

Christopher D. Johnson, M.A.

Pronouns: he/him/his

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Professional Summary

Pragmatic, transformational, and collaborative leader skilled in steering the strategic direction of initiatives aligned with advocating for the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind communities. 9+ years of experience in elevating the quality of programming by establishing program governance, engaging with key stakeholders, and leading high-performing teams. Adept at identifying areas of success and opportunities to continually promote cultural diversity, improve performance through community engagement, and achieve organizational excellence.

Area of Expertise

Strategic Planning | Team Leadership | Budget Management | Program & Project Management | Resource Allocation | Data Analysis | Training & Development | Presentations | Relationship Building | Advocacy & Communication Strategy | Cross-functional Collaborations

Education

National University, Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, Expected Graduation 2026

- Alpha Delta Epsilon chapter of Kappa Delta Pi Honor Society

Gallaudet University, Master of Arts: Sign Language Education, 2019

University of West Georgia, Bachelor of Science: Sport Management

Employment History

Creative Minds LLC | 2021 – Present

Chief Executive Officer and Founder

- Oversaw the programmatic strategy focused on driving accessibility to programs and services improve resulting in improved social belonging globally; Identified areas of improvement that impact service delivery
- Cultivated a strategic partnership with the California School for Deaf to pioneer the delivery of the Black Deaf & KODA Camp to advocate for education, laws, and other important resources that impact intersectional deaf communities
- Devised strategic plans to execute the organization's vision to deliver interpretation, translation, news anchor, and speaking engagement services; Establishes program governance to develop program controls including policy, procedures, and organizational structure
- Developed comprehensive recommendations to address employment of individuals who identified as deaf or hard of hearing
- Drafted presentations and provided training that are tailored to the needs of the requestor to address issues impacting underrecognized groups, or marginalized communities.

Gallaudet University | 2021 – 2024

Project Manager, Division of Equity, Diversity & Inclusive Excellence (DEDI) | 2022 – 2024

- Spearheaded the inaugural Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Excellence Deaf-Centric Institute, managed \$50,000 budget, focused on developing qualified and credentialed professionals to collaboratively sustain a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, belonging, and social justice in deaf diverse communities

- Led the development of more than 50-plus projects to close gaps in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) knowledge and visibility across the institution; Oversaw projects from concept through execution, created timelines, and outlined action plan deliverables focused on fostering a culture of inclusivity
- Designed and developed cross-level or cross-group bias and anti-oppression training workshops for students, staff, and faculty to foster a connected culture across the campus through improved cultural competency and increased knowledge of DEI principles
- Developed trend assessment for faculty syllabi that fosters classroom inclusivity
- Generated and organized evaluating programs and monitors curricula and equitable instructional activities that align with Gallaudet University's Promise Phase I and II
- Centralized program initiatives, or units within the division, data, and evaluation assessment tools to measure the overall effectiveness of DEI and EEO programs
- Organized and streamlined cultural awareness and recognition with unit managers for a variety of ethnic groups through various social media platforms and internal communications in partnership with University Communications
- Assisted with Annual Report of Achievements and division inaugural annual report in collaboration with managers to submit a comprehensive report that entails benchmarks, past activities, and evaluation metrics for measuring the impact of programs, initiatives, and activities for the next academic school year
- Served on, and chaired several, interview committees to review candidate pools to hire diverse talents at Gallaudet University
- Collected and ensured completeness and accuracy of recordkeeping and reporting systems; and centralized monthly reports for the Executive Director.

