker and a

visionary

20:28:09 and who's leading deaf people and

20:28:12 , you know, she was always having to work under someone

20:28:16 and never really recognized as a leader and she

20:28:19 had to breakthrough all that, you know, and make people see  
her

20:28:22 as a deaf person and she showed me that

20:28:26 as well for me that you have to make people

20:28:29 look at you. And that

20:28:32 kind of attitude was very impactful for

20:28:36 me in that kind of mind-set or

20:28:40 I don't want to just be stuck sitting oh I'm deaf

20:28:43 , I can't do anything

20:28:46 instead I don't want to sit around feeling sorry for myself  
that

20:28:50 I can't hear. There was so many different beautiful aspects  
of life beyond

20:28:54 hearing, both senses,

20:28:57 my parents gave that to me and my father he taught me

20:29:01 to enjoy what I do have,

20:29:04 because my father, it was not easy for him during

20:29:07 his life. And there were so

20:29:11 many things that we were blessed to have, like access and  
that kind of thing and

20:29:14 I know that my parents wished that they had

20:29:17 that but they're a big

20:29:20 driving force for me and I'm so grateful for the two of

20:29:24 them.

>> So just to add

20:29:28 on what Gideon was saying, you know

20:29:31 , I mean, your position now since I'm a

20:29:35 mom, a deaf daughter and soon to be son

20:29:38 who is also deaf or hard of hearing, really what's

20:29:41 important is the communication.

20:29:45 Whatever communication you use, make sure

20:29:48 they're included and --  
>> Yes.

20:29:51 >> Laura: Just making sure they know their identity in supporting them with  
20:29:55 whatever they decide to do, whether  
20:29:58 if they use nothing, cochlear implants  
20:30:02 hearing aides, ASL, cued speech, spoken  
20:30:05 language, doesn't matter. I mean, right now what I'm seeing  
20:30:08 with my two-year-old daughter, she'll be  
20:30:12 two years next week, I'm seeing she really thrives with  
spoken language paired with  
20:30:15 sign language. You know, we  
20:30:19 use both at home back and forth with some cue  
20:30:22 ing support but like I said, it's really important to make  
sure your  
20:30:27 child is a part of the conversation  
20:30:30 , you know, by providing the  
20:30:33 communication with whatever they prefer.  
20:30:36 Because it is really about the child.  
20:30:40 And I'm sure as you know, as I mentioned that I used  
20:30:43 to be a teacher of the deaf and my thing was  
20:30:46 my students was what works for them and that's important  
20:30:50 .  
20:30:58  
>> Raily: So my mom was the only one that actual  
20:31:00 ly learned how to cue and  
20:31:03 she's honestly my bestfriend because of she  
20:31:06 -- her ability to communicate with me had always meant so  
20:31:10 much to me. Sometimes it would be very hard for me  
20:31:14 and big family environments  
20:31:17 to feel like I'm a part  
20:31:21 of the family. So I would encourage families to  
20:31:24 just encourage their siblings to learn how  
20:31:28 to cue, sign, or if they're just oral  
20:31:31 to include them and make sure that they're a part of the  
20:31:34 conversation and understand what's happening around them  
because it can hard  
20:31:38 to know that like when  
20:31:41 I was younger I didn't necessarily understand and know  
20:31:44 that I was missing information and I didn't know how to  
verbalize  
20:31:48 it when I was younger. It wasn't until later  
20:31:52 when I was in high school did I really -- was I able  
20:31:56 to advocate that side of myself to express those  
20:32:00 needs to my family because I didn't realize it  
20:32:03 before. I didn't realize that's what was miss  
20:32:07 ing. So just keep your eyes and ears out  
20:32:10 for any lost gaps of information  
20:32:14 , in communication and family, dinner tables or whatever,

20:32:17 just make sure your child is included and that  
20:32:20 itself means a lot.  
20:32:26  
>> I had a couple of thoughts here that I wanted to mention  
20:32:29 --  
>> Gideon.  
>> Jill: Oh, sorry  
20:32:33 , does Gideon want to talk? Hold on.

