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Summer institute helps educators in teaching deaf students biology

Ten-year-old Matthew Dillehay struggled not to squint as his mother, Dr. Jane Dillehay, project director of the new Summer Institute in Biology (SIB), flashed a light into his left eye. Although his right eye received no light—Matthew held a hand between his eyes—both pupils contracted.

It was a simple test of neurological response used by doctors, called a pupillary response test. It also demonstrates a neurobiological fact—a pair of eyes will respond even when only one is stimulated, with no equipment fancier than a flashlight. In short, it fits the bill for the participants in SIB, who teach biology to deaf high school students in schools that don't have the budget for elaborate laboratory supplies.

"We want to be sure what is done here is carried back [to the teachers' classrooms]. If it isn't, it isn't successful," said Dillehay, who is chair of the Biology Department and who will become acting dean of the College of Arts and Sciences this fall.

The four-year SIB project, funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), was initiated to train high school teachers in teaching biology to deaf students. NSF granted a total of \$936,237 for SIB, including \$166,976 for this year. Five teachers from the Washington, D.C., area are studying at Gallaudet from July 11 to Aug. 5. In the remaining three years, 24 teachers from across the United States will study at Gallaudet for five weeks each summer.

The SIB project is focusing its training in the areas of genetics, physiology, and the environment. Genetics was chosen as a focus, Dillehay said, because half of all deaf people are deaf from hereditary causes. Phys-

iology was included because, although most teachers are familiar with anatomy, many are not aware of all the body's functions. The environment was added because "it's important; it's relevant," Dillehay said.

"Many teachers of deaf students specialize in deaf education, but their knowledge in specific areas is not always good—especially in science," Dillehay said. That means the students don't learn science well—and Gallaudet often must deal with the results.

The late Paul Cunningham, former chair of the Biology Department, wrote the original grant proposal for SIB, which was accepted in the summer of 1992. The Biology Department had to renegotiate the grant with NSF to let Dillehay replace Cunningham, she said, which postponed the project until this year.

If the SIB is successful in the next few years, Dillehay said, Gallaudet may apply for a renewal of the grant, possibly for another two or three years.

This summer, the teachers in the project have been kept busy filling in the gaps in their knowledge of biology and learning simple activities and lab skills that they can use to encourage their students to develop thinking skills they can apply in science and other classes. "Most science courses follow a 'cookbook lab,'" in which students follow directions in their lab book without thinking about them, Dillehay said. "They don't learn anything."

SIB participants also learn about educational technology, such as CD ROMs and video discs, and available resources on the Internet, such as electronic newsgroups and electronic mailing lists.

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Gallaudet President I. King Jordan shakes hands with U.S. President Bill Clinton at the commemoration of the fourth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act held at the White House July 27. Earlier that morning, President Clinton used the telecommunications relay service to call Gallaudet Board of Trustees Chair Glenn Anderson at the University of Arkansas to show real-life ways that the ADA has helped eliminate barriers for deaf people.

Deaf Italians train to become teachers

Although deaf people do not teach in Italy's public elementary schools, that hasn't stopped deaf people such as Santina Bufalino and Daniele Chiri from seeking the education they need to change Italian laws and to teach deaf children when Italy eventually opens its preschool and elementary classrooms to deaf teachers. (Italy does allow deaf teachers to teach in high schools for deaf students.)

Chiri's and Bufalino's hopes for teaching jobs are based on the European Economic Community agreement, which includes a directive that sign language must be used in teaching deaf children and that deaf teachers must be trained.

Bufalino, 25, and Chiri, 32, are the second set of deaf Italians to take summer classes at Gallaudet as recipients of the Roberto Wirth Scholarship. Wirth is a Gallaudet alumnus and successful Italian businessman who set up the scholarship last year to help prepare deaf teachers to educate Italy's deaf children.

From June 26 to Aug. 7, Bufalino and Chiri are studying English, ASL, and educational methods for teaching deaf children. Both have hearing parents and earned their high school degrees at institutes for deaf students, which use the oral method in the classroom but allow children to sign in dormitories and on the playground. While Bufalino's parents sign a little bit, Chiri's parents and siblings do not.

Bufalino is surprised by the large deaf community here at Gallaudet; the deaf community at her home in Sicily is small, she said. She also was impressed that "a lot of deaf people here have work. Many deaf people in

Italy have no work."

"When I saw deaf hands moving here, it was very, very wonderful," said Chiri. "When deaf people sign, I am filled with joy."

