

LOCAL / AREA NEWS

NEED OF DEAF BLACKS RECOGNIZED

By Susan Teeter
Enquirer Reporter

Members of the Black Deaf Concerns Caucus celebrated a victor at the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) convention when their list of minority needs received NAD support Saturday morning.

Now that the concerns of deaf minorities are acknowledged by the major association, caucus members were urged to take action.

"It has been a very important convention for us. I want to say we had a great victory this morning," said Chuck Williams of Cleveland. William was chosen acting co-chairman of the caucus at its wrap-up meeting Saturday afternoon.

Others echoed Williams excitement.

"I think Chuck is right that today is a victory for us. But we still have more days to come. You have to go back to your home states and tell the associations that NAD supports what you ask for. The states NAD is bound by the national bylaws," said Linwood Smith, education specialist, at St. Elizabeth Hospital, Washington, D.C.

THE CAUCUS statement was read at the NAD meeting in the Convention Center by social worker and caucus member Sandi LaRue. The one-page statement told approximately 3,000 convention members that NAD must communicate better with the black deaf community and encourage minorities involvement in the national and state organizations.

The caucus stressed heightened awareness of black deaf people through role models, better, better publicity and modification of sign language to exclude derogatory signs.

There are not enough role models to provide positive-images of black deaf adults to deaf children," the caucus

Contended.

The statement also said the publication. Deaf American "puts emphasis on successful black deaf people in the sports section. We would like to get on the cover and front pages."

NAD agree with the caucus call for increased minority membership, more black leaders at national and state levels, and better information for deaf blacks. The caucus also asked Junior NAD to work in the school to recruit more deaf black students.

"THIS WILL further enhance the image of NAD as a wonderful deaf organization truly representative of all deaf people," LaRue said.

After the morning NAD meeting, approximately 30 members of the caucus met in the Convention Center, taking turns expressing their pleasure over the success of the proclamation.

"I'm happy we were able to do that at the 100th convention. That number alone shows how long it took us to be ready to organize," said Smith. "I hope we can maintain the enthusiasm which happen this morning. The more battle we win, the sooner we win the war."

Smith said, I didn't get to sleep until four, thinking about what would happen today."

Richard White, an interpreter who has full hearing, told the group that because of his work with them this week, "I feel I am part of you, and your struggle." He also told them, "Continue the work, because what will in the future will not be the responsibility of NAD itself but of each of you."

ANOTHER INTERPRETER, Ann Wilson of Washington, D.C., said "I have a 15 years old son at home who I will tell about today. He ask me, why are whites always successful, always involved? I'll carry good news to him."

Ohio House Majority Leader William L. Mallory, of D-Cincinnati, said the caucus had made him more aware of the difficulties that face black deaf. "Until we had our discussion I was not fully aware of the problems of that particular position."

During the meeting, temporary officers were elected. They will hold office until the 1982 NAD convention in St. Louis. Co-Chairman are Williams and Wilson. Secretary is Smith, Assist secretary is Rose Moore, assisted by Jeffrey Cry.