

CAPTIONS

Official Newsletter Publication of the Colorado Association of Professional Interpreters
P.O. Box 40664, Denver, CO 80204, www.coloradointerpreters.org

First Quarter 2005 (April)

Page 1 of 5

NOTES FROM THE BOARD:

We have been off to a busy start of the year!

In light of the new State Court Interpreter Program Administrator position, CAPI will no longer need to be responsible for the court interpreter certification process and can resume offering more continuing education workshops of interest to our members. However, CAPI continues to collaborate with the Colorado State Interpreter Program to provide training and testing for the certification of court interpreters.

Given CAPI's objective to promote recognition of all facets of the interpreting profession, the board believes it is time to shift the focus of our efforts to medical interpreting, spearheaded by the Medical Interpreting Task Force. Anyone interested in medical interpreter issues and/or participating on the Task Force should contact Julia Davis at sitc@qwest.net or Tonya Johnson at tjohnson@coloradointerpreters.org. Although Tonya's term as CAPI Board Secretary ended in March, she remains active on the Medical Interpreter Task Force.

The CAPI board has also formally endorsed the Ethics for Medical Interpreting put together by the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care. To view these ethics go to www.ncihc.org.

In addition, we would like to focus more continuing education efforts on other areas of interpretation, as well as languages other than Spanish, or language neutral training sessions. If you have ideas for continuing education, or can help organize events, please contact co-chair Cathy Bahr, cbahr@coloradointerpreters.org.

The board has held regular lunch time business meetings and also organized the Annual Meeting. This took place in Broomfield on March 5, and was a great success. Thanks to Mari Welch for the wonderful refreshments provided! In addition to

being a great networking and brainstorming session, board elections were held. The CAPI board would like to thank outgoing secretary Tonya Johnson for her hard work. We also welcome new director Ana Mostaccero, returning directors Elia Simon Martin and Isabelle Houlbreque, as well as the new co-chair Ruth Warner and secretary Ana Acosta Miller.

Anyone with concerns, ideas, or suggestions for CAPI can contact either co-chair: Cathy Bahr at cbahr@coloradointerpreters.org or Ruth Warner at rwarnner@coloradointerpreters.org.

GETTING TO KNOW A NEW OFFICER.

Ana Acosta-Miller will serve as CAPI's secretary in 2005. She is a Spanish court-certified interpreter and works as a freelancer in the legal and medical fields. Ana has translated numerous documents and articles from English into Spanish and has interpreted in business meetings and press conferences. She is interested in expanding her professional activities into community and conference interpreting.

Ana holds a B.A. degree in Journalism from Escuela de Periodismo Carlos Septién García in Mexico City and received a diploma in translation and interpretation from Berlitz. Prior to her career as an interpreter, she was a reporter for *El Economista*, the well-known Mexican financial newspaper, and an account executive for a public relations agency.

Ana intends to make contributions to Colorado's interpreting community through active participation on the CAPI Board of Directors. She also aims at passing on to others the support and encouragement she has received.

The Makings of a Professional Interpreter, By Alicia Ernand

The evolution of the interpreting profession has been a very slow one. In states with strict certification requirements, certified interpreters enjoy the benefits and recognition of having their certification. However, in states where certification is not a requirement, the degree of formal training, skill level and professionalism among the working interpreters varies drastically. This tends to hurt the profession, as well as the manner in which interpreters are perceived by the individuals who utilize their services.

I am an interpreter advocate. I love to see interpreters succeed, and every success story helps the profession. By the same token, every time an untrained, inexperienced bilingual individual accepts an interpreting assignment, he or she is directly contributing to the mistaken notion that a bilingual person is the same as a professional interpreter.

In my opinion, the best interpreters are those that combine excellent language skills with a very solid interpreter style. The acquisition of interpreter style comes with experience, and a very clear understanding of the typical challenges that come up in our line of work on a regular basis. For example, in depositions, the interpreter will most likely face at least one of the following scenarios: the interpretation is challenged, the deponent gets confused every time an objection is posed, the interpreter needs to seek clarification on a word used by the deponent, the deposing attorney speeds through documents that he or she wants to enter into evidence, the plaintiff's attorney brings a bilingual employee to check on the interpreter's competency, or the deponent insists on answering before the interpreter has finished interpreting. If the interpreter has a very prepared professional response to tackle these situations, then that interpreter will be able to proceed with the interpretation without getting defensive.

In closing, I will give you some food for thought. If you go to the book store right now, you will not see one single book titled, "Interpreting for Dummies!" Interpreters at work take into consideration syntax, culture, idiomatic expressions, nuances of meaning in speech, and range of registers. On top of that, interpreters develop stamina to cope under extremely stressful situations. All of these factors add up to a form of math that I call interpreter magic!

