



December 10, 2008

President Davila:

Hello, I'm Robert Davila, president of Gallaudet University. Welcome to *Bob's Vlog*. I'm proud to let you know that our guest today is Joseph Hill, a doctoral student in the Department of Linguistics here at Gallaudet. Earlier this year, he spent six months as a Fulbright scholar in Siena, Italy. I had the pleasure of meeting Joseph while he was in Italy last May and seeing his work first-hand, as well as other things that he was doing there. Welcome, Joseph!

Joseph Hill:

Thank you.

President Davila:

Before we get started, I know that you have a slide show of pictures that you want to show us. These are pictures you took yourself while in Italy. Let's take a look.

(One minute video montage plays on the *Bob's Vlog* large screen on the set.)

President Davila:

Italy is such a beautiful country! You know that living in another country for an extended period really gives a person a different perspective and an opportunity to learn about that country's culture. That's really wonderful. Joseph, I have some questions for you so that our audience can get to know you and learn about your recent experiences in Italy. Let me ask you, what did you enjoy most about your time spent in Italy?

Joseph Hill:

Really, it was a pleasure traveling in Italy and going to the different cities, and also making new deaf friends in Italy, becoming involved with the deaf community, and attending different events. I really enjoyed my experience there.

President Davila:

And exactly what did you do? What was the purpose?

Joseph Hill:

I focused on research in deaf schools, both mainstream and residential schools. I focused on language attitudes of sign language in schools, and I had two research questions. One thing I wanted to know was, in those schools where they have bilingual education, how do they incorporate sign language in the school? Secondly, how do the teachers, principals, and parents deal with language attitudes

both inside and outside of school? I went to six different schools in Italy – I didn't only go to the schools – after doing research, I would go out and socialize with deaf people in the cities. Also, I was fortunate to be invited into some homes and to be invited to deaf events such as sports, or to see plays. It was a really enjoyable experience.

President Davila:

That's very interesting. I also wanted to ask you, what made you apply for a Fulbright scholarship?

Joseph Hill:

I applied for a Fulbright because I wanted to develop in my profession, for education and personal growth. I have been studying in the field of linguistics and have learned all of the different theories. I know them all, but I still felt that something was missing. I needed to go to another country and learn their culture and language, too. So, it felt good to have that opportunity, that education, and learn their language. Also, upon returning, I would have some examples of language experience myself for when I teach classes here.

President Davila:

I'm sure that you had a choice of many different countries, so I wonder why you chose Italy?

Joseph Hill:

I chose Italy because we have Italian students come to Gallaudet for their Fulbright, so I met them, talked with them, and became friends with them. Also, one advisor in my department has a relationship with Italy, so I thought it made sense for me to go to Italy and study there. That's why I chose it.

President Davila:

And I'm sure that you learned LIS, Italian Sign Language. Tell us about that.

Joseph Hill:

I learned LIS – signed like this – from Italian deaf students who came here. They taught me. Also, when I went to Italy, I really picked it up on my own. I learned it through communicating with it. It was hard, but I really enjoyed that. Also, I had the opportunity to interpret for a group of deaf Americans and Italian students. I interpreted for both of them. That was in my sixth month, and it went well.

President Davila:

Did you use LIS primarily during the time you were in Italy? It seems to me that you developed your skills to achieve equal ability in both languages?

Joseph Hill:

Yes, most of the time I used Italian Sign Language but, when I met Americans, I used ASL. Most of the time, I used LIS.

President Davila:

Also, I want to ask you, what is the Siena School for Liberal Arts?

Joseph Hill:

The Siena School is located in Siena, which, in Italian sign language, is signed this way. I chose that school as my host school. That school focuses on liberal arts education for college and university students. They come to Italy to learn Italian culture and language. That school also offers different courses related to art, for example, photography, painting, sculpture, creative writing, music, poetry, and various other courses related to the arts. I was fortunate to be involved. That school tries to be involved in the deaf community. They set up conferences and workshops related to deaf education, deaf studies, and deaf culture. I was fortunate to be involved, and some of my research was for them.

President Davila:

Do you have any plans to go back to Italy?

Joseph Hill:

Yes, I will go back to Italy next year, in July. I will teach a cultural studies course there for one month.

President Davila:

That's great. You know that Gallaudet has a long history with Italy. Joseph is the 14th Gallaudet student to go to Italy as a Fulbright fellow since the program was established between the Italian deaf community and Gallaudet 20 years ago. Thirty-six Italian students and professionals have come to Gallaudet through the Mason Perkins Scholarship Program and Roberto Wirth Scholarship Program. Those two programs are coordinated by Dr. Elena Radutzky, director of the Mason Perkins Deafness Fund.

In addition to Joseph, Gallaudet also has had three other Fulbright scholars in the past year. One was Krista Leitch Walker, a Ph.D. student in administration who went to Dublin and Kerry, Ireland to research and develop training curriculum for deaf families with hearing children and the educators who work with them. Brayde Ridenhour, a 2007 graduate in administration and deaf education, worked with schools for the deaf in China. And, Daniel Nead, a Ph.D. student in clinical psychology, conducted research on how deaf Israelis react to traumatic situations during his work in Tel Aviv.

If you want to know more about the Fulbright program, global internships, or programs for study abroad, please get that information from the Center for International Programs and Services at cpso.gallaudet.edu.

Thank you very much for watching. We will be seeing you again on another *Bob's Vlog* shortly. So long!