



## AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME

### NAJIT Launches Mentoring Program

Michael Kagan

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I'm happy to announce the creation of a pilot mentorship program within NAJIT. This nascent program began to take shape at this year's conference in Houston, but it's an idea that has been in the minds of many members for quite some time. Many hours were devoted to framing this initiative. With the guidance of Courtney Searls-Ridge, coordinator of ATA's mentorship program, a group of potential NAJIT mentors met formally in Houston for the first time to discuss their mentoring experiences, both positive and negative.

That exercise gave me pause to wonder whether NAJIT needed a mentorship program. It entails new challenges for NAJIT as well as important commitments from the members — but then remembering the dread and isolation of my first consecutive interpretation at a small claims trial in South Boston's Municipal Court, and how helpful it would have been to have had a mentor-type relationship to guide me through the beginning stages of my new career, I felt certain that this was the right effort to be engaging in. That's why I think it's time that NAJIT, both for itself as an organization as well as for the benefit of its individual members, needs the structure of a mentoring program to be developed by and for us. But this is easier said than done.

Because there are a lot of questions we are trying to answer, we decided to begin with a pilot program to tackle some important issues, such as the different types of mentorship settings and whether the mentoring process should be mentee-driven, as is the case with ATA's program and others. How would one set up a mentoring program if the request for a mentor doesn't necessarily have to come from the mentee (a new word for many of us)? How much formal structure and content should the program have? What

would be the difference between regular training for interpreters and a mentorship program?

Trying to answer these important questions was the focus of the two subsequent meetings we had in Houston. Obviously, the most important issue is how to fit the very multifaceted and complex needs of the judiciary interpreter into a positive and productive mentoring relationship. I am happy to say that we are lucky to have a highly qualified and committed core group of both potential mentors and mentees who have already offered practical ideas of how to establish the relationship, the goals and the support for both sides of the equation.

At the outset we agreed to begin this pilot program conservatively. We plan to pair six very experienced mentors, who will also be part of the mentorship committee, with six mentees. We are aiming for a diverse range of experience, both linguistically and geographically. With this mentoring initiative, we believe that the exchange among the many mentors will enrich the mentoring experience for everyone. We are hoping to integrate a mentorship component on NAJIT's website, as well as to maintain an ongoing presence at regional and national conferences, creating opportunities for veteran interpreters to share and transmit their knowledge and experience to those new to the field. This will insure that NAJIT will be the host, whether at regional conferences or in discussion groups on the website, and that the best in the profession will be engaged and challenged within the mentor/mentee dynamic. If you are interested in becoming either, please contact me at [Michael\\_Kagan@fd.org](mailto:Michael_Kagan@fd.org).

*[The author is a staff interpreter at the Office of the Federal Public Defender in Los Angeles.]*

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT  
**NAJIT Position Papers inside**

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## Message from Chair Rainof

My thanks to all for your vote in favor of the changes proposed to our bylaws. The NAJIT and SSTI Boards will be working in close cooperation to implement the changes stemming from this vote. I am also grateful to all the members who reelected me for a third term on the NAJIT Board of Directors, and for the subsequent vote of the Board reelecting me for a third time, by acclamation, to the position of Chair of the Board.

It is a pleasure to welcome our newest member of the NAJIT Board of Directors, Laura Garcia-Hein. She brings to the board a distinguished background: Costa Rican diplomat, attorney, mediator, graphic facilitator, tester with ACTFL, and certified interpreter. Congratulations are in order to Dr. Lois Feuerle for her re-election to the NAJIT Board. The baton for advocacy was passed to Isabel Framer. Congratulations, Isa. (See the annual meeting report for more on this subject.)

Heartfelt thanks to Janet Bonet for her two years of service as NAJIT Director. Special mention must be made of the remarkable job she did with our NAJIT scholars at the conference as well as running our lively and entertaining raffle. We all look forward to continuing to count on her expertise and energy. In this respect, it was with personal satisfaction that I was able to welcome our outstanding NAJIT scholars. They represented a great language variety and truly were a personable and interesting group of young people. You can read some of their reports on pp. 18 and 19. Thanks to Vanesa Ieraci and Amy Free who helped with the selection of these outstanding young people, and to our three distinguished judges who participated in the selection: Dr. Carol Patrie, Claudia Soronellas-Brown, and Jonathan McNeil Wong, Esq. NAJIT's deep commitment to preparing new generations of highly trained interpreters is also evident in Michael Kagan's hard work on the NAJIT mentoring program, as seen in our feature article. This

mentor/mentee project is bound to grow and become an important part of NAJIT. Thank you, Michael. Also, as part of NAJIT's interest in the future generations of forensic interpreters, welcome contributions were made by Courtney Searls-Ridge & David Cotlove of the Highline Public Schools.

The Houston conference was a success in great part due to the very hard work of the conference committee, consisting of co-chairs Cristina Helmerichs and Odile Legeay and of members Andrea Anastasi, Janet Bonet and Vania Haam. Thank you to all and to Odile in particular for the wonderful reception at her lovely home (*et pour un chèvre digne des dieux*).

