

To usher in Deaf History Month, observed mid-March to mid-April, two Deaf guest speakers came to give Brown Bag presentations. Deaf History Month coincides with the anniversary of the Deaf President Now protest at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. This year marked the 30th anniversary. The protest, led by Deaf students, brought the installation of the first deaf President of the University and changes to the structure of leadership that ensured that every future Gallaudet University President would be deaf, along with 51% of the board. It was a pivotal moment in Deaf history.

On Thursday, March 1, approximately 25 students, faculty, and staff attended "Creating Space", presented by Lisa Cryer, activist, advocate, and Deaf interpreter. She discussed her personal experience and provided insight to allow students to reframe ability, accessibility, attitude, and accountability. Ms. Cryer is an advocate for Deaf and hard of hearing kids, a Deaf mentor for ASL interpreting students, an activist in the Deaf LGBTQ community, and Deaf interpreter. Her advocacy efforts often focus on access to language and the education of Deaf children.

On Monday, March 19, Erin Wiggins, NIU Alumna and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee ASL Studies Program Co-Coordinator taught about ASL idioms and translating English idioms in her presentation, "ASL Idioms, What?". Interested students met in Watson 110 and introduced to idioms in both languages. Some examples of ASL idioms included True-Biz, Kiss-Fist, and Swallow-Fish. If you are wondering what these idioms are, or what they mean, find an ASL instructor and ask away!