



2025 *Distinguished* GRADUATE

AMANDA SANDOVAL | American Sign Language Deaf Support Specialist

Amanda Sandoval is a devoted single mother of two daughters whose journey has been shaped by love, sacrifice, and the determination to be the advocate her children need — especially her eldest daughter, Halie, who was born deaf and faces additional medical challenges.

For Amanda, the thought of not being able to fully communicate with or advocate for her daughter was too difficult to accept. As Halie grew older, Amanda knew that sitting back was no longer an option. With the encouragement of educators and a deep inner calling, she made the courageous decision to return to school and learn American Sign Language — taking a leap of faith to change the course of both her and her daughters' lives.

Through her educational journey, Amanda not only gained the skills to communicate and connect more deeply with her daughter, but she also discovered a new community, culture, and calling. Her dedication and hard work have earned her multiple academic honors, including recognition on both the Dean's and President's Lists, as well as membership in the ASL Honor Society, Phi Theta Kappa, and Tri-Alpha. She has also served as historian for the ASL Connection Club and was awarded the Rea & Barbara Hinrichs Scholarship.

Amanda's passion for language access and Deaf culture expanded even further during her internship, where she was introduced to the DeafBlind Community of Texas. The experience was transformative — what began as a requirement became a revelation. She discovered not only a new skill set but also a profound connection to a community that now feels like family. This opportunity ignited a deep desire to serve as a bridge between the DeafBlind community and the world, providing access and support with compassion and care.

While she graduated with her degree as a deaf support specialist in December, Amanda's story is far from over. She returned in Spring 2025 to pursue her interpreting degree, with the dream of becoming a skilled music interpreter. Her long-term goal? To one day travel the world — perhaps even interpret on cruise ships — bringing music and meaning to Deaf audiences everywhere.

“We didn't
come this far
just to **come**
this far.”

— **Matthew Reilly**



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