The participation of distinguished guests from the U.S. government added also to the quality and scope of the conference. Keynote speaker Everette Jordan, Director, National Virtual Translation Center, gave a relevant talk enhanced by a humorous and interesting video (If you haven't yet done so, you are invited to sign up for future disaster relief situations—see p. 22 for more details). Dr. Susan Kelly of the Department of Defense gave an important presentation on the panel which I chaired, on the topic "Everyone is a Global Citizen." This talk was of particular relevance today, and reflected the long-standing advocacy of the Department of Defense for language awareness, education, and competence as an essential need for our safety and competitive edge. It was a pleasure to participate with her in this panel. Thanks are also due to Dr. Caroline Kinney, Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. NAJIT very much appreciates the excellent relations between the AOUSC and NAJIT, and we thank Dr. Kinney for her fascinating material. Also instrumental in making our Houston conference memorable were Martin Roldan, Executive Office of Immigration Review, and U.S. Marshals Wanda Price and Carlos Trevizo, together with NAJIT member Lorena Martin. Her remarkable security manual is available for free download from our website. Thank you, Lorena.

> *continued on page 5*

NAJIT occasionally makes its member information available to organizations or persons offering information, products, or services of potential interest to members. Each decision is carefully reviewed and authorization is given with discretion. If you do not wish to have your contact information given out for this purpose, please let headquarters know and we will adjust our records accordingly.

# MENTORING NEW INTERPRETERS

## CONNECTICUT'S JUDICIAL BRANCH BREAKS NEW GROUND

Gabrielle Winter

In 2001, Connecticut's Judicial Branch joined the National Center for State Courts consortium certification program for court interpreters. In order to ensure that as many interpreters as possible attain state certification, the Judicial Branch offered the first of what have become yearly or semi-annual training seminars.

Interpreters attended two two-day training sessions with Holly Mikkelsen, as well as a six-week cycle of one afternoon a week focusing on the modes of interpreting, taught by federal interpreter Frank Geoffrion. Seven out of thirty staff interpreters attained consortium certification in Spanish the first time the exams were offered in Connecticut.

By investing in training staff interpreters before administering the test, Connecticut showed that proactive training increases the chances of interpreters passing the consortium exam for state certification the first time around. More training was conducted for the group in preparation for the following exam, and six more interpreters passed that year.

These sessions proved that training working interpreters increases their chances of passing the consortium examination. As is the case in most states, Connecticut's budget for training goes only so far. Therefore, after careful planning, a mentoring program was established to help newly qualified interpreters learn good interpreting habits, thus easing the road towards certification.

The mentoring program of Connecticut's interpreter and translator unit is the result of a real team effort. Most of the newly certified interpreters contributed ideas, particularly for the mentoring manual compiled by one of the certified interpreters. At the same time, a group of interpreters produced training tapes in English and Spanish based on scripts written by a federal interpreter so that new interpreters can get practice in consecutive and simultaneous interpreting.

The mentoring manual has two volumes, consisting of one for the mentee and another for the mentor, with guidelines for the certified interpreters who have expressed a desire to act as mentors. The mentoring program is designed to last four to six weeks, depending on the new interpreter's prior court interpreting experience and the mentor's recommendations.

The manuals are divided into sections on every topic that a new interpreter needs to familiarize herself with: theoretical chapters include discussions of the code of professional responsibility, policies and procedures, operational procedures, and translation and transcription guidelines. The practical chapters include instructions and suggestions, forms and paperwork for each step of the criminal process, starting with arraignments and ending with sentencing.

Every new interpreter candidate is loaned a copy of *Fundamentals of Court Interpretation* and is required to read the book during the mentoring period. Contents are discussed with the mentors. At

the end of each week of mentoring, the new interpreter fills out an assessment form together with the mentor and this form serves as a progress report on the candidate.

Each mentor also has a copy of the Linda Phillips-Jones book, *The Mentor's Guide: How to Be the Kind of Mentor You Once Had — or Wish You'd Had* and has received yearly additional training offered by well-known instructors or qualified certified interpreters (Irene Tomassini, Gerardo Rojas, John Lombardi, Sylvia Zetterstrand, Ana Cecilia Rosado, Edwin Gentzler, Nancy Festinger, Linda Lamitola, Adriana Podesta, Nancy Schweda Nicholson, among others).

"Mentoring puts both the mentor and mentee in a win-win situation," said one of the mentors, "the newcomer forms a bond with a seasoned interpreter, while the mentor has an opportunity to give back and further our profession of choice."

If you have any questions or would like more information on the Mentoring Program of the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch Interpreter and Translator Services, please email: [Gabrielle.Winter@jud.ct.gov](mailto:Gabrielle.Winter@jud.ct.gov)

### Wireless Communications Equipment for Interpreters

The use of remote equipment frees the interpreter to move to a spot offering the best hearing and visibility, where the interpreter can concentrate on the message without interruptions or distractions.

Although many courts provide this equipment for interpreters, availability is not always guaranteed. And some courts and other venues don't even offer it.

For less than \$100, interpreters can now have their own set of wireless transmitter and receiver, including microphone and earphone. In many instances, the rental of similar equipment for just one day exceeds this purchase cost.

