

Carolyn McCaskill, Ph.D. *and the Black ASL Project*

Carolyn McCaskill attended the Alabama School for the Negro Deaf in Talladega and was in the first integrated class in 1968 at the Alabama School for the Deaf. In 1977, she completed a BA degree in Psychology with a minor in Social Work, and a MA degree in Counseling of the Deaf in 1979 both from Gallaudet (College) University. Dr. McCaskill is a recipient of the Thomas and Julia Mayes Award 2005. In that same year, she earned her Ph.D. in Special Education Administration and Supervision. She is currently a full professor in the Department of American Sign Language and Deaf Studies at Gallaudet University, where she has been teaching since 1996. Carolyn has conducted numerous seminars and workshops related to multicultural issues in the Deaf community, and Black Deaf history and culture. She is also the Project Co-Director of the Black ASL Project.

Black ASL Project Book and DVD Now Available

The historical segregation in American communities and schools has played a major role in the linguistic differences found between blacks and whites in the deaf community. Like their hearing counterparts, Deaf African Americans experienced racial discrimination and marginalization, resulting in the development of a dialect of signing different from that of white signing populations. The Black ASL Project is a language project which aims to describe the linguistic features of a variety of American Sign Language (ASL) used by African American signers known as Black ASL. Specific aspects of sign formation and vocabulary were analyzed and many of the findings are included in the 2011 book, *The Hidden Treasure of Black ASL*. This compilation also includes stories about what life is like in the black deaf community.

The DVD and the book *The Hidden Treasure of Black ASL* are available through Gallaudet Press. [For more information visit the Black ASL Project website.](#)