Deaf deaf world workshop

BY KIERA MCKENDRICK
CRUSADER NEWS STAFF

On Tuesday, Sept. 25, as part of national Deaf Awareness Week, the Deaf Studies Program at Holy Cross co-sponsored the program, “It’s A Deaf Deaf World.” The interactive workshop, an annual event that is meant to heighten the awareness of deaf culture in the world, took place at the Hogan Campus Center in a morning and an afternoon session. By participating, students were able to catch a glimpse of what it is like being a deaf person immersed in a hearing culture. Through role reversal, students experienced the frustrations that a deaf person might feel because of the lack of understanding of their means of communication.

Volunteers, mostly deaf persons themselves, from the Worcester Center for Learning and Working, set up four booths that exposed participating students to some typical situations that a deaf person might encounter on a daily basis. Some of these booths included mock settings of a restaurant, a bank, travel agency, and a hospital, to name a few. At these booths, students had to order food, make reservations, and converse with other people using forms of communication other than the spoken word. While being immersed in a non-hearing environment, students were able to experience the frustrations that a deaf person might feel every day, as they had to use lip reading, gestures, facial movements, and signed English only to communicate.

Randi Foot ’05, an American Sign Language (ASL) student, found that communicating without speaking was more difficult than she had imagined. “I discovered how truly difficult it was to read lips!”

Whitney Smith ’03, also an ASL student, compared her own experience in “It’s A Deaf Deaf World” to “being placed in a foreign country without having the slightest idea of what language is being spoken.”

In one situation, a student sat on a bench in a fictional park, while two deaf volunteers carried on a conversation in ASL. At this booth, depending upon the extent of their sign language experience, volunteers encouraged students to interrupt the silent conversation to include themselves. Students left this experience feeling the aggravation that one might experience as a deaf person.

“I felt awful,” described Liz Charity ’05, also an ASL student. “It was so frustrating. While I thought I was being rude, they wanted me to communicate with them. I realized how different the means of communication are for the deaf. When we begin interrupting is considered rude, but in deaf world, it’s welcomed. Being so frustrated, I realized how difficult it must be for the deaf to talk to a hearing person who does not understand sign language.”

The program also showed participants various new technologies available to deaf and hearing-impaired people. Volunteers and representatives displayed different devices that help deaf people attend to daily skills that they need to communicate. These devices range from an earphone around a deaf student’s neck that light up when someone enters their house or apartment. There are also phone amplifiers available to increase the volume of the receiver on the telephone for those who can hear with difficulty. The increasing amount of new technology accessible to those with disabilities has been a great aid to deaf and hearing impaired people.

Overall, the program gave students who attended different perspectives on what it is like to have a disability. These volunteers gave the program participants a slight idea of the efforts they have to use to communicate daily, along with the technologies that are needed to perform simple tasks.

Judy Fask, director of Deaf Studies at Holy Cross, explained the goal of the workshop racially, when she said, “Hopefully, It’s A Deaf Deaf World serves as an eye-opener to understanding differences. It teaches that with cooperation, communication is possible.”

Relay for Disaster Relief

Relay, page 1

everything from sweatshirts and t-shirts from the Bookstore to gift certificates supplied by local merchants.

With the help of the Residence Life staff, the groups will consist of teams made up of the different halls in the dorms as well as off-campus students, to whom an e-mail has already been sent. Additionally, members of Holy Cross’ faculty and staff as well as alumni are encouraged to attend and show their support. Local businesses are also being solicited for donations.

Live bands from the Holy Cross campus will provide entertainment during the relay, and the famous Crusader Marching Band will be there to give a sense of spirit to the occasion. It is hoped that all will attend and afterwards join CAB in participating in the Relay for Disaster Relief.

That’s News to Me

National and International News Stories

BY JOSH BROUGH
CRUSADER NEWS STAFF

International News: Taliban claims bin Laden is hidden; U.S. reaffirms its stance

This past Sunday, Taliban’s ambassador to Pakistan, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef, informed the press that Osama bin Laden, the prime suspect in the Sept. 11 tragedies, is hidden in an undisclosed location “for his safety,” presumably protecting him from a possible United States commando raid.

This statement has caused a lot of skepticism in the U.S. because it stands in sharp contrast to their previous assertion that the Taliban did not know where the suspected terrorist was located. In this shift of stance, Zaeef informed reporters that his expectations are that bin Laden will comply with a request made by Afghan Islamic clerics that he depart Afghanistan. Zaeef said he was not aware of when bin Laden would leave and where he will then go, but that it would ultimately be up to bin Laden himself.

Right now bin Laden “is being moved around and he does not stay in one place,” Zaeef said. “The whole issue is because...he is in danger.” However, Zaeef added, “We are stopping him from making any actions.”

Meanwhile, the U.S. reiterated its stance that the Taliban must hand over bin Laden to the United States or it will face military consequences. White House Chief of Staff Andrew H. Card commented, “We do not want any government to harbor terrorists, and the Taliban government has been harboring terrorists.” However, at this point in time, the U.S. has had no luck in gaining any information as to where bin Laden is. Phillips said yesterday, “It really makes me wonder.”

Just last week, Massport executive director Virginia Buckingham revealed that unaccompanied baggage was found to be full of bullets past airport security checkpoints, controlled by private agencies hired by the airlines.

Phillips commented, “The sad part is that all the politicians are trying to give people’s confidence up, but [the authorities] seem more interested in getting the economy running again than in real security.”

Lecture held on death penalty

Sr. Prejean, page 1

tions of the poor.

Sister Helen attacked the prison problem in the United States as well. She reminded the audience that California spent more money on its incarceration systems last year than on those of education. She recognized the “sub-economy of drugs” as a hindrance to the poor. “When a boy, who has known poverty all his life, and who is only going to grow up to work at McDonalds making just enough to stay alive is offered twenty bucks to run this little bag of white powder down the street, what do you think he is going to do?” she quipped.

Sister Helen also addressed the mistakes made by the United States court system. She admitted that while no manmade institution can be expected to be perfect, when the life of a man or woman is on the line, certainly the greatest care should be taken to ensure that innocent people are not put to death. Fortunately, 98 people who have been removed from death row after appeals have proven their innocence, but the prejudiced appeals process certainly could not have found every innocent person.

She underscored the fact that innocent people are being put to death by the United States government and deemed it to be sufficient cause to require a stay on all executions until further discussions take place.

In conclusion, Sister Helen challenged the members of the audience to do their part. “I know [the death penalty] is a tough issue,” Sister Helen said, “but all God asks us to do is start walking down the path.”

Sister Helen Prejean, author of “Dead Man Walking,” spoke on the prejudices of the death penalty in Hogan.