TN Communications, an Oregon company, offers dependable, long-lasting wireless equipment that easily fits in a shirt pocket. All equipment comes with a one-year warranty.

Visit [www.tncommunications.com](http://www.tncommunications.com) for product specifications and availability.

For more information, please contact us at [info@tncommunications.com](mailto:info@tncommunications.com) or call 1-888-371-9005.

Courts and agencies: Please contact us regarding institutional sales.

## Tales from a Court in Barcelona

### En todas partes cuecen habas, or: It's the same all over

*This story was posted on the Internet and reproduced in the newsletter of the Association of Sworn Translators and Interpreters of Catalonia in its September 2005 issue. It has been translated from the Spanish and annotated by Daniel Sherr.*

## LOST IN TRANSLATION

Boris Matijas

**K**amel is a North African who has set up a small translation agency in Barcelona.<sup>1</sup> Very professional. Courts from the entire province of Barcelona call Kamel and he calls his interpreters.

To work with him, just leave your contact information and he'll call you whenever they need you — in other words, any time one of your fellow countrymen does something that isn't totally in keeping with the law. The position of interpreters is somewhat akin to that of Consul, but without the protocol or the official car.

One day Kamel needed someone to interpret from Yugoslavian. That's what he asked me to do when I went to his office. While he was asking the questions, he amused himself by gazing at the calendar.

"You speak Yugoslavian, right?"

"No," I answered. "No one does because the Yugoslavian language doesn't exist." I was about to explain the entire geopolitical situation of my country of origin, but decided to save the spiel.

"Well, but you are Yugoslavian?"

"Yes."

He then told me that I was to report to the Barcelona courts the following day. This I did, and took a seat, waiting for my "Yugoslav" client to appear.

He came in handcuffs and when I saw him, I remembered a joke a Dane had told me: "A Serbian, a Bosnian, a Croatian and an Albanian are in a car. Who's driving?" — "The police." That was the answer.

My "Yugoslavian" was also "escorted" into the courtroom. Shortly afterwards, I was called and they gave me a sheet of paper with his name on it: Viral H.

It was an Albanian name. I deduced that the gentleman was from Kosovo and that there are no branch offices from the new state of Serbia and Montenegro<sup>2</sup> in Kosovo. That's why they continue to have Yugoslav passports.

It didn't take long for me to realize that the situation was troublesome. An Albanian with a Yugoslav passport. Yugoslavia, a country that no longer exists, has been rebaptized as Serbia and Montenegro. A couple of years ago there was a war there and it turns out that the Serbs and Albanians don't get along too well. etc. etc. I admit it's a drag, and if I hadn't been born in that area and if it hadn't affected my life, I probably wouldn't be interested in knowing a thing about it, either.

Surrealism aside, the matter was truly serious. I fail to understand how in an honest country, in a court that takes its responsibilities seriously, there can be responsible judges and administrators

who call upon a Serbo-Croat to interpret for an Albanian, bearing in mind that their languages are as distinct as Basque and Spanish.

After a few minutes, the judge said to me:

"Mr. Matijas, can you explain to the defendant<sup>3</sup> that in spite of his lawyer's motion to have the matter dismissed, the trial will go forward on the nth day of the month?"

When he heard the judge, Viral addressed the judge in fluent Spanish:

"Your Honor, I don't need an interpreter."

The judge answered:

"Yes, Mr. Viral, I understand, but it's this court's obligation to ensure that you have an interpreter present in case you need to consult on something. Mr. Matijas, introduce yourself to the defendant, please."

*"Dobar dan, gospodine Hiuse. Moje ime je Boris i posredstvom prevodilacke agencije dodjelen sam Vam posudkoj odluci."*

Viral looked at me with a face just like yours as you read these words.

"Your Honor, please. I understand you perfectly when you talk to me, but I can't understand a word this guy's saying."

"An administrative error. Please sit down, Mr. Matijas," said the judge.

A little while later they signed my time sheet and handcuffed Viral.

When two former compatriots meet and part under such circumstances there are a lot of things you wonder about. How did he get here? Where does he live? How does he live?

I didn't open my mouth and went to get paid for my service: interpretation from Yugoslavian. When I saw Kamel, I explained to him that I didn't have anything to do because the guy was Albanian and I don't speak that language. I did ask Kamel a question, though. I wanted to know how what happened could have occurred. In other words, why did they send me instead of an Albanian interpreter?<sup>4</sup>

"Ah, but was he Albanian?"

"Yes."

"And you don't speak Albanian?"

"No. And I never said I did."

"They goofed. Sign here, please. One hour plus a half hour waiting time comes to 20 euros."

I left there thinking I could make a living this way. I could simply sign up for all possible languages, show up for trials with a straight face, wait a while until the judge says, "Mr. Matijas, is there any possibility of you and the defendant communicating?"

> continued on page 20



MESSAGE FROM CHAIR RAĪNOF continued from page 2

Important contributions were made by Saveen Kaushal & Purvi Shah, Vivian Huelgo, Catherine Shugrue dos Santos – and their much needed questionnaire on domestic violence. They are working now on a joint position paper. NAJIT is proud to support such high professionalism in this vital field.