20:32:36 >> Gideon: Yes. I also wanted to add a comment as well.  
20:32:39 Speaking to all the parents.  
20:32:44 I mean, you might have very young children or you might  
20:32:47 have older children. It doesn't really matter their  
20:32:50 ages. I'm just letting you know that  
20:32:55 it's what's important, what you must always,  
20:32:58 always include your children.  
20:33:01 It doesn't matter the communication method or  
20:33:04 style. It's your  
20:33:08 heart, your children need to be able to see  
20:33:11 your heart clearly through you. They need to be able to  
20:33:14 communicate with you. It's so important for their  
20:33:17 future lives and  
20:33:21 you want you want to make sure that your children see the  
effort that you're making  
20:33:27 . You know, sit with them as a family and friends if  
20:33:30 you're all talking, make sure your child  
20:33:33 's just not sitting at the table going hey what's being said,  
20:33:36 what's going on, feeling left out.  
20:33:39 It's a parent's responsibility to make sure that you let  
the other  
20:33:43 person say hold on a second and explain to your  
20:33:46 child what's being communicated, what's being said. Give  
them the opportunity  
20:33:50 to ask questions as well to make sure that  
20:33:53 they can be involved with you and to know  
20:33:57 that they have this clear connection that they are your  
20:34:00 child. Er. They can see it in your eyes.  
20:34:04 That's what's so important, that they can connect  
20:34:08 with you.  
20:34:12

>> Jill: Thank you for that. Gideon, you actually  
20:34:15 said exactly what I was going to say  
20:34:18 just a few minutes ago. So I'm glad you said it  
20:34:22 . Because I think parents  
20:34:26 , especially hearing parents that have a deaf or hard of  
hearing child need  
20:34:29 to remember that nobody  
20:34:32 really wants to build it, right?  
20:34:36 So it's really important as a parent that you just be  
20:34:40 really conscience of that. Like Gideon said if you're at a

table

20:34:43 and there's people talking, find a with a I to include your child, even your

20:34:46 kindergartner can participate, you know,

20:34:50 in the conversation. But you've got to be there to help them. And that

20:34:54 means using the language

20:34:57 or the communication method that that child has picked

20:35:00 or that family has picked.

20:35:04 That also means making sure that

20:35:08 you, you know, get everybody's attention and your child has a chance

20:35:11 to look at the person talking and realize who's talking

20:35:15 and yes, it does slow the pace down a

20:35:18 little bit but it's worth it in the long run. You've got

20:35:22 to make sure that you turn down the background

20:35:25 noise and you slow your speech down just a

20:35:28 little bit and that you just look at each other.

20:35:31 And these are things that are just really going to help

20:35:35 make environments comfortable for kids that are deaf and hard of hearing and

20:35:39 if you as a parent are just automatically doing that and everybody's

20:35:42 doing it, then it's just going to be a comfortable environment

20:35:45 to be in. So I think it's really

20:35:49 important as parents you just create a safe

20:35:52 place for your child to be, okay

20:35:56 ?

Anything else?

20:36:02

Let's go to another one. Okay, let's see here. Looking

20:36:05 at the time.

Okay, tell us about jobs that you had while

20:36:08 growing up, accommodations

20:36:11 that were needed and the ways that you made deaf and

20:36:15 hard of hearing

20:36:23 .

>> Laura: This is kind of funny because growing

20:36:26 up, you know, I did a bunch

20:36:29 of little jobs. I started babysitting when

20:36:33 I was

20:36:36 13, but in high school I went through this whole

20:36:39 identity, I don't know what you call it, like shift was

20:36:42 like I'm not deaf, I'm not, you know, signing. I'm

20:36:45 not cueing or whatever. So I became

20:36:49 a waitress for two years.

20:36:52 I loved it.

