



Jazzmyne: “I was born with hearing loss and have been using American Sign Language for 24 years. I started teaching American Sign Language during COVID, and since then, I’ve taught all these people ASL because you will never know where you’re going to need to communicate—at your job, with family and friends, at school.”

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Gladys: “This building used to be my hair salon, Gladys’s Hair Express, and we’ve been in Florence most of my adult life. But when Jazzmyne graduated with her masters degree from Gardner Webb, she had a hard time finding a position in her degree field—accounting.

And I said to Jazzmyne, listen, God has blessed you. Don’t look at yourself as a person with a disability, but as someone with the ability to soar. I wasn’t going to do hair anymore—I did that for something like 40 years. And I said, use what God has blessed you with and teach others how to communicate through ASL. Offer a service to help the deaf community, and you’ll be successful.

Other people can be accountants.”

...

Jazzmyne: “So, I decided to open my business here in December 2022.

I teach beginners through fluent students. Along with learning words, phrases, and sentences, I like to quiz my students, and I send videos and notes to help them improve and move to the next level.

I love making people laugh when I teach.”

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Gladys: “She’s done great with it, and it has really taken off. She’s had great support from the Florence area and even has people coming from Columbia to take her classes. So, it’s really been a blessing.”

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Jazzmyne: “Opening this business and having students who love the classes has really touched my heart. I opened the American Sign Language Studio because I want to help people communicate with our deaf community and maybe become interpreters one day.

You never know where you'll have the chance to communicate with someone who is deaf, to connect."

—Jazzmyne Pipkins, owner, [American Sign Language Studio](#)

—Gladys Thomas, former owner of Gladys's Hair Express and Jazzmyne's mom