Regarding our sister organizations, member Carola Green’s presentation on NCIHC Standards of Practice was part of an ongoing national awareness of the intimate connection between translation and interpretation in the forensic and the medical fields (see NAJIT’s letter and three points to consider with regard to these standards on p. 14). Thanks are also due to Esther Diaz of the Public Relations Committee of ATA, as well as to George Rimalower, Javier Becerra, and our colleague Cynthia Roat who always manages to serve a rich soufflé of erudition and liveliness.

Most of all I am most grateful to the many NAJIT members who generously share their expertise and experience with their colleagues. They are too numerous to mention individually here, but they have always made me proud to serve NAJIT. To view their individual contributions, please visit our website to view the final conference program.

I hope everyone is prepared to remove the staples from this issue of *Proteus* and save the special supplement — our first eight position papers. They can be copied freely, and were received already with great enthusiasm wherever we took them, including the Translation Summit in Salt Lake City and the ATISA conference in San Diego.


In the Summer *Proteus*, I promised to keep you all informed about our ongoing discussion with the AOC of New Hampshire. I think we have reached a very positive stage in our ongoing dialogue (see pp. 11 for the most recent letters). Thanks to our wonderful and very hard working colleague Rosemary Dann.

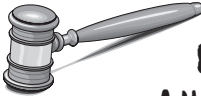
Finally, I am indeed pleased that NAJIT continues to support regional organizations with their events — the Iowa Interpreters & Translators Association, the Nebraska Association of Translators & Interpreters (Jan Bonet plays a key role here as elsewhere) and the Tennessee Association of Professional Interpreters & Translators.


Last, but not least, the next conference committee is hard at work for Portland — submit your proposals now! See you all in Portland.

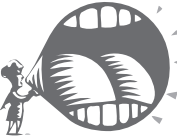
Alexander Rainof, Chair  
NAJIT Board of Directors

NAJIT NEEDS YOU • NAJIT NEEDS YOU • NAJIT NEEDS YOU • NAJIT NEEDS YOU • NAJIT NEEDS YOU • NAJIT NEEDS YOU • NAJIT NEEDS YOU

ARE YOU A NAJIT SECRET AGENT?  TIME TO GO PUBLIC!

 DO YOU WANT NAJIT TO BE A WELL-KNOWN ORGANIZATION THROUGHOUT THE JUDICIARY AND WITHIN THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES IN YOUR STATE?

WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO CONTACT THE APPROPRIATE OFFICES AND INVITE THEM TO JOIN OUR GREAT ORGANIZATION? 

 COULD YOU SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT REGIONAL INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATING EVENTS?

Would you distribute NAJIT position papers and *Proteus* to people who should know about us? We invite you to become a NAJIT liaison.

We are developing an outreach campaign. We would like to have at least two representatives per state to help educate potential members, judges, attorneys, law enforcement officers, practicing interpreters and interested members of the general public about our profession and the benefits of becoming a member. The Membership Committee needs your enthusiastic help!

If this is something you would like to do, please contact:  
Claudia Samulowitz, Chair, NAJIT Membership Committee • EMAIL: [TheLanguageConnection@gmail.com](mailto:TheLanguageConnection@gmail.com)

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## NAJIT NEWS

### Annual Meeting News

Minutes • Saturday, May 20, 2006

J.W. Marriott – Houston, TX

1. The annual meeting was convened at 12:50 pm by Chair Alexander Rainof. A quorum was present.
2. The Treasurer made her report.
3. Committee reports were heard from the Advocacy, Education and Publications Committees.
4. President Peter P. Lindquist reported on the work of the Society for the Study of Translation and Interpretation over the past year.
5. The NAJIT Scholars were presented with plaques.
6. Executive Director Ann G. Macfarlane presented the proposed bylaws amendments. They were approved with one amendment, namely, that the words “or until a successor is elected” be inserted in Article IV, Board of Directors, Section IV, Officers, Subsection D, Term of Office, so that the first sentence should read: “The term of office for each officer elected shall be one year or until a successor is elected.”
7. Nominations Committee Chair Rosemary Dann presented candidates Janet Bonet, Maria Cristina de la Vega, Lois M. Feuerle, Laura Garcia-Hein, Alexander Rainof and Claudia Samulowitz and gave instructions for voting.
8. New business: In accord with the Standing Rules, NAJIT member Aaron Ruby requested permission to present a resolution for consideration by the members. Over two-thirds of the voting members present approved consideration. The motion, entitled “Draft Resolution for Adoption by NAJIT Condemning the Cooperation of Interpreters and Translators in Physical and Mental Abuse and Torture of Military Prisoners and Detainees, and in Interrogations of Prisoners Held in Violation of International Law and the U.S. Constitution,” was introduced and then referred to the Advocacy Committee for further discussion and consideration.
9. The meeting adjourned at 2:25 pm and voting took place.