20:36:55 Really I didn't use any accommodations other than having

20:36:58 the -- what do you call it? Clients or customers

20:37:01 point out what they wanted where  
20:37:04 I would repeat their order back to them.  
20:37:08 I also worked in real estate for  
20:37:11 a little bit. Again, you know, I would ask people to repeat  
themselves  
20:37:14 when needed.  
20:37:18 And then my -- after college in grad  
20:37:22 school I became a teacher.  
20:37:24 So I had a COP or ASL interpreter.  
20:37:28 For meetings and whatnot. Other than that, that's  
20:37:31 how I functioned and really  
20:37:36 I didn't meet a lot of new deaf and hard of hearing friends  
20:37:39 until college. When I learned  
20:37:42 sign language and got involved in the deaf community. So  
it's kind of funny because  
20:37:46 I'm married to somebody who's deaf so  
20:37:50 it's a funny shift growing up deaf, not  
20:37:53 being really involved in the deaf community and then  
20:37:57 as an adult, here I am.  
20:38:03  
>> Riley: So for me  
20:38:07 , I'm currently a teacher  
20:38:10 and I  
20:38:13 didn't have any jobs before this. I worked in day cares and  
stuff like that but  
20:38:17 I didn't really need accommodations. I was just working  
with babies and  
20:38:20 watching them in their sleep and feeding them when they were  
hungry  
20:38:26 , changing their diapers. When there were times  
20:38:30 weren't much that required accommodations for that.  
20:38:34 But accommodations for -- I started teaching, my first year  
of teaching was during  
20:38:39 COVID  
20:38:42 first year. That was extremely challenging,  
20:38:45 especially since all my students on my  
20:38:48 caseload has speech impediments  
20:38:51 . So not only were we like virtual  
20:38:55 , they had speech impediments so I had a hard time reading  
their  
20:38:59 lips and understanding what their needs were  
20:39:02 and trying to gather data for the reading  
20:39:05 goals was really, really hard because I couldn't understand  
what  
20:39:09 they were saying, let alone understand what they were  
reading  
20:39:13 . So I was trying really hard to figure out ways  
20:39:16 to accommodate  
20:39:20 my needs and I did the best I could with closed captioning  
and the computer and stuff

20:39:23 like that  
20:39:27 but -- so that was my first year of teaching.  
20:39:30 And then I actually took a step back from teaching to  
become an  
20:39:34 instructional assistant while I went back to grad school to  
become  
20:39:37 a deaf Ed teacher. Before  
20:39:40 the pandemic I didn't think I was going to become a deaf E  
20:39:43 d teacher. It wasn't until the pandemic hit that  
20:39:46 I realized, oh,  
20:39:50 maybe I should go into deaf education. Maybe I should just  
go work with other  
20:39:53 kids who are like me  
20:39:57 and I could teach them better access to accommodations that  
work for me and  
20:40:00 for the other students and so that's what I'm doing  
20:40:03 now. I work with  
20:40:07 their DHHP school, camla elementary school and  
20:40:10 it has been a game-changer in my life because I didn't real  
20:40:13 ize how much I was missing. I didn't realize  
20:40:17 how much harder I had to work without the accommodation  
20:40:20 s and how much I was compensate  
20:40:23 ing until I went to work at a school  
20:40:27 where I didn't have to work as hard, where everyone just  
understood that, oh, it's  
20:40:31 just I couldn't hear that. It's fine. I'll just repeat  
that again  
20:40:34 . Or they could just  
20:40:38 cue it for me. That was just a huge game-changer for me.  
20:40:41 And now I'm actually looking forward  
20:40:45 to the future opportunities to working in other schools and  
hopefully  
20:40:50 like bust being in the same  
20:40:53 environment for other kids like me.  
20:40:56 So the best thing about this job is just watching other  
20:41:00 kids who were like me and just watching  
20:41:03 them grow and developed the same schools  
20:41:06 that I did. I'm still actual  
20:41:09 ly in touch with a lot of my friends from grade  
20:41:12 school who are also deaf so I still have  
20:41:15 some connections from that too.  
20:41:26  
>> Gideon:  
20:41:36 I've had a lot of experiences here. My first experience  
with working  
20:41:41 , I was an intern in high school  
20:41:45 and it was a biology lab internship  
20:41:49 . They were all hearing and I was the only one signing  
20:41:53 . I mean, I didn't speak. I had to write back and forth for  
my