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Adoptions on rise in deaf community

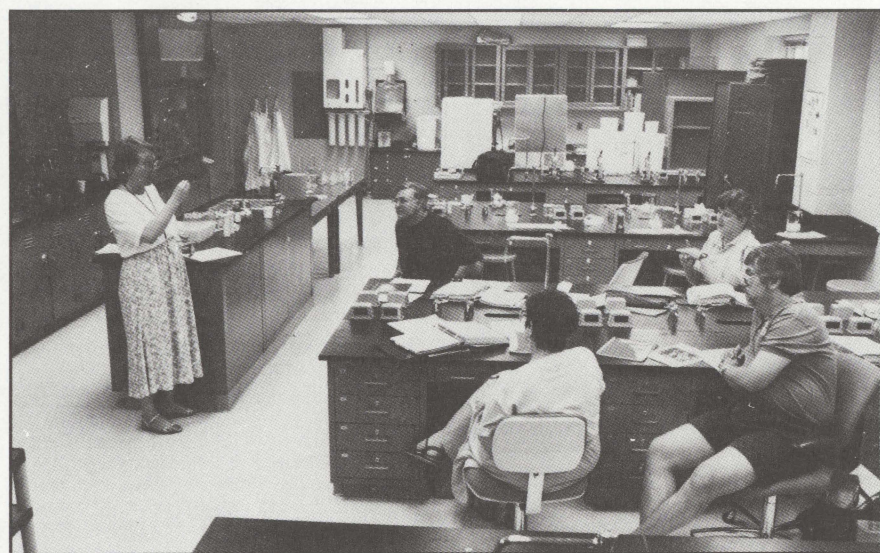
In 1963, a judge refused to let a deaf couple adopt a child because of their deafness. Although the decision was later overruled by a higher court, this type of discrimination would never happen today. In recent years it has become increasingly acceptable for deaf and hard of hearing people to adopt deaf and hearing children—and many are doing it.

In a July 14 presentation, "Adoption as an Option in the Deaf Community," Barbara White, associate professor in the Department of Social Work, discussed the history of adoption, particularly in the deaf community. The lecture, held in the Ely Center Auditorium, was part of the Deaf Enrichment and Arts Festival sponsored by Continuing Education and Outreach.

White's interest in adoption is both personal and professional. White and her husband, English Department Chair Bruce White, who are deaf, adopted a hearing baby girl in 1988.

After adopting, White began meeting other deaf people in the Washington area who had also adopted. A small informal group was set up that met twice a year. This group evolved into the Deaf Adoptive Parents sup-

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Dr. Jane Dillehay, project director of the Summer Institute in Biology at Gallaudet, lectures on physiology, one of three areas studied by SIB participants.

Resources available for adoptive parents

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port group. "Every time we have a meeting, I see new faces," said White.

About five years ago, White distributed a questionnaire to approximately 30 deaf families, asking about their experiences and the attitudes of adoption agencies. Half of the families who responded said they wanted to adopt deaf children; the other half said it did not matter if the children were deaf or hearing. Some families had experienced some discrimination in the application process, some had waited two to three years, and some had been unable to find children. "Some agencies said they'd never seen deaf children," White told the audience.

In 1990, a Harvard College law student did a study of adoption agencies, said White. The student sent out a survey to adoption agencies nationwide and found that not one agency had a policy for working with deaf adoptive parents. Few agencies even knew what a TTY was.

Last year, two Gallaudet graduate students did their master's theses on the experiences of deaf people with the adoption process. These graduate students found that subtle discrimination still exists in terms of attitudes

and communication barriers. Also, in the past, deaf families often had to pay for their own interpreters for meetings with adoption agencies; now, with the Americans with Disabilities Act, there may be some changes, said White.

Identification of deaf and hard of hearing children can be difficult, noted White, especially with foreign adoptions. "Some people in our group adopted 'deaf' children who turned out to be hearing," said White. Sometimes, the description of the child is not clear with regard to hearing loss.

"My goal is to try to educate the social work profession to see this as a cultural match," said White. Deaf children should be placed in "culturally sensitive homes," meaning either deaf parents or hearing parents who can sign.

There are now more resources available to deaf adoptive parents, including the Deaf Adoptive Parents support group newsletter, *The Networker*; the organization Advocates for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Youth, and a Deaf Adoption News Service available via the Internet. In addition, several Washington, D.C., area adoption agencies and local departments of human services have worked with deaf families.

SIB trains teachers of deaf students

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In addition, the teachers have taken day-long field trips to sites such as the Chesapeake Bay Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to attend lectures on topics such as aquatic vegetation, waterbirds, and wetlands.

Teachers are also introduced to deaf scientists working in the field to help increase their expectations for their own students, Dillehay said.

When teachers return to their schools they will be expected to report on how they are implementing what they have learned over the summer in their own classrooms—and how they are passing on their knowledge and renewed motivation to other teachers in the school.

"All the teachers have been very positive and so excited," said Dillehay. "They feel they are contributing, too, sharing their experiences with each

other. The [SIB] instructors are really impressed with the teachers."

Dr. Kathleen Arnos, director of Gallaudet's Genetic Services Center, Jamie Israel, an associate in the center, Audrey Grissom, a research associate in the Biology Department, Dorothy Wynne and Joyce Doblmeier, instructors in the Science Department at the Model Secondary School for the Deaf, staff of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Biological Survey, and Dillehay have been teaching the SIB participants.