Lois M. Feuerle, Secretary

Approved by the NAJIT Board of Directors  
July 28, 2006

### Report of the Elections Committee

NAJIT Election of Directors

27th Annual Conference • May 20, 2006 • Houston, Texas

Candidate	Votes received by mail	Votes received onsite	Total votes received
Janet Bonet	76	17	93
Maria Cristina de la Vega	51	8	59
Lois M. Feuerle	75	35	110
Laura Garcia-Hein	85	20	105
Alexander Rainof	70	23	93
Claudia Samulowitz	45	19	64
<b>Write-in candidates:</b>			
Rosabella Rice	1		
Daniel Sherr	1		
Steven Mines	1		
Arlene Kelly	1		
Aaron Ruby	1		

Total mail ballots received — 160 —  
Total invalid mail ballots — 7 —

Total onsite ballots received — 44 —  
Total invalid onsite ballots — 0 —

The candidates elected for a two-year term to the NAJIT Board of Directors are:  
Lois M. Feuerle and Laura Garcia-Hein

A third position will be filled according to the result of run-off balloting at 10:15 a.m. Sunday, May 21, 2006 in the Travis/Nueces Room or, if no quorum is obtained, by mail ballot of all voting members.

Submitted by the 2006 Elections Committee May 20, 2006  
Susan Castellanos Bilodeau, Co-Chair; Joyce Y. Garcia, Co-Chair  
with Albert Bork, Vania Haam, Natalie Malmberg

### Results Of Run-off Election

May 21, 2006

Janet Bonet 43 votes                      Alexander Rainof 55 votes

Alexander Rainof is elected for a two-year term to the NAJIT Board of Directors.

Submitted by the 2006 Elections Committee May 21, 2006  
Susan Castellanos Bilodeau, Co-Chair; Joyce Y. Garcia, Co-Chair  
with Albert Bork, Vania Haam, Natalie Malmberg

## Bylaws Amendments Pass

The effect of the six bylaws amendments approved by the membership is:

- 1) NAJIT officers will now serve for a term of one year or until a successor is elected.
- 2) Committee members shall be approved by the Board of Directors.
- 3) The Advocacy Committee is now a standing committee, and the Education and Publications Committees have been removed. Their work will be taken up by SSTI.
- 4) NAJIT will establish a Certification Commission to oversee our credential, the National Judiciary Interpreters & Translators Certification Examination: Spanish. SSTI has transferred responsibility for this credential to NAJIT.
- 5) The Board of Directors will now establish the membership year. The board has subsequently approved a membership year based on the "anniversary" date on which a member originally joins the association. This means that membership will now be valid for a period of twelve months from the date of joining.

## Board News

### ■ NAJIT Board Elects Officers

The NAJIT board has elected the following officers for the coming year:

Alexander Raïnof, *Chair*  
Judith Kenigson Kristy, *Treasurer*  
Laura Garcia-Hein, *Secretary*

### ■ 2008 Conference Venue Chosen

The board has approved the Omni William Penn Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania as the site for the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference, to be held May 16-18, 2008.

## SSTI News

The NAJIT Board has appointed to the following members to the SSTI board for the coming year, who have elected officers as indicated:

Peter Lindquist, *President*  
Lois M. Feuerle, *Vice-President*  
Melinda González-Hibner, *Secretary & Treasurer*  
Joanne Moore, *Director*  
Michael Piper, *Director*

## Treasurer's Report — NAJIT Annual Conference 2006

Once again, it gives me great pleasure to report that NAJIT is in excellent financial health; in fact 2005 was an exceptional year for NAJIT's bottom line, with a year-end net worth of \$85,495, up from \$30,273 in 2004. In a nutshell, the Association took in more money due to expanded membership and outstanding conference attendance, while expenses were kept to just about the same as last year's.

Membership figures are higher than ever (around 1150 compared to the December 2004 total of about 1000), indicating a healthy growth trend. The 2005 Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. was a huge success in terms of both quality and finances, generating over \$34,000 in net revenue. Thanks to these improvements in income, the 2006 budget includes generous expense allocations for committees, publications and public relations work as NAJIT volunteers continue to expand the Association's outreach to students and new members, advocate for the profession, and publish more materials for members to consult and disseminate to courts, members of the legal profession, government entities, schools and the public. The new position papers in your conference packets are evidence of NAJIT's growing advocacy efforts and more letters and materials are available for download on the Association website. In addition, for the first time in NAJIT's history we have been able to put aside, in the form of income-bearing investments, a prudent emergency fund representing three months' estimated expenses.

As you can see in the last two columns of the finance report, for the most part we stayed within our budget and exceeded anticipated income. As before, our administrative services provider,

ERGA, under the careful oversight of Andrew Estep, has provided excellent service and savings in administrative expenses. Thanks are also due to Ann Macfarlane for her superb guidance and tireless vigilance of NAJIT's expenditures.

Implementation in 2005 of "MemberClicks" (MC) web services helped us realize savings and greater efficiency in web management while making it possible to create a secure "Members Only" section where members can update their own information and renew memberships online. Through an MC feature we were able to generate the hard-copy "Member List" on sale at cost at this conference. The list will also be available for download in the Members-Only portal of the NAJIT website. In the future we hope to see the MC "forums" feature being used for committee exchanges and members' discussions that currently occur on the listserv. It could prove to be a good medium for in-depth discussions of specific topics.

