

March 23, 2011



DEAF STRONG HOSPITAL: ST. JOHN FISHER COLLEGE

St. John Fisher College (SJF), NCDHR and the DHCC collaborated on March 23, 2011 to administer another successful Deaf Strong Hospital (DSH) event. Over 90 students of SJF attended the event on this snowy afternoon. Many members of the Deaf Community, DHCC, and NCDHR all volunteered their time to help run DSH.

Students who attended were given cards with different illnesses on them, then asked to wait in the mock “waiting room”. Here, two Deaf community members would call the next person in line to the front and direct them to the correct doctor’s office (Psychology, pharmacy, emergency room, etc.). All of this was done using American Sign Language. The students (who were all hearing) were thrust into a situation where they were not fluent in the main language being used at this “hospital”. They had to use what skills they had (writing, interpreter use, a little ASL) in order to try



to communicate with their Deaf doctors.

In this role reversal, students were exposed to Deaf Culture, and the communication barriers Deaf patients face every day. Many students reflected that there could be serious consequences for misinformation due to the communication barriers between hearing doctors and Deaf patients. Many felt DSH was an eye opening experience that would help them during their careers as healthcare providers.

After a long day, the event wrapped up with group discussions, answering questions from students, receiving feedback, and Deaf volunteers providing their personal experiences when trying to communicate with hearing, non-ASL fluent, healthcare providers. Overall, the experience was well received and another great success.