Printed by permission of Alicia Ernand. First published in The Interpreter's Voice Fall-Winter 2004, the newsletter of the interpreter's division of the ATA. Ms. Ernand interprets in California, and conducts Court Interpreter Minimum Continuing Education Credit (CIMCE) workshops on a regular basis, and has also developed a Distance Learning Program to serve the needs of certified and registered interpreters. More information can be found at her web site: www.aliciaernand.com or email alinick@sbcglobal.net.

Court Interpreter Certification

Spanish

Dates: June 25-26, 2005
Time: (scheduled individually)
Location: Denver
Fee: \$250.00 or
 (\$100.00 per portion - separately)
Registration: Download registration form after 5/1/05 from CAPI website

Languages Other Than Spanish

Dates: September 24, 2005
Time: (scheduled individually)
Location: Denver
Fee: \$250.00 (\$100.00 per portion if taken separately)
Registration: Download registration form and mail in by 8/31/05

Please note: Attendance at the two-day Interpreter Orientation is required before you can take the Certification exam. The Orientation will be held August 27-28, 2005 for Languages Other Than Spanish. For more information, see the CAPI website.

MAKE A STATEMENT ABOUT OUR PROFESSION

An article was recently discovered in The Docket, the newsletter of the Colorado Bar Association, in which a professor at DU law school wrote to convince lawyers about the importance of learning and using Spanish in order to communicate with their clients. She wrote, "While interpreters are a great asset, the best way to control outcomes is to become fluent yourself." The article called for a rebuttal from the court interpreters' perspective. Jack Mudry wrote the following:

April 2, 2005

Dear Editor of The Docket,

Recently I found myself waiting in Courtroom 186L of the Denver County Court to begin the arduous task of interpreting for a number of Spanish speaking defendants when I came across your January 2005 issue. The article that interested me the most was titled, "Hola! Not the Only Spanish for Lawyers", and was written by Valeria Elliot, a lecturer at the Denver College of Law. Although generally well written and entertaining, the article lacked any substantive analysis of the role of the Spanish interpreter in the courtroom, but even worse, it made no mention whatsoever of CAPI, the Colorado Association of Professional Interpreters. I know that your space is limited for letters to the editor, so I will simply raise a few points so that we can continue this discussion in another format and at another time.

Ms. Elliot starts her 4th paragraph with the following warning, "While interpreters are a great asset, the best way to control outcomes is to become fluent yourself. An interpreter – especially one without a legal background – may inadvertently choose the incorrect legal term without proper supervision." Obviously, this is reason Numero Uno for any careful attorney to hire a CERTIFIED interpreter, one who has passed all required tests and whose name appears on the CAPI list, which contains the contact information for all certified Spanish interpreters in Colorado. Simply go to our website at coloradointerpreters.org. When you use a certified interpreter you can be certain that the legal terminology you are speaking will be rendered correctly into the language of your client.

Secondly, although I agree that attorneys should be studying Spanish if they have a case load of Spanish speakers, please don't get any illusions of becoming fluent anytime soon, and please PLEASE don't attempt to explain issues such as "child custody" (mentioned by Ms. Elliot in paragraph 7 of her article) on your own without an interpreter. As an interpreter who has worked in Colorado for over 20 years, I can say that the potential for confusion is too great to justify the risks.

All that having been said, I do think it is a positive step for the Denver College of Law to have a certificate program to train attorneys in Spanish legal terminology and cultural issues. I wish them the best and hope that CAPI can be a resource for future presentations

Sincerely,

Jack G. Mudry
CAPI Member
Certified Interpreter

INTERPRETERS MAKING HEADLINES!

Newly Certified Interpreters!

The following Colorado colleagues just passed the Consortium Certification Exam for Spanish Interpreters:

Tatiana Contreras
Santiago Garcia
Ines Mienheartt

Congratulations!

DON'T MISS THIS CHANCE: SKILLS BUILDING COURSES FOR SPANISH COURT INTERPRETERS

Coming April 30-May 1 Consecutive Interpretation

Instructors: Emy López, Anna Kelsey and Melinda González Hibner

This two-day class will focus on the consecutive mode of interpretation used in the courtroom setting. Instruction will include memory exercises, common methods for note taking, and controlling difficult situations. There will be ample opportunity for student practice and feedback from colleagues and instructors, as well as role playing exercises. Typical courtroom vocabulary will be covered and students will be exposed to consecutive scripts of variable difficulty

Coming May 21-May 22 Simultaneous Interpretation

Instructors: Susana Cahill, Melinda González-Hibner, Ruth Warner

This 12-hour course will focus exclusively on the skills involved in simultaneous interpretation in the courtroom. Exercises designed to cover proper simultaneous techniques will include shadowing and paraphrasing, décalage, reformulating syntax to assure an understandable output, as well as discussion of use and misuse of cognates and vocabulary research. Students should be prepared for intensive, active interpreting practice during the two days of instruction. The course is geared to legal and court related terminology and scripts of variable speeds (110-150 words per minute) will be used.

