



From Neil McDevitt, Executive Director, June 3, 2020

<https://youtu.be/GESSR51ieP4>

My name is Neil McDevitt and I'm the Executive Director for the Deaf-Hearing Communication Centre in Philadelphia.

DHCC is not a political organization. Our mission is simple. We do our best to provide equal access for Deaf, hard of hearing, and DeafBlind people.

George Floyd. Ahmaud Arbery. Breona Taylor. David McAtee. Eric Garner. And countless more.

We must say their names

Black Lives Matter

Many people today are fighting for basic human and civil rights. We know there are Deaf, hard of hearing and DeafBlind people who want to add their voice to peaceful protests but don't have equal access. This changes today. We are committing to coordinating equal access for Deaf individuals who want to participate in peaceful protests by connecting them with volunteer Deaf and/or Hearing ASL interpreters.

We are also working to inform law enforcement agencies in the region about interpreters working to provide access to ensure no one is targeted as a result of a misunderstanding.

If you intend to march as part of a peaceful protest, please text us with as much advance information (ie: your name, where interpreters should meet you, etc.) at (484) 474-0071. We will do our best to provide access for you as long as possible.

However, the safety of our interpreters is key. If the situation becomes violent, the interpreter may need to step away.

We have never done this before so we've got a lot of learning to do. We'll work together to figure it out.

Again: If you're a Deaf, hard of hearing, or DeafBlind individual and you would like to participate, please text us at (484) 474-0071.

If you're an Interpreter who wants to volunteer, please let us know. Text us also at: (484) 474-0071

The leaders in this conversation at the intersection of being Black and being Deaf are: Philadelphia Chapter of Black Deaf Advocates, National Black Deaf Advocates, National Alliance of Black Interpreters and our local Black Deaf and Interpreter community members.

We will not be silent. We will amplify the voices of our Black Deaf community members. And we will do what we can to make sure the fight is as accessible as possible. Thank you.