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OUACHITA
BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



NEWS

From the "Ouachitonian": Meghann Bledsoe



By Emma Dennis

October 17, 2022

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or (870) 245-5208.

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – Meghann Bledsoe was one of many people in America who grew up bilingual. Her second language is not spoken, though. Bledsoe grew up fluent in American Sign Language.

Bledsoe, a freshman Christian studies/Christian missions and Christian studies/Christian ministries major from Plano, Texas, is the hearing child of two deaf parents. Bledsoe explained that both of her parents are the only members of their families who are deaf, and it not being genetic means that she, along with her older brother and younger sister, are all able-bodied in terms of hearing.

Despite what would seem to be a challenging life, Bledsoe had little to lament in terms of growing up.

"Typically, if they didn't have a translator, I would be there to help translate, and there were times where I felt frustrated," Bledsoe said. "I felt really responsible for making sure they understood what was happening. But I realize my parents didn't expect me to be perfect. They want to be included, but they don't want to make me feel like I'm the only way."

Growing up was a learning curve for Bledsoe. She learned ASL from her parents and spoke English with her grandparents, learning the languages simultaneously.

Bledsoe had an open mind and open heart for where life will lead her in terms of deaf missions.

“We all have those things where we tell God like, ‘Absolutely not this one thing.’ And for me it was deaf ministries,” Bledsoe said. “I was like, ‘Absolutely not God, like that is not something I want.’ It’s actually so cool how He opened my heart up to it.”

Bledsoe tells a story of a summer internship where she interacted with the deaf missions on multiple occasions, from her roommate being fluent in ASL as well, to speaking with a partially deaf woman who was healed after her ministry group prayed for her. Since then, she’s had an open heart to the idea of deaf ministries.

Bledsoe explained that people regularly take advantage of deaf people. She herself had her rebellious phase in kindergarten before she understood the implications of her actions.

“It was easy for me to go behind their back, so I had to be more aware of like, I love my parents and it’s really important that I honor them because if I don’t, I can seriously hurt our relationship,” Bledsoe said.

Bledsoe and her family were very close to each other, making a conscious daily effort to include each other in their lives, whether that be through signing at the dinner table so her parents are in on the stories being told or her parents comforting her as a child from a storm they couldn’t hear. They choose to not let these roadblocks stand in their way.

Photo by Levi Dade