

The official company newsletter of

PLAY WITH ASL



INSIDE: CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PARTNERS WITH PLAY WITH ASL FOR ASU+GSV SUMMIT

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES!

Written by Jon Mowl

Welcome to the third edition of our Play With ASL newsletter! It's been an incredible start to 2025, filled with exciting new partnerships, inspiring presentations, and remarkable milestones that continue to propel our mission forward.

Over the past three months, we've proudly partnered with the California Department of Education, been spotlighted in SCORE's national campaign, secured funding from NSF I-Corps, and presented at influential conferences including Hands & Voices and the upcoming ASU+GSV Summit. Each achievement strengthens our commitment to creating accessible, engaging, and culturally authentic ASL learning experiences.

As always, none of this would be possible without your amazing support—educators, parents, students, and advocates alike. Thank you for being part of our journey. Together, we're transforming the landscape of ASL education, making a meaningful difference, one sign at a time.

Let's dive in and celebrate our latest achievements together!



WHAT'S NEW?

California Department of Education Partners Play With ASL for ASU+GSV Education Innovation Showcase

Play With ASL partnered with the California Department of Education (CDE) for the Education Innovation Showcase at the upcoming ASU+GSV Summit 2025!

This partnership represents an important milestone, reflecting our shared commitment to making American Sign Language (ASL) education more accessible, engaging, and inclusive. Together, we created a special showcase video highlighting how our gamified ASL learning platform supports students and educators across California—and beyond.

The video emphasizes key challenges students and teachers face in traditional ASL education, such as high costs and limited accessibility, especially for Deaf and hard-of-hearing learners. By leveraging technology like LMS integration, deep-linking, and QR codes, Play With ASL enables seamless classroom integration, providing educators with effective tools to track progress and customize learning.

While Play With ASL was not selected for the innovation showcase, feedback from educators has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting increased student engagement, improved ASL retention, and greater classroom participation. The partnership with CDE underscores our commitment to addressing language deprivation and ensuring Deaf cultural authenticity in ASL education.



Watch our showcase video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2FuMKdcfbc

We're excited to share more updates as we prepare for the summit—read Page 4: "Play With ASL Leaders to Present at ASU+GSV Summit 2025"

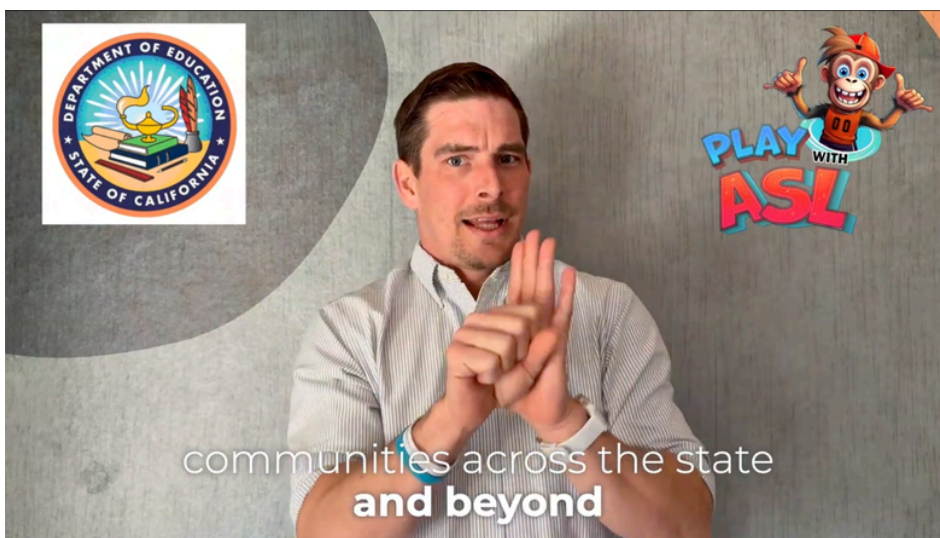


IMAGE DESCRIPTION: JON MOWL SIGNING IN THE PLAY WITH ASL AND CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHOWCASE VIDEO.

Play With ASL Shines in SCORE's National Campaign

Play With ASL has been featured in SCORE's national campaign, highlighting our commitment to empowering learning through fun and accessibility. This recognition underscores our dedication to making American Sign Language (ASL) education engaging and inclusive for all.

About SCORE's Campaign:

As part of SCORE's 60th Anniversary Pitch Competition where we placed second, Play With ASL was spotlighted for our innovative approach to ASL learning. The campaign showcases our mission to provide culturally authentic, gamified ASL education tools that cater to diverse learners, including the Deaf and hard-of-hearing communities.

Our Journey with SCORE:

SCORE's mentorship and resources have been instrumental in our growth. Their support has enabled us to refine our platform, expand our reach, and continue developing tools that make ASL education both effective and enjoyable.

