

## ***Texas ASL Educators 2024 Presenters***



**Jennifer Bennett**

I was not born into the Deaf World, but I got here as quickly as I could. I studied Deaf Education at Texas Christian University and taught at a school for the Deaf for 7 years. While I loved preaching to the choir, the time came for me to bring the gospel of ASL and Deaf culture to unknowing heathen masses and I taught ASL as a foreign language at a public high school for 13 years. Along the way, I earned a Master's degree in Teaching American Sign Language from the University of Northern Colorado. Currently, I teach in a seminary of sorts - Tarrant County College's Sign Language Interpreting Program.



**Eric Breland**

Eric Breland has been teaching ASL at the high school and collegiate level for over 10 years. Currently, he teaches at the Liberal Arts and Science Academy (LASA) in Austin, TX where he is the World Language Department Chair and District Lead for the ASL program.



**Bethany Davis**

Bethany has worked in the educational field since 2007 starting as a Deaf Ed paraprofessional, then ASL interpreter, then ASL teacher. She helped write the ASL curriculum for two school districts and piloted the ASL program at Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD, where she currently teaches and mentors. She has presented various topics of best ASL teaching practices from the local to international workshops/webinars/conferences.



**David Duvall**

David DuVall has been in education for 12 years teaching American Sign Language, serving 2 years at Cypress Fairbanks ISD and soon to be 10 years at La Porte ISD. He has served on the TASLE Committee from 2016-2022. He, like the rest of us, enjoys teaching ASL and collaborating and learning from his colleagues across the state of Texas. On his time off, it is no surprise he loves his Houston Astros, and you'll always find him at the game or somewhere watching the ballgame, and he loves to travel and meet people!

## ***Texas ASL Educators 2024 Presenters***



**Pamela Farley**

Pamela has been teaching ASL since 2017 at Veritas Academy and 2020 at One Day Academy, both in Austin, Texas. She has been involved in TASLE conferences since 2018. Pamela holds a MS degree in Education of the Deaf, a BA in Communication Studies, an AA in Speech Communication, and certifications in Social Work, Social Media, and Trust-Based Relational Intervention Training (TBRI). She has experience as a Social Media manager, blogger, motivational speaker, and sign music performer. Pamela and her husband, also deaf, have four adult hearing children.



**Brendon Feagans**

I graduated from Stephen F Austin State University with a degree in Deaf Education in 2017, with a minor in linguistics. I became a professional interpreter with the State of Texas in 2016. I have been teaching ASL for 7 years now in and around the North Texas area. I am currently working in Prosper ISD! I think storytelling is one of the best mediums for teaching language and I hope you enjoy the presentation.



**Debra Garner**

Debra describes herself as “I am a cool ASL Teacher and taught for 8 years from ASL 1 to 4 . Proud former TSD School Bus Deaf Driver ! ( Yes Large Yellow Bus ) I have a lovely and beautiful Proud Mom of 6 children. I Love to play Pickleball and Softball.” Fun Facts about Debra : Expert Pro Last Minute , Multi Tasks in One Day ! Dog Lover



**Melissa Ibanez**

I graduated from Gallaudet University with an AA degree in Dance, Bachelors in Elementary Education and Masters in Deaf Ed. I've been teaching since 2000. First 15 years as a Deaf Ed teacher, and part time as an ASL and Deaf Culture Instructor at TCC for 5 years. This will be my 10 year teaching full time at South Texas College. I'm a single mom with 2 daughters, 3 dogs and a pet snake. I'm part of different organizations such as ASLTA and ASLHS. I've been the Graduation Coordinator for ASL Honor Society since 2019.

## ***Texas ASL Educators 2024 Presenters***



**Nicholas Lalanne**

Nicholas Lalanne, with over 15 years of diverse experience teaching ASL and Deaf Culture, is known for his innovative teaching style and creative use of technology in the classroom. An important aspect of his approach is the use of varied assessment techniques to ensure an interactive and captivating learning experience. He will share tips on engaging students using the TRUE+WAY ASL textbook and the What's the Sign? ASL dictionary app, which he has successfully utilized for over five years.