20:41:56 internship so  
20:42:01 I had the right to communicate about with them.  
20:42:04 They would speak and I would have to say, please,  
20:42:07 could you write it down for me.  
20:42:10 I had to build a relationship with them. My boss,  
20:42:14 my supervisor.  
20:42:18 It was going okay but it was slow going.  
20:42:21 It wasn't really my best experience  
20:42:27 . So I asked if I could have an interpreter moving  
20:42:30 forward  
20:42:35 if we could sign.  
20:42:42  
Oh, I'm asking the interpreter if you can follow me  
20:42:46 .  
THE INTERPRETER: Yeah.  
>> Gideon:  
20:42:49 I'm just checking. Okay.  
Any way,  
20:42:52 I went to Gallaudet University  
20:42:57 health communication class.  
20:43:04 It was really -- school was really overwhelming, the  
20:43:08 education and everything, the terminology, the  
20:43:11 science, all of that  
20:43:16 and I hadn't had full access to all of that  
20:43:19 until I'd gotten into the university and  
20:43:23 I had the interpreter there and  
20:43:26 wow, once they brought in the interpreter, it became like my  
bestfriend  
20:43:29 having the interpreter there. There was so much  
20:43:33 more access and communication for me and then  
20:43:39 also  
20:43:42 with the interpreter I was able to learn how to communicate  
with the interpret  
20:43:45 ers and how to  
20:43:49 navigate my way through the different challenges with the  
interpreter and the  
20:43:52 interpreter was able to help me a lot with  
20:43:55 those challenge  
20:43:58 that is arose. Then I became a Fulbright  
20:44:02 circular and I moved to India  
20:44:05 . Mywife  
20:44:09 was my dependent. So she went with  
20:44:12 me and, you know, asked if we  
20:44:15 needed accommodations for -- as a deaf person if  
20:44:18 she'd be the interpreter for it  
20:44:22 but she'd had no plan for that. My wife is a  
20:44:25 professional interpreter so I decided,  
20:44:28 well, could I have my wife be there as the interpreter? And  
20:44:31 they were like sure.  
20:44:35 So was able to give her a stipend that would help cover for

her  
20:44:39 as well as she interpreted and so when  
20:44:43 we had professional meetings, interviews with hearing  
people, my wife could  
20:44:46 interpret for me perfectly and that was just a really great  
20:44:49 experience and I was able to communicate  
20:44:53 with deaf Indians there and I learned  
20:44:57 Indian sign language. I was able to learn that  
20:45:00 and to use the  
20:45:04 ability to be able to take them, them to accommodate me  
20:45:07 and to be able to communicate and to navigate  
20:45:10 our way through using language and gestures  
20:45:13 , written notes, texting.  
20:45:17 So you know, now that I'm work  
20:45:20 ing with hearing people  
20:45:26 in the state of New York -- let's see, Maryland -- let's  
see, some  
20:45:29 of the different areas, but like Virginia has  
20:45:33 as well but some companies, you know, it's been a long time  
20:45:37 where hearing and deaf people, they don't -- hearing  
20:45:40 people have not even met deaf people until  
20:45:44 they met me, right? And then the communication app, so it  
becomes really  
20:45:48 interesting. Like I'll have an app on my  
20:45:51 phone that I can use very quickly to be able to communicate,  
to put things  
20:45:55 down. I might have them speak into the microphone.  
20:45:59 It will translate it so then  
20:46:02 I can read it. So I would speak it. They would speak into  
it.  
20:46:06 I could read it and then I could communicate back  
20:46:10 . So having this opportunity with like hands-on jobs  
20:46:13 and things has been really great  
20:46:16 but there's been a lot that I have been able to do  
20:46:21 .  
20:46:25  
>> Jill: Thank you guys for answering that.  
20:46:28 I think I'm going to go ahead and move on to the fourth  
question because we only have  
20:46:31 about 15 minutes left, okay? So the fourth question  
20:46:35 is  
20:46:38 what advice or words of wisdom  
20:46:42 do you have for parents of young deaf and  
20:46:45 hard of hearing children today?  
20:46:51  
>> Laura:  
20:46:55 Really it makes being a teacher of a  
20:46:59 deaf and now a mom of a deaf  
20:47:02 daughter, first of all, you know your children  
20:47:05 best. And look