Looking Ahead:

Being featured in this national campaign is a significant milestone for us. It not only validates our efforts but also motivates us to further our mission of breaking down barriers in language learning. We are excited about the future and remain committed to fostering an inclusive environment where ASL learners can thrive.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to SCORE for this recognition and to our community for your unwavering support. Together, we are making a difference in the world of ASL education.

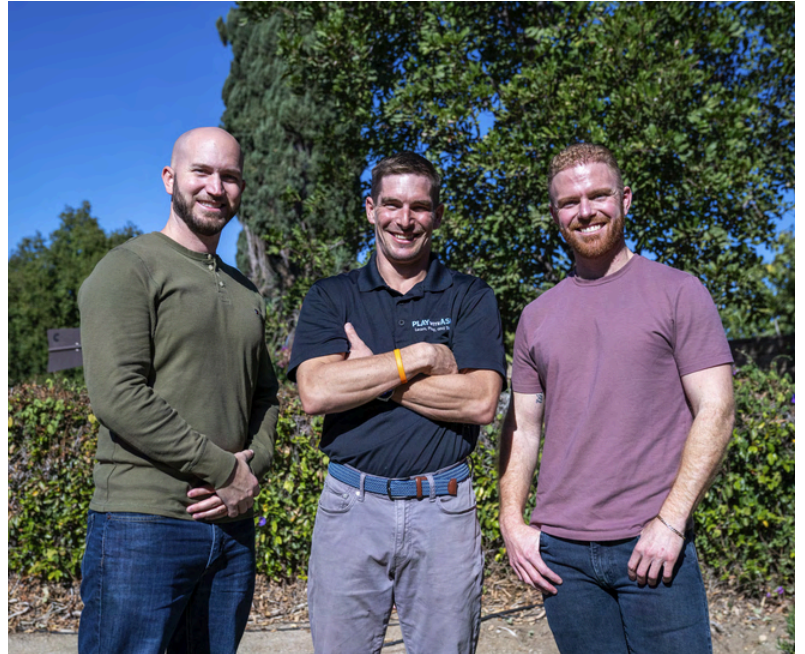


IMAGE DESCRIPTION: IN THE SCORE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN IMAGE, KENT TURNER, JON MOWL, AND JUSTIN JACKERSON ARE STANDING TOGETHER OUTSIDE.



IMAGE DESCRIPTION: JON MOWL SIGNING IN THE SCORE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN VIDEO.

Jon Mowl Inspires at Hands & Voices Conference in South Carolina

Play With ASL founder Jon Mowl recently delivered a compelling keynote at the Hands & Voices Conference in South Carolina, sharing insights on gamification, parenting, and language access through the lens of the "Rubber Band Effect."



IMAGE DESCRIPTION: JON MOWL ON CENTER STAGE, PRESENTING AT THE SC HANDS & VOICES CONFERENCE AS KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Jon captivated attendees with a relatable analogy from gaming: just like rubber banding in games such as Mario Kart ensures no player falls too far behind, parents similarly act as the "rubber band" in their children's lives—knowing precisely when to tighten their support to encourage growth and when to loosen it to nurture independence. Throughout his presentation, Jon emphasized the fluid nature of roles in parenting and education, asking thought-provoking questions:

- "Are you the teacher or the student?"
- "If you're the teacher, can you also be the student?"
- "If you're the student, can you also be the teacher?"

Jon's message resonated deeply with the audience, highlighting that genuine growth emerges when parents, educators, and mentors remain flexible, mindful, and adaptable.

We extend heartfelt gratitude to South Carolina Hands & Voices for their warm welcome and commitment to empowering Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and their families. It was truly an honor for Jon and Play With ASL to contribute to such a meaningful gathering.

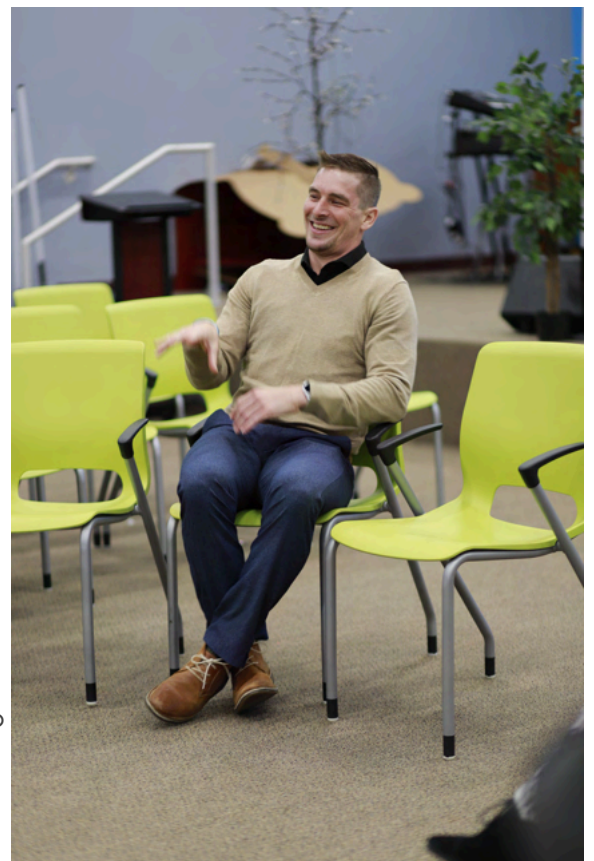


IMAGE DESCRIPTION: JON MOWL SITTING AND SMILING.