Community Relations Manager, University Communications (UC) | 2021 – 2022

- Built and nurtured relationships with internal and external minority stakeholders including the National Association of the Deaf, National Black Deaf Advocates, Greater Washington Asian Deaf Association, and Council de Manos as a liaison to the office of the University Communications
- Amplified the mission and vision of the institution to global audiences as the program ambassador by sharing Black Deaf Excellence stories and addressing any multicultural experience gaps identified through technical assistance consultations with divisions and units on campus
- Assisted with the implementation of strategic communication methodologies that support the Anti-oppression plan and Equity and Belonging Initiatives to increase awareness of respect for multiculturalism, diverse backgrounds, physical ability, intersectionality, and gender differences
- Established ongoing recruitment and outreach to create a pipeline of diverse American Sign Language (ASL) talents and recruited signers for bi-weekly *Hi5* bilingual e-newsletters

Howard Community College | 2021 – 2024

Adjunct Instructor

- Designed and developed a diversified American Sign Language (ASL) curriculum that supports both course objectives and learning outcomes
- Formulated strategic plan(s) with other adjunct instructors on developing a list of collaborative deaf-related events for ASL students to attend and build connections with the deaf and signing community

North Hennepin Community College | 2022

Adjunct Instructor

- Designed and developed a Black Culture and History curriculum that supports both course objectives and learning outcomes where it demonstrates an awareness of the individual and institutional dynamics of unequal power relations between groups in contemporary society
- Identified and classified readings and discussions among students to reframe their critical thinking process to analyze their own attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs regarding diversity, oppression, and racism in the deaf community

University of Minnesota-Duluth | 2020 – 2021

Professor

- Designed and developed a diversified American Sign Language (ASL) curriculum that supports both course objectives and learning outcomes
- Articulated and coordinated a campus-wide event titled “2021 Black History Month Celebration” for the campus community in collaboration with external stakeholders.
- Served on the Strategic Planning Committee under the College of Education and Human Service Professions

Missouri Commission for The Deaf and Hard of Hearing | 2019 – 2020

Deaf Community Advocate

- Led sponsorship requests and maintained stewardship with potential donors for all deaf and hard of hearing events
- Liaised between Missouri constituents and state and community leaders to effectively communicate critical updates impacting the deaf/hard-of-hearing community
- Executed the coordination of presentations, public awareness activities, workshops, and law enforcement training sessions on hearing loss, deafness, American Sign Language, legal rights, and services available for persons with hearing loss
- Oversaw and conduct trend analyses of data regarding targeted outreach efforts and diversified advocacy resources for deaf and hard of hearing Missourians
- Arranged Deaf Empowerment Symposiums and Deaf Awareness programs to disseminate handbooks concerning the legal rights of people who are deaf or hard of hearing, and various other materials relating to hearing loss
- Managed MCDHH Social Media accounts and performs market research for minority-owned vendors

Gallaudet University | 2018 – 2019

Residential Life Graduate Assistant

- Planned, organized, staffed, directed, managed, and evaluated programs, initiatives, and activities through collaboration with six (6) residential life advisors (RAs)
- Assisted with the development of a training program for RAs, including the planning and implementation of in-service training and residence hall programming
- Developed strong staff relationships and assist in the supervision of RA staff by facilitating one-on-one meetings and weekly staff meetings
- Maintained residence hall paperwork including residence life programming, payroll, and create weekly work schedules
- Performed administrative and human resource management; Provided support to each RAs to complete their written input into the reporting system

Tennessee School for the Deaf | 2016 – 2018

Youth Service Worker

- Founded and implemented the Cup of Wisdom Club for high school residential students; Pursued funding opportunities including grants and donations that align with the club's programmatic strategy and goals
- Evaluated cottage program budgets to ensure effective allocation of resources and maximized cost-effectiveness
- Developed, strategized, and coordinated fundraising events and community engagement opportunities with local colleges and universities for undergraduate and graduate students
- Participated in and provided advocacy during IEP meetings assigned to a cottage where students are under my supervision during after-school hours

Presentation / Workshops

Cultural Inclusivity in the Digital Age: Promoting Accessibility Through Deaf Lens

Presenter (September 2023) – Accessibility Consumer Technology Summit

Equitable Space: Physical, Language Contact, and Digital

Keynote Speaker (August 2023) – Maryland Association of the Deaf (MDAD)

