



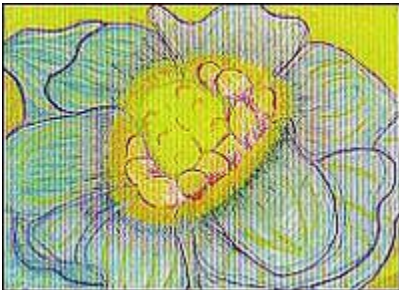
[This page prints out on 2 sheets]

Demetra

Demetra is a college student. Here she shares her thoughts about being deaf and living a full life. [Contact us](http://www.raisingdeafkids.org/contact.jsp) (<http://www.raisingdeafkids.org/contact.jsp>) if you want us to respond to Demetra or ask her questions.

October 19, 2002

Living Life as an Oral Person, in a Hearing Community



I would like to introduce myself. My name is Demetra and I am a student at Drexel University. I will be sending many short entries online for all viewers to understand the meaning of being deaf and at the same time live the fullest life possible.

I have been raised as an oral person and I consider myself as being hard of hearing rather than deaf. Even though I am profoundly deaf, the hearing aids help me to hear more and therefore I prefer to be considered in this way, as a hard of hearing person.

I come from Greece and my native tongue language is Greek. I moved to America, in Washington D.C. with my family 8 years ago, when my struggles and difficulties life began with learning English as a second language. I fought for a better life and the right to a good education, during the middle school and high school years. I strongly believe that the experiences that I have gone through helped me and to build my self-confidence and self-respect.

I choose this kind of life as an oral person and in a hearing community because in the real world everywhere you go and everywhere you see you are always exposed and influenced from the hearing community. I always felt that being successful is the biggest reward and accomplishment. In other words, I want to be successful and make a career. That requires me to be involved in the real world and explore many different places to gain from experience values and ideals.

Wanting to Help Others - and Finding Just the Right Place to Volunteer

Since I love to get as many volunteers as I can to help people's lives, I was walking by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, which is a few blocks away from the Drexel University campus. I immediately knew that it would be the perfect place for me to start to volunteer during my free time. I thought that if this is really a Children's Hospital, than perhaps I could get involved with deaf patients and to help them communicate either in American Sign Language or Cued Speech Language. This idea motivated me.

So the following day I went into the building. Unfortunately I wasn't familiar with the building and I had to explain what I was looking for to the front desk. I was immediately informed that I was in the wrong place and it was suggested to try the building across the street. At first I was puzzled, but I decided to go along with this suggestion. When I went into the other building there was another the front desk, where I had to explain the purpose of my visit all over again because I wasn't sure which floor I should go to. Of course there was another miscommunication with the person at the front desk, because he was assuming, perhaps, that I wanted to do the Human Resources Department, while I was thinking of the children. Finally he recommended me to go to 9th floor.

As soon as I went up to the 9th floor I saw how the communication didn't go well and I saw a sign that read Human Resources. I was extremely disappointed and frustrated because the front desk person wasn't really listening to me and what I was looking for. As I was turning around ready to leave, I saw a sign. I stopped immediately and I was very pleasantly surprised. The sign was for the Deafness and Family Communication Center.

This is what I was looking for and after introducing myself to those people such as Lisa Bain as a Research Project Manager and Olivia Thetgyi as a Web Editorial Assistant. I was informed that I could volunteer and that I could write a journal about the life of a student, the problems and difficulties that I face so that other people can possibly benefit from my experiences. So look from time to time to my Journal.

This page was last edited on October 31, 2003.

You can find this page online at:

<http://www.raisingdeafkids.org/meet/deaf/demetra.jsp>