The liquidation in 2005 of our total debt to MI for the NAJIT exam was another achievement of which we can all be proud. The Association is grateful to everyone who contributed to this effort and especially to Janis Palma for her extraordinary work raising funds through SSTI training events.

Thank you for generosity and support in both financial contributions and as volunteers carrying out association work. We look forward to even greater accomplishments in 2006. As always, it has been a pleasure and an honor to serve as your Treasurer during the past year.

Judith Kenigson Kristy, Treasurer  
May, 2006

## Treasurer's Report

NAJIT Annual Conference 2006

### Profit and Loss for 2005 (compared with actual 2004 figures and 2005 Budget)

	Jan - Dec 05	Jan - Dec 04	\$ Change	Budget 05	\$ Over Budget
<b>Income</b>					
1000 Membership	145,595.00	79,365.00	66,230.00	104,200.00	41,395.00
1200 Advertising	1,391.00	200.00	1,191.00	900.00	491.00
1300 Publications	50.00	0.00	50.00		
1400 Conference	76,065.00	60,585.00	15,480.00	71,550.00	4,175.00
1500 Spring Regional Conference	0.00	19,460.00	-19,460.00		
1700 Training	-190.00	0.00	-190.00		
1760 Other rev-Mem list rental	710.00	800.00	-90.00	300.00	410.00
1781 Other rev-Misc	0.00	180.00	-180.00	180.00	-180.00
1800 Contributions rec'd for SSTI	5,378.00	3,901.00	1,477.00	3,000.00	2,378.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>228,999.00</b>	<b>164,491.00</b>	<b>64,508.00</b>	<b>180,130.00</b>	<b>48,529.00</b>
<b>Expense</b>					
1810 SSTI Passthru Contribs	4,801.00	4,686.00	115.00	3,000.00	1,801.00
1815 SSTI passthru Fees	2,010.00	0.00	2,010.00		
1830 Contribs by NAJIT	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00
1900 Professional Fees	69,028.74	69,118.55	-89.81	67,560.00	1,468.74
1930 Administration	10,801.85	13,543.57	-2,741.72	12,720.00	-1,918.15
1950 Service Charges	4,175.05	1,423.52	2,751.53	4,720.00	-544.95
1960 Gov't Fees	50.00	50.00	0.00		
1975 Taxes-NY State Corp	250.00	250.00	0.00	250.00	0.00
1980 Website	7,575.00	8,349.75	-774.75	8,040.00	-465.00
2000 Proteus	11,479.51	9,744.64	1,734.87	11,800.00	-320.49
2020 Publications	1,256.89	103.00	1,153.89	1,200.00	56.89
3000 Conference	42,007.52	39,557.27	2,450.25	43,045.00	-937.48
3100 Spring Regional Conference	0.00	14,225.88	-14,225.88		
3200 Fall Regional Conference	0.00	116.40	-116.40		
3300 Training	394.49	582.00	-187.51		
4000 Awards	0.00			200.00	-200.00
4100 Volunteers	274.73	229.71	45.02	500.00	-225.27
4200 Board	8,442.40	9,530.61	-1,088.21	8,250.00	192.40
5000 Committees	1,518.14	38.60	1,479.54	3,420.00	-1,901.86
6000 Dues & Subscriptions	450.00	325.00	125.00	360.00	90.00
7000 Public Relations/Advocacy	3,651.00	481.99	3,169.01	4,200.00	-549.00
8000 Special Events	0.00			600.00	-600.00
9000 SSTI	652.95	1,232.52	-579.57		
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>173,819.27</b>	<b>173,589.01</b>	<b>230.26</b>	<b>174,865.00</b>	<b>-945.73</b>
	<b>55,179.73</b>	<b>-9,098.01</b>	<b>64,277.74</b>	<b>5,265.00</b>	<b>49,474.73</b>



## CALL FOR PAPERS



# NAJIT 28th Annual Conference

May 18 – 20, 2007

Embassy Suites Portland Downtown  
Portland, Oregon

◀ Deadline for submission of proposals: **Friday, September 21, 2006** ▶

**N**AJIT invites proposals for one-hour presentations and three-hour or six-hour interactive preconference workshops on any topic related to court interpretation and legal translation. The conference will have a special focus on legal sign and spoken language interpreting. Proposals on all the following topics are welcome:

- Interpreter training
- Specialized terminology
- Interpreting techniques – all languages
- Specific language interpreting techniques
- Transcription and translation
- Translation of evidentiary materials
- The court interpreter as expert witness
- Court interpreting in specialized settings
- Interpretation and translation theory
- Cross-cultural issues
- Professional concerns (ethics, working conditions, financial planning)
- Other topics of interest

Please submit proposals using the form available on the website, [www.najit.org](http://www.najit.org), or contact headquarters to request a copy.

