



# SPECIAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION DISORDERS EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

*Jonathan Scherling*  
*Lecturer*

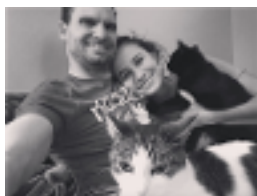
*Jonathan has been part of the UNO SECD family for 15 years. Jonathan teaches in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Sign Language Interpreting programs.*

### ***What led you to choose a career in teaching American Sign Language and why did you choose UNO?***

I studied American Sign Language (ASL) at Gallaudet University, the only university in the world that is specifically designed to accommodate Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. ASL is my native language; however, I did not learn the linguistics of ASL until I was in college. It was fascinating to study the complexity of ASL's structure and sociolinguistics. After I graduated from Gallaudet, my former high school teacher, Dr. Julie Delkamiller, urged me to apply to UNO as an ASL instructor. I decided to apply and got the full-time job here. I have always enjoyed teaching people about Deaf community, Deaf culture, and ASL.

### ***What is an interesting fact about you that not many people know?***

I am a third-generation member of the Deaf community. My whole family is Deaf, and my parents' dog is deaf too. While a diagnosis of deafness is often viewed negatively because it focuses on what we cannot do, we view it with positivity and a wide range of opportunities. We don't perceive deafness as something to be fixed, instead we celebrate our heritage, culture, and traditions. The Deaf community is a close knit group, and I am blessed to be a part of it.



### ***What outdoor activities do you like to participate in?***

I like many outdoor activities because I love being outside! Camping is the activity I enjoy the most. My girlfriend and I

just finished remodeling our 1963 Shasta camper interior and we plan to go camping more this year. I also enjoy hiking, kayaking, skiing, and landscaping.

### ***You recently graduated with your master's degree, what is it in and do you plan to use it?***

I completed my master's degree in Public Administration and Urban Studies at UNO last year. I can't say enough positive things about this program because it taught me a lot about community challenges across America, in particular Omaha and Nebraska. I am the new part-time director at the Nebraska Deaf Heritage Museum and Cultural Center and I have already used some resources from the leadership classes I took at UNO.

### ***What is the most impactful experience you've had in your teaching career?***

Several years ago, one of my interpreters at a meeting was my former student. It puts a smile on my face knowing that my work has made an impact on my former students and also my community. It is a win-win situation because interpreters are like a bridge connecting between two languages, ASL and English speaking.