Announcements

Lincoln Circle West in the vicinity of Peet Hall will be closed to vehicular traffic for the majority of this week so that utility connections can be made for the new Gallaudet University Conference Center.

The Round House Theatre in Silver Spring, Md., will present a signed performance of "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" Oct. 6 at 8 p.m. To purchase tickets, which cost \$19 and \$22, call the Box Office, (301) 933-1644 (V).



Lorraine Chickering (left), president of Public and Operator Services at Bell Atlantic, and Marie Johns, vice president of Bell Atlantic-Washington, D.C. Inc., give President I. King Jordan a mock-up of a \$100,000 check for HMB renovations.



Deaf Italians Daniele Chiri of Biella and Santina Bufalino of Sicily are at Gallaudet as Roberto Wirth scholars, studying English, ASL, and how to teach deaf children.

Deaf Italians await chance to teach

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Chiri also has a bachelor's degree, which he earned at a hearing college with no interpreters. Only recently have Italy's colleges started providing interpreters for deaf people.

At home in Sicily, Bufalino has no paying job, but she coordinates youth programs for her local branch of the ENS, the Italian equivalent of the U.S. National Association of the Deaf. Chiri is a financial officer in the community tax office of the small town of Biella, where he also works with deaf children at a community health center.

Both Bufalino and Chiri want to teach deaf children. "Many deaf kids are mainstreamed, and that bothers me," said Bufalino. "I want to pull them back and teach them; I want them to grow up with sign." She hopes to return to Gallaudet to earn a degree in deaf education so she'll have the credentials she needs when Italy starts hiring deaf teachers for preschool and elementary grades.

Chiri is waiting to hear whether his application for a teaching position in Italy will be accepted and whether he will one day get a paying job as a preschool teacher of deaf children.

The Wirth Scholarship is one of several programs under the Mason Perkins Fund, which is administered through the Fulbright Commission and the United Jersey Bank. Last year's Wirth scholars so impressed the Fulbright Commission that it decided to waive its requirement that a scholarship must be on the graduate level to be called a "Fulbright," so Bufalino

and Chiri are officially Fulbright scholars. Gallaudet also hosts students chosen for the Mason Perkins Scholarship, which used to provide one student a full year at Gallaudet and now provides two students with a semester each.

Arlene Blumenthal-Kelly of the Culture and Communication Studies Program and Clayton Valli of Linguistics and Interpreting are coordinating the Wirth Scholarship students' stay this summer.

Classified Ads

Classified ads are printed for Gallaudet faculty and staff. Written ads must be submitted in person or by mail to *On the Green*, MSSD, Room G-37. Off-campus phone numbers must include an area code and whether the number is voice or TTY. In compliance with the Education of the Deaf Act of 1992, as amended, payment of \$1 per ad per printing must accompany each ad. The deadline for submitting ads is Friday, 10 days before the desired publication. *On the Green* will not be printed Aug. 8. Ads received Aug. 1-5 will be printed in the Aug. 15 issue.

WANTED: Deaf babysitter for 2 children, exchange for room and board. Call (301) 262-7687 (TTY).

FOR RENT: 1-BR English basement apt. on Capitol Hill, close to Eastern Market, fireplace, CAC, DW, microwave, W/D, all amenities, \$525/mo. incl. util., avail. Sept. 1. Call Chris, x7503 (TTY) or (202) 544-4531 (TTY) eves., or E-mail DV_KRENTZ.

FOR RENT: 1-BR w/priv. BA in 2-BR apt. in Silver Spring, Md., CAC, DW, balcony, pool, tennis court, no pets, near stores, Metro, female preferred, \$300/mo. incl. util. Call Sharon, (301) 681-6508 (TTY).

FOR RENT: 2-BR apt. less than 1-block from Kendall Green. Call (301) 773-1710 (V/TTY) or (301) 322-7372 (V).

FOR RENT: 3-BR, 2 1/2-BA townhouse in Greenbelt, Md.; near BW Pkwy., I-95/495, on bus line; deck faces wooded area; w/w carpet, CAC, W/D, separate util.; avail. mid-Aug. Call Lynn, (301) 345-6642 (TTY).

FOR RENT: 1 BR in huge 3-BR, 2-BA apt., Greenbelt, Md., area, W/D, pool privileges, must have own trans., \$250/mo. Call Leigh, (301) 794-9411 (TTY).

WANTED: Caring person for affectionate, housebroken 2-mo.-old kitten; free shots, willing to pay 1/2 for spaying. Call Diane, (301) 604-6365 (TTY).

FOR RENT: 1 BR w/priv. bath in 2-BR apt. in Greenbelt/Seabrook, Md., to nonsmoker, pool and spa privileges, \$350/mo. incl. elec. Call (301) 595-8843 (V/TTY) after 6:30 p.m., or Jay at (301) 794-7067 (V/TTY) 9 a.m.-noon.

FOR RENT: 1 BR in 2-BR apt. in Cheverly, Md., Sept.-May, \$230/mo. incl. util. Call Lydie, x5447, or E-mail 12MAKINOSI.



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