**Dannette Lira-Anderson**

Dannette has been teaching ASL at San Marcos High School since August 2021. She has been teaching ASL at college level for 25 years and high school for 14 years. She has taught Elementary Deaf Ed for 11 years. In Bryan ISD, she has taught beginning & advanced ASL classes for parents of Deaf children and staff. In college, she taught ASL at all levels at Blinn Community College in Bryan, TX and Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, TX. She is currently teaching ASL at Lone Star College System, CyFair Campus and North Harris campus. She has a Master of Science in Deaf Education/Deaf Studies from Lamar University and Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Communication from University of Houston. She joined TASLE in 2018. During free time, she loves making chalk crafts, spending time with her dog and family and traveling.



**Robyn Marcak**

(Deaf) holds B.A. in Education from California State University, Northridge, as well as an M.S. in Deaf Education from Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas. In the state of Texas, she is certified in two areas: All Levels in Deaf Education and Secondary Level in ASL. She is an ACTFL (American Council Teachers of Foreign Languages Association) member. She currently serves on state and national board committees: ASL Access, TCCTA, Houston Community and Lone Star Colleges. She has won several awards but these are the recent state and national awards: NISOD Award 2012 and Teaching Excellence Award 2017. She is currently a coordinator and professor at Blinn College. She will be starting her 27th year for the upcoming school year.

## ***Texas ASL Educators 2024 Presenters***



**Lisa McLeroy**

After graduating from Abilene Christian University in 1990, Lisa was pursued in the hotel industry as an income auditor for the next 20 years. She has experience in both private and public school since 2008, which includes serving on the district's curriculum writing team. She has been involved with TASLE since 2016, serving as participant, presenter and now as part of the leadership. When not teaching, Lisa enjoys hanging out with her family, playing board games, and watching professional football.



**Julia Nelson**

I have been teaching since 2008. I spent 7.5 years as a Deaf Ed teacher in middle and high school, then switched to teaching ASL 10 years ago. I have been with La Vernia ISD since 2019. My first time to TASLE was in 2019. I loved it so much I became a presenter and committee member. Can't wait to share and collaborate with you all!



**Cris Nunn**

I am a born Texan, grew up in Dallas. I hold a masters in Deaf Studies with a focus in Sign Language Teaching from Gallaudet University. I taught ASL and Interpreting at the post-secondary level for 12 years, and at the secondary level for 3 years before transitioning to Deaf Education. I have returned to teaching secondary level ASL at TSD.



**Randi Shaw**

Hello! I am Randi Shaw and was born and raised in Mineola, Texas. My educational background is varied as I have degrees in ASL Interpreting, English, and History. I have been involved in education for 15 years. The first 5 years I worked as a collegiate and community interpreter, and these last 10 years I have been teaching ASL and sponsoring student leadership organizations such as Student Council and National Honor Society. My first school was Whitehouse High School (2014-2020) where I also taught College English at Tyler Junior College. My current school is Forney High School (2020-present) where I lead our World Languages Department. This school year I was also blessed to be named the Forney High Teacher of the Year for 2024.

## ***Texas ASL Educators 2024 Presenters***

### **Tracy Wilson -**

Hello, my name is Tracy Wilson and I teach American Sign Language (ASL) to 9th to 12th graders at San Marcos High School. This is my second year teaching ASL. Before this, I taught at the Texas School for the Deaf for 4 years, working with Preschool and Elementary students. I also work as a part-time Adjunct at San Antonio Alamo College. I hold a Master's in Deaf Education/Special Education and a Bachelor's in Elementary Education from the University of Arizona.

In my free time, I enjoy being a mom to 4 CODA (Children of Deaf Adults) kids, reading magazines, and working on renovating our house.

I joined TASLE in 2023 and look forward to learning more from this TASLE conference!



**Rebekah Witt**

"I'm a dynamic third-year department chair and instructor, bringing six years of expertise in teaching American Sign Language (ASL) to students at all proficiency levels. I'm passionate about crafting vibrant curriculums and implementing innovative teaching methods that captivate learners, fostering interactive and engaging learning environments. A regular presenter at the Texas ASL Educators conference, I eagerly share insights on enhancing student engagement, effective language acquisition techniques, and strategies for accommodating and tracking student progress."

💎🕶️ **THANK YOU** so much for sharing your knowledge! 💎🕶️