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Critical Incident Journal

Deaf Event

On October 24th, 2016, I attended a Deaf Event put on by Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services in the Minnesota State University Mankato’s Centennial Student Union. The event featured speakers Mike Pravancha, a Sign Language Interpreter Specialist, and Parker Greene-Kelly, a Mental Health Program Consultant and Deaf individual. I attended this event with my Beginning Sign Language class and there were many Deaf people in attendance. The purpose of the event was to educate hearing people on Deaf culture, Deaf myths/facts, tips for communicating with Deaf people, and to touch on the different technologies that attempt to minimize the negative impacts of hearing loss.

Attending this event provided me with valuable insight into what it’s like to be a member of the Deaf community. I am currently studying American Sign Language (ASL) and I believe that it is important to understand the culture surrounding the language in addition to the grammar. ASL is the fifth most spoken minority language in the United States, and the Deaf have a complete culture of their own with many differences from the culture of hearing people. I was made aware of many aspects of Deaf culture at the event that will help me be a better global citizen and better understand my chosen language.