20:47:09 ing at deaf education in general, I'm sure you all know this  
20:47:13 . Different programs and  
20:47:16 whatnot and I highly --  
20:47:19 well, strongly recommend that you fight for what  
20:47:22 your child needs because every deaf and  
20:47:26 hard of hearing child is different. Whether they use AS  
20:47:30 L, cued speech and spoken language or  
20:47:33 all the way, it doesn't matter and  
20:47:36 , you know, making sure your child's a part  
20:47:40 of the family, you know, with whatever communication  
20:47:43 modality they prefer. I wish my  
20:47:46 family did that. So again  
20:47:49 , you know your children best, advocate  
20:47:53 , don't be afraid to say no, that doesn't work for  
20:47:56 my child. We need this for him or her to be successful  
20:48:01 .  
20:48:08  
>> Riley: I also agree with much of what she  
20:48:11 said. I think for me I would also just really  
20:48:14 encourage the communication and  
20:48:19 whatever modality you choose, if it's cued speech or sign  
language  
20:48:22 , have your whole family learn how to sign, the siblings  
20:48:27 , the parents, grandparents even, like encourage them to  
learn  
20:48:30 how to cue or sign. And  
20:48:33 if you just like if that's what you choose  
20:48:36 , have the whole family participate  
20:48:40 . That makes a difference  
20:48:43 . And  
20:48:46 advocate, you know? Just advocate for your child and teach  
20:48:49 them how to advocate because you know your child best  
20:48:53 and they're the ones that are going to need  
20:48:57 you  
20:49:01 so just advocate and don't be afraid to ask your child what  
do you  
20:49:04 -- what do they need?  
20:49:08 Maybe they know, maybe they don't but that's when you can  
work it out  
20:49:12 together. My mom sometimes would ask me how can we  
20:49:15 help -- how can I help you? How can we  
20:49:18 figure something out? If I didn't know the  
20:49:21 answer to that she would be like that's okay, we can just  
try to figure something out together  
20:49:24 . So it's okay to not have the answers  
20:49:28 to everything and  
20:49:31 it's okay for your child not to know everything either.  
20:49:35 That's when you can work it out together and figure out  
what works best for your  
20:49:38 child because deafness affects

20:49:41 each person individually  
20:49:44 differently  
20:49:47 . Not one hearing loss is the same and how it affects you,  
the  
20:49:51 family, the child is different. So everyone's experience  
20:49:56 is going to be different. Just have to  
20:49:59 go with the journey and  
20:50:02 just keep grow  
20:50:05 ing.  
20:50:12

>>

>> THE INTERPRETER: Jill,

20:50:15

>> Gid one: Jill,

20:50:18 do you mind repeating the question? I think I missed it.

20:50:22 This is Gideon.

20:50:32

[PAUSE]

>> You're muted Jill.

20:50:36 >> Jill: Thank you. Sorry about that.

So the question is, Gideon

20:50:42 what advice or words of wisdom do you have for parents of  
young deaf and

20:50:47 hard of hearing children today? And

20:50:50 if you want to think about it for a minute that's fine  
because I have something to say

20:50:54 here.

You know,

20:50:57 I kind of keep going back

20:51:00 to I love what Laura and Riley said, every kid is

20:51:03 different and I had a big speech about that too that I don't  
20:51:06 need to repeat but

