



Amy Andersen

*American Sign Language Teacher
Ocean City High School, Ocean City, NJ*

Amy Andersen started an American Sign Language (ASL) class at Ocean City High School in 2004. Today, she teaches three levels of ASL to more than 150 students and has made such an impact on Ocean City, it is becoming known as the “Deaf-friendly” town on the Jersey shore.



Ms. Andersen gives her students the opportunity to interact directly with the Deaf community. She runs ASL socials at a local coffee shop, where deaf volunteers practice sign language with her students. Her students also had the opportunity to volunteer at a nearby day-care center that was caring for a Deaf baby. Additionally, every year her students create and perform an ASL Show that raises money for various Deaf causes.

Most important, Ms. Andersen teaches her students how to look at a group of people who are different and simply view them as a variation of themselves. That is the fundamental lesson on *appreciation for diversity* and it is why Ms. Andersen was so deserving of this honor.