



Contact:

Amy Ruberl, Executive Director
National Cued Speech Association
800.459.3529 v/tty
info@cuedspeech.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hannah Mann Receives 2009 Cornett Memorial Scholarship

June 3, 2009—Bethesda, MD—The National Cued Speech Association (NCSA) announces the award of the R. Orin Cornett Memorial Scholarship to Hannah Mann (Wisconsin). The R. Orin Cornett Scholarship Fund, which supports qualified individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing in their post-secondary endeavors, makes this award possible.

NCSA President Josh Libby says,

“Ms. Mann has overcome many obstacles, and has persevered in the face of adversity and she truly represents the kind of individual that is worthy of exemplifying the work that the NCSA does for Cued Speech. To me, Hannah resembles a kind of pioneer—despite being geographically limited, she consistently used her own individuality and persistence to obtain Cued Speech services throughout her education. This is exactly the kind of individual Dr. Cornett had in mind when he created the Cued Speech system.”

About the Scholarship

This scholarship honors Dr. Cornett’s memory and lifelong dedication to Cued Speech, as well as his personal interest in the academic successes of cuers around the nation. Dr. Cornett developed Cued Speech in 1965-66, during his first year as Vice President of Long-Range Planning at Gallaudet University. His goal was to develop a way for deaf children to access clearly and visually the properties of spoken language.

Research has shown that individuals who cue typically reach their maximum literacy potential and often perform at or above grade level in language testing. Most cuers pursue post-secondary education and the NCSA supports them in achieving their goals.

The award recipient must have used Cued Speech as the primary mode of communication during the crucial language learning years or for five or more years of education. He or she must be entering or attending an undergraduate, graduate, or vocational institute for the upcoming school year. The scholarship is not based on academic achievement, need or degree of deafness. Award recipients qualify by writing an essay that reflects the mission, vision and goals of the NCSA, which include championing effective communication, language development and literacy through the use of Cued Speech.

About Hannah Mann

Hannah Mann is a resident of Wisconsin, and is currently a student at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. She lost her hearing when she was a year and a half old when treatment for Hirschsprung's disease caused a severe hearing loss. By the time she was four years old, Hannah had achieved rudimentary language skills.

At that time, her mother enrolled Hannah in the Alexander Graham Bell Montessori School outside of Chicago, which uses Cued Speech. The commute from southeastern Wisconsin to Chicago was approximately an hour long.



Says Hannah, “Despite the hour-long commute, my rapid linguistic progress outweighed any inconveniences that came with attending an out-of-state school. Even after I was mainstreamed into a private school closer to home, I continued to excel academically, particularly in grammar and literature; in fact, my peers often called upon me to help them with their papers.”

Hannah recently completed her first year at UWM and is maintaining a 4.0 GPA. While other deaf students attend UWM, she is currently the only cuer on campus. This has not prevented her from reaching out to others on campus.

In her scholarship essay, Hannah said,

“I find myself in a unique position to demonstrate the benefits of Cued Speech to a mixed audience of deaf and hearing alike. Because I was not fluent enough in sign language to benefit from ASL interpretation, the university hired a transliterator for me and provided Cued Speech training for its current ASL interpreters and captionists.... Moreover, members of the Signing Student Association invited me to speak on their annual Deaf Panel about my experiences as a deaf person. Naturally, I spoke about my history with Cued Speech and demonstrated Cued Speech for a few minutes.”

Hannah is studying film at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee.

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The National Cued Speech Association champions effective communication, language development and literacy through the use of Cued Speech. The NCSA launched the Deaf Children's Literacy Project in 1997. For more information, contact info@cuedspeech.org or visit www.cuedspeech.org.