20:51:10 , you know, I -- something that I just wanted to say for

20:51:13 those of you that have kids who are wearing

20:51:16 hearing aides or cochlear

20:51:19 implants, I just really think today's generation

20:51:24 , we do have a much wired acceptance

20:51:27 of people having things on their ears and

20:51:30 I know that for people like me growing up with hearing  
aides, life

20:51:33 was really hard, but, you know, because you

20:51:36 were very isolated and you were seeing this very different,  
but

20:51:40 I feel like part of the reason why we brought some younger  
people

20:51:43 in tonight because we wanted to show that

20:51:46 , you know, we also are just an evolving generation

20:51:50 s and I think some of

20:51:53 what you're seeing maybe today is that my

20:51:56 hope is that some of the stigma of having hearing loss  
20:51:59 and having hearing aides is starting to go away  
20:52:03 and particularly because of the event -- the introduction of  
20:52:06 just digital technology because everybody has something on  
20:52:09 their ears now. And so  
20:52:13 I don't know if that's like really advice but it's just  
something that  
20:52:17 when you grow up through the '80s and nineties  
20:52:20 and you know, I'm hear now,  
20:52:23 I'm a grown-up adult, I've seen the difference and he  
20:52:26 evolution and I'm  
20:52:30 just -- I just feel like our kids today have  
20:52:33 such a great opportunity to  
20:52:36 learn language in a way that, you know, a lot of us never  
20:52:39 did. So I hope that gives you some joy and some  
20:52:42 encouragement in that  
20:52:45 , you know, you may not know the answers tore your family now  
but it's going to  
20:52:49 come over time. It's not something that happens overnight  
20:52:53 but just know that we're all start  
20:52:56 ing to wear stuff on our ears now so  
20:53:00 hopefully some of that stigma is going to go away  
20:53:03 .  
Anybody else?  
20:53:09  
>> Riley: One more thing. Oh, sorry, you  
20:53:12 can go first.  
20:53:15  
>> Gideon: Riley, you can go ahead  
20:53:19 .  
Yeah, go ahead, Riley, please.  
>> Riley:  
20:53:22 Okay.  
Just thinking back in the  
20:53:25 advocacy,  
20:53:29 it doesn't end at schools. It's also in the  
20:53:32 community. If your child is going to be part of like swim  
20:53:36 team, soccer, football  
20:53:40 , your job is to advocate for  
20:53:43 them there too. It's not just school.  
20:53:46 It's the whole community. I just want  
20:53:49 ed to clarify on that part. Because  
20:53:53 when I was a child on the swim team, I  
20:53:56 didn't have a cued speech interpreter there for me. I had  
to figure out  
20:53:59 how to navigate that whole world silent  
20:54:03 ly, learn how to swim silently  
20:54:06 . I managed to do it  
20:54:09 but I think it would have been nice to  
20:54:13 have some of that in the community that I didn't

20:54:16 have but, yeah, just  
20:54:20 advocacy doesn't come from home and school. It's like  
everywhere,  
20:54:23 the community too.  
20:54:31  
>> Gideon: Riley, you said it beautifully.  
20:54:34 I just want to build off your comments there.  
20:54:38 Yeah, as a parent and you see your children growing  
20:54:41 up and socializing with other kids  
20:54:46 , you may see they're a little different. They may not be as  
comfortable  
20:54:50 with everyone else. There's so much technology.  
20:54:53 So many accommodations.  
20:54:56 Expunge about oh, you might think about less deaf  
20:54:59 or something like that but you still have to try your best  
to  
20:55:02 invest in your kid and the community like Riley said. Take  
an AS  
20:55:06 L class if that's what your child is using as a parent, you  
go  
20:55:09 take the class as well.  
20:55:14 And just generally there should be ASL classes  
20:55:18 for the peers of those children so that  
20:55:22 they can find -- because children love learning new things  
and they would love to be  
20:55:25 able to learn a new language to communicate with each other  
20:55:30 and then they can figure out oh I'm learning something  
20:55:33 new and it helps me communicate with  
20:55:36 you and then I'd also like to add another important  
20:55:40 thing. As your child  
20:55:44 grows up, please make sure that they find other deaf  
20:55:47 children, other deaf peers that they can social  
20:55:50 ize with. And help them understand their identity  
20:55:53 and who they are through another person  
20:55:57 . It's like oh  
20:56:00 wow, I can't hear, you can't hear, wow, we're the same  
20:56:03 and you make that connection instantly when deaf people meet  
20:56:07 one another and you don't  
20:56:10 get to feel ode, you don't feel strange, you don't feel  
there's  
20:56:13 something wrong with you. It's actually really cool. It's  
like oh we're special.  
20:56:17 We're really cool. We're the same and  
20:56:21 very empowering as well for those children  
20:56:25 to be able to interact with other children that they feel  
are  
20:56:28 the same as them. And another point I'd like  
20:56:31 to -- to mention is  
20:56:35 art for children. For me, act  
20:56:39 ing and storytelling, so-so that's something I enjoyed