Play With ASL Leaders to Present at ASU+GSV Summit 2025

Play With ASL team members Jon Mowl and Kent Turner have been selected as featured presenters at the prestigious ASU+GSV Summit 2025. Their session, "Lighting the Way: How Gamified ASL is Revolutionizing Language Access," is scheduled for Monday, April 7, 2025 as part of the Summit's Spotlight Series at Town Square.

Session Overview:

In this engaging fireside chat, Jon and Kent will explore how gamified American Sign Language (ASL) is transforming language education and accessibility. They will discuss the critical issue of language deprivation, which affects over 90% of Deaf children, and how innovative, game-based learning tools can address this challenge. The session will highlight how technology enhances communication skills, critical thinking, and inclusion for all learners, bridging communication gaps and empowering educators facing a shortage of ASL resources.

About the ASU+GSV Summit:

The ASU+GSV Summit is a premier annual event that brings together leaders in education and workforce innovation. Scheduled for April 6-9, 2025, in San Diego, the summit features a dynamic lineup of sessions, workshops, and networking opportunities aimed at shaping the future of learning and work. This year's theme of the summit is "Learning at the Speed of Light" focuses heavily on how AI has influenced education.

We are incredibly proud of Jon and Kent for this recognition and look forward to their contributions to advancing ASL education on such a prominent platform. Stay tuned for more updates as we approach the summit!



Play With ASL Heads to ASLTA 2025 – Thanks to NSF I-Corps!

We're thrilled to announce that Play With ASL has received funding from the prestigious NSF I-Corps program to attend the 2025 ASL Teachers Association (ASLTA) Conference! After completing over 30 insightful interviews with ASL educators, we confirmed the urgent need for engaging, culturally authentic, and adaptable learning tools.

ASLTA 2025 is an exciting opportunity to directly connect with ASL teachers, learn more about their classroom needs, and showcase how our gamified approach makes ASL education both effective and fun. We're eager to strengthen our relationships with educators, gather valuable feedback, and continue enhancing our platform to better support learners everywhere.

Stay tuned as we gear up for this amazing event—big things ahead for Play With ASL!



More Exciting News Ahead!

Looking forward, Play With ASL continues to build momentum with even greater opportunities and innovations ahead. We're expanding our partnerships, introducing fresh and engaging content, and refining new features to enhance your experience.

We deeply appreciate your ongoing support and enthusiasm. Keep spreading the word, stay connected, and watch as we grow and achieve new milestones together.

Thank you for being an essential part of our thriving Play With ASL community!

LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER - JON MOWL

To the Sign Language Community,

As we welcome Spring 2025, I find myself energized by the incredible momentum we've built together at Play With ASL. Reflecting on these first few months of the year, I'm filled with gratitude for your continued support and passion for our mission.

We began 2025 by working extensively on our backend solutions, laying the groundwork for richer, more personalized learning experiences—ensuring educators and students have the best possible tools at their fingertips. These behind-the-scenes upgrades allow us to deepen our impact and better serve our growing community.

One of my personal highlights this year was delivering the keynote at the Hands & Voices Conference in South Carolina. In my presentation, I introduced the "Rubber Band Effect," a powerful metaphor drawn from both gamification and parenting. Just like rubber banding in video games, such as Mario Kart, ensures players remain engaged and no one falls too far behind, parents serve as the essential "rubber band" in their child's life—knowing precisely when to tighten support to encourage growth, and when to loosen it to foster independence and nurture self-confidence.

At the conference, we explored the fluid nature of roles—how parents, educators, and mentors constantly shift between teaching and learning. By embracing flexibility, recognizing that we can simultaneously be both teachers and students, we create environments where genuine growth and meaningful connections flourish. It was incredibly rewarding to share these insights with such a dedicated and passionate audience committed to language access and empowering Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and their families.

Another exciting milestone this year is our partnership with the California Department of Education for the Education Innovation Showcase at the upcoming ASU+GSV Summit. We're honored by this collaboration, which reaffirms our dedication to making culturally authentic, accessible, and engaging ASL learning tools available to everyone.

Finally, we're excited to announce our booth reservation at the ASLTA Conference this summer. We look forward to connecting directly with educators, hearing your insights, and showcasing the innovations we continue to develop together.

There's much more on the horizon for Play With ASL, and I look forward to sharing updates as we continue this meaningful journey together.

Thank you for being part of our community. Here's to a vibrant, impactful spring!

Warmest wishes,
Jon Mowl
Founder, Play With ASL