### HOTEL INFORMATION

**Embassy Suites  
Portland Downtown**  
319 SW Pine Street  
Portland, OR 97204  
Tel: 503-279-9000



The Embassy Suites Portland Downtown is located in the heart of downtown Portland. It is a magnificent historic hotel, fully renovated for beauty, charm and modern expectations. NAJIT's special rate of \$139.00 plus tax (currently 12.5%) is available until April 18, 2007. Each suite includes a private bedroom and spacious living room. All suites are fully equipped with two televisions, refrigerator, microwave oven, coffee maker, two telephones with data ports and well-lit dining/work table. Book early and luxuriate in comfort!



# Portland attractions will delight NAJIT members and guests!



Travel Portland/Steve Terill

*The crisp, clear Pacific Northwest offers great recreational opportunities. Visit Mount Hood or take a dinner cruise on the Willamette River. The Embassy Suites provides a perfect home base. Your room rate includes free hot breakfast and manager's reception. Wine, beer and snacks from 5:30 to 7:30 pm without charge.*



Powell's City of Books: Bruce Forster

*Our hotel is just a few blocks from Powell's City of Books. This fabulous store carries over 1 million titles. Used and new books are shelved side by side. Convenient any time between 9 am and 11 pm. Snack bar and reading room allow patrons to read in peace.*

*The Portland Chinese Garden is only eight blocks away. A lovely creation of the Ming Dynasty with authentic plantings. Portland offers three other unique gardens. The Saturday Market and the river walkway await you! Over 40 theaters, opera and ballet.*



Travel Portland/Larry Geddes

## NAJIT 28th Annual Conference

May 18-20, 2007

Embassy Suites  
Portland Downtown  
Portland, Oregon



Photos courtesy of Portland Oregon Visitors Association

## COMMITTEE NEWS

### Appointments

The board of Directors has made the following appointments of committee and project chairs, effective through May 19, 2007:

- Advocacy Committee* – Isabel Framer
- Conference Committee* – Lois M. Feuerle & Cristina Helmerichs D.
- Elections Committee* – Albert Bork & Joyce Garcia
- Membership Committee* – Claudia Samulowitz
- Nominations Committee* – Susan Castellanos Bilodeau
- Certification Commission* – Rosemary Dann
- Pilot Mentoring Project* – Michael Kagan
- Student Outreach Project* – Vanesa Ieraci
- Position Papers Project* – Nancy Festinger
- Transcription & Translation Project* – Teresa Salazar & Gladys Segal
- TT Ensemble Task Force* – Jeck-Jenard Navarrete
- Proteus Editor-in-Chief* – Nancy Festinger

### Advocacy Committee Report

The following letter was received from the Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts in New Hampshire, and is published together with NAJIT's reply.

June 12, 2006

Alexander Rainof, Ph.D.  
Chair, Board of Directors  
National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators

Dear Dr. Rainof:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter of April 2, 2006. I appreciate your interest in the quality of foreign language interpretation in New Hampshire trial courts. The New Hampshire Judicial Branch is committed to ensuring that all members of our communities have full and equal access to justice. In furtherance of this goal, we entered an agreement with The Language Bank, a program of Lutheran Social Services of Northern New England, specifically to address the issues you raise such as training, qualifications, screening, performance standards, and quality control. We are hopeful that our collaboration with The Language Bank and with Southern New Hampshire Area Health Education Center will allow us to leverage some strengths and fill in for each other's weaknesses, all to the benefit of the residents of New Hampshire.

Consistent with your advice that the New Hampshire Supreme Court adopt standards of proficiency and establish a quality control system, we are working with our counterparts in Maine and Vermont and considering joining the National Center for State Courts Interpreter Consortium. One of the benefits of the Consortium is the opportunity to test New Hampshire interpreters for language proficiency and for interpretation skills. The National Center offers test services in 12 foreign languages. If we join the Consortium, we will surely take advantage of those test services for our Spanish interpreters. To assist us in deciding whether to join the Consortium, can you let me know whether the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators offers tests or

other means of verifying the qualifications of interpreters.

In closing, I want to thank you once again for your commitment to quality interpretation services.

Yours very truly,  
Donald D. Goodnow, Esq.  
Director, Administrative Office of the Courts for the State of New Hampshire

July 13, 2006

Donald D. Goodnow, Esq.  
Director, Administrative Office of the Courts for the State of New Hampshire

Dear Director Goodnow:

Thank you for your letter of June 12, 2006.

We are pleased to know that the New Hampshire Administrative Office of the Courts is exploring the possibility of joining the other 36 states that are members of the National Center for State Courts Consortium for State Court Interpreter Certification (hereinafter "Consortium").

All of these state courts have found joining the Consortium to be the most efficient and cost-effective way to establish and implement sound standards for court interpreting in their states. The Consortium has developed valid and reliable tests, in 13 languages, incorporating the expertise of psychometricians, linguists, federally certified court interpreters and other experts in the field. Through this testing process the Consortium has established methods for determining the skills levels of interpreter candidates and the screening of language service providers whose skills are not adequate to ensure full access to justice.