TO REGISTER:

Visit the CAPI website or the Colorado Judicial Department website at <http://www.courts.state.co.us/chs/hr/interpreters/courtinterpreterpage.htm>

What Do You Do If...?

The judge is citing his findings and conclusions, basically recapping evidence presented during a full day of testimony, and says, "The Court finds that the officers did, indeed, enter the defendant's apartment where they found him asleep and they aroused him..."

How would you interpret:

"A crime is committed when the defendant has committed a voluntary act prohibited by law accompanied by a culpable mental state. Voluntary act means an act performed consciously as a result of effort or determination. The culpable mental state for the crime of _____ means intentionally, or with intent, as explained in this instruction. Proof of the commission of the act alone is not sufficient to prove that the defendant had the required culpable mental state. The culpable mental state is as much an element of the crime as the act itself and must be proven beyond a reasonable doubt, either by direct or circumstantial evidence."

Let's keep learning!

Do you have a great idea for a continuing education workshop? So much to learn! Can you volunteer some time for this, or another CAPI activity? How can we promote more activities for medical and community interpreters? What do interpreters working in languages other than English need from CAPI? Let us know your thoughts and ideas! Contact CAPI co-chairs Cathy Bahr (cbahr@coloradointerpreters.org) and Ruth Warner (rwarnr@coloradointerpreters.org)

Use your website!

Be sure to check the CAPI website regularly for updated training opportunities, job announcements, and general information. It also includes great links that may be of use in your work. CAPI periodically shares announcements with its members and contacts. If you haven't been receiving these, make sure we have your current e-mail address! Contact info@coloradointerpreters.org

New interpreter directories online

Melinda González-Hibner is working hard as the State Court Interpreter Program Coordinator. Undoubtedly, we will all benefit from her efforts to promote the profession in Colorado. Please visit the Judicial website to catch up on the activities going on through her office. The site includes comprehensive directories for Certified Spanish Interpreters and Sign Language Interpreters in the State of Colorado. Visit <http://www.courts.state.co.us/chs/hr/interpreters/courtinterpreterpage.htm> or follow the links from the CAPI site. Thank you, Melinda!

What did the doctor say...?

By Isabel Echeñique

Front Range Community College is a pioneer in the field of medical interpretation (English-Spanish) in Colorado with a great 28-hour training. It is paving the future for a new specialty that is growing very rapidly and needs some standards, and the sooner the better. Melinda González-Hibner and Julia Davis gave a very complete overview of the many aspects that this type of practice entails. Their expertise and wonderful senses of humor kept us interested the entire time: thank you very much!

There were 29 of us in the class “*de todos los colores, autores, credos y proveniencias*” (from many walks of life, all shapes and sizes) which made the interaction varied and enriching, and an opportunity to meet future good friends. Another interesting ingredient for me was to learn more about all the terrible illnesses that one can suffer and the many complicated names for parts of the body.

The class will be offered again sometime soon, so keep your eye on the CAPI website for future announcements.

For Spanish interpreters: Cuestionando la cuestión

An article was written for this newsletter in Spanish by Humberto Orive about the use of the cognates "question" and "cuestionar." This newsletter's purpose is to reach interpreters of all languages, so we decided to circulate that article by email to those who would like to read it. Humberto Orive is a former litigation attorney who practiced law in Mexico for 14 years prior to his relocation to Colorado. He is a Certified Court Interpreter and currently serves the Colorado Judicial Department as the Managing Interpreter for the eighth Judicial District in Fort Collins. To receive a copy of this article, please contact Ron Olson, the editor of this newsletter, olsonr@ci.denver.co.us.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Language volunteers needed!

Total Longterm Care is a non-profit managed care program for frail individuals in the Denver area. We provide for nearly 1,000 elders a home away from home in centers in Thornton, Aurora, Denver and Lakewood. Participants come to us during the day and return home in the afternoon. Every center provides comprehensive health care, supportive services as well as a Day Center providing activities and the opportunity to socialize.

Life can be pretty lonely if you can't understand the language spoken around you. We have some elderly participants who speak only Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Ukrainian or

German. If you speak, read or write any of these languages and have some time to spend volunteering with us, we would love to talk with you. Here are some possibilities: Our **Living Legacy** program provides volunteers the opportunity to audiotape the elder's stories and to transcribe them in a booklet form. Our **Friendly Visitor** program gives the opportunity to visit the participant in their home as a friend would. The **Day Center** at each site also enjoys giving volunteers the opportunity to converse with participants on a one-on-one basis or in a group.

We would welcome you as a part of our Total Longterm Care team. Please call Barb Warner at 303-996-0444 x 102 or e-mail bwarner@totallongtermcare.org