A Narration of Black Deaf Community: Black American Sign Language, Culture, and History

Speaker (February 2023) – University of West Georgia through American Sign Language Club and National Student Speech Language Hearing Association

Behind The Veil of Deaf Education: Transformative Steps Through Black Deaf Lens

Presenter (December 2022) - California Association of the Deaf (CAD)

Transformative Approaches to Leadership at the Eagles Nest: 13 Guiding Principles

Facilitator/Speaker (November 2022) – California School for the Deaf - Fremont

Sustaining Voice Through Deaf Leadership: How Individuals Reclaim Recognition of One's Voice Through Music

Moderator (February 2021) – University of Minnesota-Duluth

Black History Month: The Importance of Valuing Our African American/Black Interpreters (Via Zoom)

Panel moderator (February 2021) – DEAF, Inc. in St. Louis, Missouri

The Night Before the Inauguration: Looking Back and Ahead (via Zoom)

Panelist (January 2021) – Gallaudet University

Class of 2020 Graduates of Tennessee School for the Deaf (via Zoom)

Commencement Speaker (October 2020)

Youth Leadership in a Pandemic: Black Lives Matter (via Zoom)

Presenter (September 2020) – National Association of the Deaf (NAD)

4th Annual Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Symposium: Disabilities A Multidimensional Experience For All (via Zoom)

Panelist (September 2020) – Kansas Medical Center Office of International Programs

Juneteenth: History & Purpose of the Celebration (via Zoom)

Presenter (June 2020) – Bay Area Black Deaf Advocates

Black Deaf Men in Crisis: what can we do about it?

Presenter (June 2019) - National Deaf Education Conference at Texas School for the Deaf

Certification

Project Management Institute | Project Management Professional (PMP) Certificate | **Expected Completion 2025**

Deafhood Foundation, Incorporated | Deafhood 101 | **2023**

Public Relations Society of America, Inc | Advancing Your Communication Strategy in DE&I Certificate Program | **2021**

Division of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Bootcamp | Consulting for Impact | **2021**

Affiliations

Board Member At-large | **United States of America Deaf Sports Federation (USASDF)** | **2023 - Present**
Inaugural Advisory Board Member | Center for Black Deaf Studies (CBDS), Gallaudet University | **2020 – 2024**

Vice Chair | Registry Interpreters of the Deaf-Deaf Caucus | **2022 – 2023**

President | District of Columbia Area Black Deaf Advocates, Inc. | **2021 – 2023**

Associate Member | American Sign Language Teaching Association (ASLTA) | **2020 – 2021**

Membership Coordinator | American Sign Language Honor Society (ASLHS) | **2020 – 2021**

Associate Member | Minnesota Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (MRID) | **2020 – 2021**

Member | Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated | **2019**

Inaugural Chairperson | Glenn Anderson Scholarship Program, National Black Deaf Advocates, Inc. | **2018 – 2020**

Assistant Director | Collegiate Black Deaf Student Leadership Institute (CBDSLII), National Black Deaf Advocates, Inc. | **2018 – 2019**

Youth Leadership Program Coordinator | District of Columbia Area Black Deaf Advocates, Inc. | **2018 – 2019**

Awards & Recognition

2024 Equity & Social Justice Scholar Award – National Conference on Race & Ethnicity

2023 Marlon Monroyo Excellence in Volunteerism Award (on behalf of District of Columbia Area Black Deaf Advocates) - District of Columbia Mayor's Office of Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing

2022 Deaf Community Leader Award for the District of Columbia – Hamilton Relay

2022 Lillian Williams Champion of Diversity Award – University of West Georgia

2020 Susan M. Daniels Disability Mentoring Hall of Fame – National Disability Mentoring Coalition

Technical Skills

Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook), Microsoft Team, Slack, Asana, Final Pro FCPX, GroupMe

Languages: English, American Sign Language (ASL)