

Athena Troy is a practicing attorney, a wife, and a mother to two beautiful little girls - Eve (age 7) and Aria (age 4). Eve is currently enrolled in first grade at the Rocky Mountain Deaf School. Eve was born with a rare and complex brain disorder called Pontine Tegmental Cap Dysplasia. In addition to being profoundly deaf, Eve is g-tube dependent and has gross and fine motor delays, vision and eye issues, sleep apnea, and a number of gastrointestinal issues. Despite these many challenges, Eve is a thriving, loving, joyful child who loves learning, her little sister, and her friends. She also has the most beautiful smile and infectious laugh. With the support of her husband, John, Athena has been able to successfully balance the demands of her career and being a mother of a special needs child.

Dallas McCarthy is from Iowa, born deaf and grew up oral. He attended and graduated from RIT where he discovered ASL. Dallas has a wonderful wife who is deaf and is a teacher. He has 2 beautiful daughters ages 4 and 6 who also are deaf.

Dr. Alejandra Ullauri, Doctor of Audiology, MPH: Alejandra is an audiologist with extensive experience in the diagnosis and treatment of hearing disorders in the pediatric and adult population. She holds a Doctorate degree in audiology from University of Florida, a Master's degree in audiology from Flinders University of South Australia, a Masters in Public Health from Universidad San Francisco de Quito. She is certified by the American Board of Audiology in Cochlear Implants. She held audiology positions in Australia, England, Ecuador and the US. Her latest position was as Manager of Audiology at the University of Chicago Medicine. Currently she participates in the team of experts to review the WHO Ear and Hearing Survey Protocol, a collaboration between the World Health Organization and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. She has also participated in the group of experts in cochlear implants revising the specialty cochlear implant exam offered by the American Board of Audiology. She is also a member of the Education Committee at the American Academy of Audiology and serves in the Board of Directors for Illinois Hands and Voices, an organization which offers supports to parents and families of children recently diagnosed with a hearing loss. Alejandra is bilingual and deeply committed to the field of Audiology and Hearing Sciences.

Apryl Chauhan: We began our journey in 2001 just prior to the Newborn Hearing Screening launch in our local hospital. My first born was not identified as deaf until she was two years old which set my husband and I on a fast pace, learn as much as you can-as quickly as you can, adventure. We were fortunate enough to immediately be connected with a Parent Links Mentor and to this day I credit that experience as being a great part of my daughter's success. Having a connection with another parent raising a deaf child was truly priceless and from that connection I learned the power of parent to parent support. For many years I served on the board of California's IMPACT organization, working closely with a variety of professional, medical, educational and cultural organizations supporting families with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children. For four years I also worked as a Parent Links mentor in Southern California, making those first contacts to parents with newly identified babies, and providing the same level of compassion, understanding and support that I was so fortunate enough to receive in the early days of my own daughter's journey. The many parents and professionals I have worked with over the years have greatly impacted our families experience, however I feel most grateful to our connection with the Deaf Community. From my very first interaction with a deaf adult, to all of the painfully slow conversations I struggled with in American Sign Language, our family has been embraced and supported by the community. We have been fortunate enough to meet incredible role models for our daughter and have made lifelong friends who openly and positively continue to guide and support our family. Because of our cherished connection with the Deaf Community you can find both our deaf and hearing children on various modeling, TV and film projects. Our family's story was featured in the novel "Far from the Tree", and recently our daughter has gained notoriety with the success of the Deaf Film Camp music videos, such as Pharrell Williams' "Happy" which has over a million views on YouTube! Now that my daughter is fifteen it's the perfect time to jump back into the world of parent to parent support. Although I well remember the early days of not knowing what to do or where to go turn, I now have more tools and more years of experience under my belt. Our family has experience in both mainstream education as well as the school for the deaf. We know what it means to work hard on speech development as well as learning a whole new language and culture. We have looked at every educational, technological and

communication opportunity out there and took advantage of many of them, believing that there is no one way, or only way for our daughter. Exploring has given us a unique insight into the many avenues parents find themselves on. I'm honored to take on the role of President for California Hands & Voices and I look forward to working with families all across this great state, supporting each other, sharing our thoughts and ideas and working collectively towards the same goal.... successful and happy children.

