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**NEARLY DEAF ACCOMPLISHED STANFORD GRAD
MOTIVATES IN THOUGHT-PROVOKING NEW BOOK
*"SIGNS OF LIFE: Past, Present, and Future"***

*Born with a hearing impairment, author Joy Elan has required hearing aids since the age of 15 months. The vibrant and outgoing single mom was born in Berkeley, CA in July 1983—to a mother who was herself single—and raised in neighboring Oakland. Having grown up without her father and been hard of hearing for her entire life, Elan has encountered numerous obstacles and challenges. She successfully overcame a good number of them as she's far exceeded low expectations that others had for her, including having earned her Master's Degree from Stanford University. When not parenting, studying, or at work for the City of Oakland, Elan fills her literal quiet time with life reflections and imaginations of what life has in store going forward. She penned intimate thoughts—hers and other's—in an alluring book of poetry titled **SIGNS OF LIFE: Past, Present, and Future**.*

NATIONWIDE—In **SIGNS OF LIFE: Past, Present and Future**, author Joy Elan tells stories of the complicated daily lives of a lover, student, worker, mother, and many other recognizable identities. "I share normal, sometimes complicated experiences, both my own and others' that I have observed," said Elan. "Mine are stories in poetry form with which people can easily identify and from which learning is possible."



Author Joy Elan

The book's title, derived from *Sign*—one form of communication that Elan has used throughout her *life*—incorporates her views of the Past as a reflection of who we were and from where we have come; the Present as our current state of mind, while leaving the past behind to move on to our next brighter side of our life; and the Future, where dreams come true and all of our hard work is accomplished and rewarded. "Without the Past and Present, there is no Future. I am blessed to share my gift with you," she says.

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Encouraging, relatable, heartwarming, thought-provoking, familiar, relevant, and motivating are how Elan's prose have been described. Wanting to be a writer since she was reading fairy tales as a child, Elan pursued her dream. For a fifth-grade project, she wrote her first book called "Junset" about a girl who transforms into a sunset. Finding writing allowed her freedom to express herself in a manner other than speech, she enjoyed jotting down her thoughts and dreams. A few years ago, after having read some of Elan's poetry, a friend suggested she publish her works. Elan came to appreciate the words she had put to paper, and believed that others would as well. Without formal composition training, Elan composed her book and self-published it after a year of searching for a publisher. She came to realize that it was not required that she earn a Ph.D. in order to be a published writer of articles and books. Writing is Joy's joy!

"SIGNS OF LIFE: Past, Present, and Future" by Joy Elan

Xlibris, Corp., July 2011, ISBN-10: 1462848052; ISBN-13: 978-1462848058

Paperback, 130 pp., \$19.99; eBook, \$3.99 US

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Born with a hearing impairment, Joy Elan has required hearing aids since the age of 15 months. Her hearing loss was attributed to oxygen deprivation caused by the umbilical cord wrapped around her neck at birth. Now, a single mother of a pretty and smart little 3-year-old daughter, Elan was born in Berkeley, CA in July 1983—to a mother who was herself single—and raised in neighboring Oakland, CA where she attended a Deaf/Hard of Hearing program in the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD). At the age of four, Elan was introduced to American Sign Language (ASL). Doctors discouraged her mother from learning to sign as it was believed that her use would hinder Elan's already limited hearing ability.

Despite her hearing loss, she excelled in school and was mainstreamed in a regular classroom. From an early age Elan's hardworking mother filled her with encouragement, assisted her academics, and worked with her on her speech. Throughout elementary school, Elan's teachers were very supportive, but the OUSD would not provide the required accommodations that were listed in the IEP (Individualized Education Program, mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). After two years of requesting the accommodations, her mother decided to move them back to Berkeley where in the Berkeley Unified School District, Elan was granted all of the necessary accommodations outlined in the IEP. She continued to the middle school and high school fully mainstreamed with ASL, and graduated from Berkeley High School one semester early. Having grown up without her father and been hard of hearing for her entire life, Elan has encountered numerous obstacles and challenges. She successfully overcame a good number of them as she's far exceeded low expectations that others had for her. However, difficulties were further exacerbated as hearing appliances were not (and still are not) covered by medical insurance.

In just three years Elan obtained her undergraduate degree from University of California, Berkeley in African American Studies, then proceeded to earn her Master's Degree in Education from Stanford University, graduating with a stellar 3.67 GPA.

Elan performs her poetry Wednesday evenings at the sub-street level Air Lounge at 9th and Washington in downtown Oakland. To learn more about Elan and her book, visit www.joyelan.webs.com. She may be reached directly at elandenise@aol.com.

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EDITORS: *Hearing devices aid Joy Elan's hearing, and her diction is sufficiently clear to give intelligible and fascinating broadcast interviews. To arrange print or broadcast interviews with Ms. Elan, contact Toni Beckham at 209-832-8020 / 408-499-3664c | Toni@PRetCetera.com.*