20:56:44 very much. And growing up my parents used to go  
20:56:48 to the theater and I  
20:56:51 was so excited and also  
20:56:54 looking forward to deaf children  
20:56:57 in the future what opportunities they'll have for art  
20:57:01 because art is expression and maybe  
20:57:05 children aren't able to speak, they might have limited  
language, but  
20:57:08 if you give them a medium, some kind of art, there is no  
20:57:11 limit to what they can create. I think it's incredibly  
20:57:14 important that the socialisation and  
20:57:18 artistic expression are very  
20:57:21 empowering for deaf children's success.  
20:57:29  
>> Jill: Thank you, guys. All of this was really, really good  
20:57:32 . I really, really appreciate for saying everything  
20:57:35 you said.  
20:57:38 I have just a couple minutes  
20:57:41 here for questions from the audience.  
20:57:45 Let me just look at the chat. This is from Amanda and it  
20:57:48 says Gideon so  
20:57:51 was college the first time that you  
20:57:54 worked regularly with an interpreter?  
20:57:59  
>> Gideon: Yeah. I'll answer  
20:58:03 .  
Yes, Amanda you're right.  
20:58:06 So college, it was  
20:58:09 my second -- yeah, my second year in the summer  
20:58:14 , I had an internship for six weeks.  
20:58:17 It was university of Maryland and in the  
20:58:20 internship, I had to work with  
20:58:24 six interpreters. There were other deaf interns as well  
20:58:27 . So I wasn't the only one, but through those  
20:58:31 six weeks, I worked with several interpreters and  
communicated through  
20:58:34 them. So I  
20:58:37 learned a lot about communication during that time  
20:58:42 because I worked from occasionally using interpreters to  
constantly using  
20:58:45 interpreters. It was a switch but yeah,  
20:58:48 that was the first time.  
And I loved this  
20:58:51 it.  
>> Jill: That's great  
20:58:55 .  
I don't see any other questions in the chat  
20:58:58 box from anybody. So if  
20:59:01 you have something you wanted to ask, you have just about  
20:59:04 30 seconds to maybe get something in. Anybody

20:59:07 ?

20:59:10 It's okay if there's not one. That means we did a really good job

20:59:15 .

Okay

20:59:18 . You know, at the end of this

20:59:23 , really I just wanted to close us

20:59:26 out and just kind of reassure you parents that it's all going

20:59:29 to be okay. You know, at the end

20:59:33 of the day, at the end of the year, even at the end of

20:59:36 high school it's all going to be okay. Your child is going to be okay

20:59:39 . Don't worry about getting it right

20:59:42 overnight. Over time this is going

20:59:46 to be something that just evolves and when you get to the end of this you're going to real

20:59:49 ize that the choices that you've made in your family

20:59:53 were probably the right choices for you and your child. So, you know,

20:59:56 spend your time connect

20:59:59 ing your child with family members and friends and other people that are like him or

21:00:03 her. Help them to like themselves

21:00:06 and you know

21:00:09 know that all of us who have hearing loss we've all

21:00:12 survived this and we're all doing great and we're all successful and, you

21:00:15 know, at the end of the day

21:00:19 we go back and we applaud our families for what they've done for us.

21:00:22 So know that, you know, it's all

21:00:25 going to be good, okay? And thank you guys for the nice comments that

21:00:29 you have here at the end. It was really lovely

21:00:32 to do this and I thank our interpreters

21:00:35 , Tonya and Hidjra and also

21:00:38 our translator Angela.

21:00:42 Thank you guys for being here. And also our panelists.

21:00:45 Thank you Gideon and Laura.

21:00:48 And Riley. You guys, you know,

21:00:53 this was really great. I really enjoyed this. It was so nice

21:00:56 to hear from just a younger group of people and I look forward to hearing from guys again

21:01:00 .

All right? Have a great evening

21:01:03 and thank you for coming.

>> Thank you all so much.

21:01:06 This is Gideon. I appreciate all of you. Thank you the  
interpreters, the  
21:01:10 trans litrators and I appreciate everyone, thank you  
21:01:14 .  
>> Laura:  
21:01:17 Thank you all. I just put in the chat I'm happy to answer  
questions later  
21:01:20 on as a parent and a teach  
21:01:23 teacher of the deaf.  
>> Jill: Great idea  
21:01:27 .  
Yeah, feel free to -- if  
21:01:30 you have anymore questions you think of you can always send  
to to  
21:01:34 Hands and Voices and we'll be happy to send it on to the  
panelists if  
21:01:37 you wanted a more individualized answer, would be happy to  
do that  
21:01:40 for you okay?  
21:01:43  
Anything else?  
All right.  
21:01:47 Have a great night. Thank you for coming