



May's (2022) **KCDHH Spotlight Q&A** is with Blake Campbell, who is Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at KCDHH. Campbell's hometown is Louisville, where he attended duPont Manual High School's deaf program. Upon graduation from Manual, he attended Gallaudet University, the world's only university in which all programs and services are specifically designed to accommodate deaf and hard of hearing students in Washington, DC. He majored in Communication Studies and minored in Photography. He resides in Louisville with his Australian Shepherd, Zora, and two cats, Zovelli and Zayla.

**What department do you work for and what is your role?**

I work for Information, Referral and Advocacy (IRA). My role is to provide information and resources pertaining to hearing loss and to make appropriate referrals to organizations and agencies. I also provide advocacy for communication access in organizations and businesses, such as doctor's offices and such, educating them about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) law relating to effective communication.

**How long have you been with KCDHH?**

I was hired in 2012 after being referred by my Vocational Rehabilitation counselor in 2012. This summer will be 10 years, hard to believe!

**What have been your biggest accomplishments in your department?**

Our department worked tirelessly to make sure all contents relating to COVID-19 were accessible as deaf and hard of hearing community was thrown into the dark during the pandemic. We advocated for the Governor to include interpreters and captions on television and social media at all times during COVID-19 press conferences. It's the agency's first in history to have a Governor to be inclusive with the deaf and hard of hearing community.

**What is the most unique part about working at KCDHH?**

The most unique part for me is advocating for deaf and hard of hearing inmates because their communication methods are different and the timing of advocating takes longer. I have to make many different contacts to the inmate's family members and write letters to the inmate to get more information in order to advocate for them. Then, I have to make a lot of phone calls to find the right point person to get the situation resolved.

**Before working at KCDHH, what was the most unusual or interesting job you've ever had?**

I was a tour guide on the Gallaudet University campus for visitors, prospective students, and international guests. I love providing historical facts and fun facts about Gallaudet's history. The most challenging part of being a tour guide was interacting with a group of international deaf people because I had to use Guestuno sign language which is an artificially devised sign language.

**What has been your favorite project at KCDHH?**

My most favorite role at KCDHH is being a DeaFestival Co-Taskmaster because it's so much fun (and very stressful) to plan a festival and watching the deaf and hard of hearing community enjoy the day. My primary duty is to oversee the Visual Artist Gallery and I love meeting new artists and giving them an opportunity to sell their artwork in a place that is usually not accessible to them at other festivals

**What is on your wish list for the next 10 years with KCDHH?**

I would like to create more outreach efforts for deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians who are struggling with hearing loss so they can learn what KCDHH can do for them!

**What is a hobby or talent you might want to share?**

It's more of an addiction than a hobby, I love PLANTS! I can't get enough of them and always want to add more to my collection. I have lost count of how many plants I have at home and I have them in every corner, every wall, and every room.