Maria Rodriguez My name is Maria Rodriguez, I am the Spanish Speaking Guide By Your Side (GBYS) for Colorado Hands & Voices. I live in Centennial, Colorado with my husband and our daughter. We have a daughter who is 14 year old daughter, her name is Ariana and she is in the 9th grade. I was born in Mexico but raised in Colorado since I was 8 years old and I was raised in a Spanish speaking household along with 6 other siblings. My husband was also born in Mexico and his primary language is Spanish. I've been working with Colorado Hands & Voices for 9 years as a Spanish GBYS.

Rosabel Agbayani, MPH is a Pediatric Clinical Researcher at Rady Children's Hospital San Diego. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Human Development from CSU San Marcos, a Bachelor of Science in Communicative Disorders and Deaf Education from Utah State University, and a Masters in Public Health from National University. She is a parent of a child who is Hard of Hearing and volunteers her time as a Board Member and community organizer for California Hands & Voices.

Rana Ottallah: A parent and a dedicated Special Education Advocate interacts effectively with individuals and parents of children with disabilities, schools, districts and the State Department of Education to ensure Free and Appropriate Education for students with disabilities, and appropriate home and community services. Advocates passionately for Deaf Education reform, and Language access for diverse population in the state of Louisiana. -Special Education Advisory Panel Member (SEAP) – LDOE (2013-2017) -Commissioner for the Deaf (2016- present) - Deaf Education Alliance Chair (2016-2017) - MFP Task Force member 2014 -Louisiana Hands and Voices Advisory Panel Member (2014-present) - Partners in Policy Making 2013 Graduate - Driving force behind Act 250- Deaf Child Bill of Rights Amendment - A member of Louisiana ESSA advocacy group that advises and monitors state implementation plan. - Faculty members of "Collaborate for students with unique communication needs grant", as a parent advocate presenting on federal and state laws and regulations (2016-present). - Executive Board member of MUHSEN (Muslims understanding and supporting Special Education Needs

Djenne-amal Morris brings passion and real life experience to her role as parent/professional trainer, facilitator and motivational speaker whose view of the world not as it is, but as it could be. As a mother of a son who is Deaf-Plus, she strives to build an atmosphere of support and empowerment for families of children with special needs and the professionals who serve them. Djenne provides speeches, workshops, trainings and individual coaching and mentoring nationally. Djenne was raised in a diverse community in New York City by a family who valued education and inclusion. She received her BA in Psychology/Sociology from Clark University in Worcester, Mass. Djenne and her high school sweetheart, Michael, have been married for 25 years and have three children. Their daughter, Imani (23) works as a campus minister at UT in Austin, Texas and Zakiya-mali (17) is a high school junior. Malik (22) attends the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf. Malik was born with CHARGE Syndrome, a genetic condition in which he is deafblind and developmentally delayed. Malik has been the inspiration for her family's resilience and she has dedicated her life to being a conduit of hope for other families. Djenne has always shown an interest in family, professional, interpersonal and cultural dynamics/collaboration. Fueling her passion for helping others, she worked in the full-time ministry, taught parenting classes, leadership seminars and worked in higher education in Boston. For 17 years she supported families in her role as Family Specialist for the New England and North Carolina Deaf-Blind Projects and currently works as a Parent Educator/Training Coordinator at BEGINNINGS for Parents of Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing in Raleigh NC. Djenne proudly serves as the President of the Board of Directors of Hands & Voices HQ, and as newly appointed Multicultural Faculty Advisor for the NC UNC-Chapel Hill LEND program. Djenne is an avid reader, yogi and a newly published author; **The Art of Collaboration: Lessons from Families of Children with Disabilities.**