Many Consortium member states have also accepted certification by the U.S. Administrative Office of the Courts and/or the NAJIT certification exam as a valid qualification to interpret in their courts. Like the federal examination, the NAJIT examination is rigorous and has undergone all of the psychometric assessments necessary to be deemed a valid and reliable test instrument. Both the NAJIT examination (available only in Spanish at this time) and the federal examination are open to anyone who wishes to take them, no matter where they reside or, in the case of the NAJIT examination, whether or not they are members of NAJIT.

As you know, we understand that the Court is contracting with an agency to provide interpreting services for the courts. While some language agencies have criteria for selecting, hiring, evaluating and training interpreters, and also require criminal background checks as the federal courts and many state courts do, many do not. It is certainly true that language agencies, including telephonic language services, are sometimes a resource on which courts must rely. We also recognize the difficulties courts encounter in finding and retaining sources for certified and qualified interpreters, especially in states that have not yet joined the Consortium and do not have criteria in place for determining certified and qualified interpreters.

Unfortunately, however, some agencies, non-governmental organizations and advocacy groups lack expertise and knowledge about our specialized field. Although their intentions are good, their lack of expertise and knowledge has unwittingly put in jeopardy access to justice and due process, causing untold havoc in the lives of non-English speaking people as well as reversals on appeal because of the use of unskilled and/or insufficiently trained interpreters whose lack of linguistic skill, ethics and protocols vitiate the process of justice. This sit-

uation has moved NAJIT to become even more vigilant regarding issues affecting our profession and the U.S. justice system. Experience in other states has shown that a broad-based approach that includes agencies, independent contractor interpreters and staff interpreters (where economically justified) tailored to local needs, together with a comprehensive certification and training system monitored by the Court or AOC, is the best solution for providing competent, qualified interpreter services at an effective cost.

In closing, we would like to thank you again for your interest in and efforts to establish an appropriate and effective plan to ensure competent interpreter services for New Hampshire's courts. Included with this letter are a list of resources with links to important information and articles that may be of assistance to your courts and their counterparts in Maine and Vermont, as well as a list of relevant case law. Please feel free to download and distribute any of these documents. Also, please feel free to contact us regarding any additional questions you may have.

Cordially,  
Alexander Rainof, Ph.D.  
Chair, Board of Directors

The following letter was sent to Governor Schwarzenegger of California. We regret to report that the Governor deleted the funding from the California budget.

June 14, 2006

Hon. Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor of California  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Judicial Branch Budget – court interpreters

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT) urges you to sustain funding for court interpreters in civil cases, as supported by Chief Justice Ronald M. George and the Judicial Council.

California is the most linguistically diverse state in the nation with forty percent of the state's population speaking a language other than English at home. This rich diversity is among the state's greatest assets and has helped make California an international leader in business, entertainment, engineering, medicine and other fields. The state's diversity also poses unique challenges for the delivery of government services, particularly for the courts. Nearly seven million Californians cannot participate meaningfully in court proceedings without significant language assistance provided by qualified interpreters.

The lack of interpreter services also negatively impacts the efficient administration of justice. Inadequate resources to assist litigants with limited English proficiency affects the court's ability to function properly, causing costly delays in proceedings for all court users, inappropriate defaults, and faulty interpretation that can ultimately subvert justice. The Judicial Council has observed that the lack of interpreters in civil proceedings has enormous consequences for parties: in domestic violence cases, respondents do not understand the orders entered against them and all too often violate them; single parents are unable to obtain adequate child support awards and must go on public assistance; and extended family members are unable to obtain guardianships, which would allow them to care for children who otherwise are placed into foster care or juvenile hall.

The courts have made significant efforts to assist litigants with limited English proficiency, including steps to increase the number of certified and registered interpreters and to provide interpreters in civil cases where resources are available. Nevertheless, court proceedings are required by law to be conducted in English, and most crucial court forms and documents are available only in English. Language assistance in civil cases would improve the operation of the judicial system by reducing the amount of courtroom time for hearings, ensuring that non-English-speaking litigants appear more consistently at subsequent hearings, and by reducing the number of delays and backlog in some areas.

As you have noted, the issues at stake in child custody, child support, and other civil cases are critical to the well-being of all Californians. It is essential to provide interpreters for civil cases, including family law and domestic violence cases so that these parties have meaningful access to the courts. Although the \$10 million funding level chosen by the Legislature will clearly not address the full need in civil cases, it will allow the courts to begin addressing the most critical cases.

Thank you for your consideration. Please support sustaining funding for civil court interpreters in order to preserve liberty and justice for all Californians.

Sincerely,  
Alexander Rainof, Ph.D.  
Chair, Board of Directors

cc: Richard Costigan, Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor  
Michael C. Genest, Director, Department of Finance

At the 2006 Annual Meeting, the NAJIT membership considered a resolution presented by member Aaron Ruby entitled "Draft Resolution for Adoption by NAJIT Condemning the Cooperation of Interpreters and Translators in Physical and Mental Abuse and Torture of Military Prisoners and Detainees, and in Interrogations of Prisoners Held in Violation of International Law and the U.S. Constitution." The resolution was referred to the Advocacy Committee for further discussion and consideration. The Advocacy Committee is studying the draft and will report to the Board of Directors with its recommendations.

## Position Papers Project Report

Eight position papers are now available on the NAJIT website as follows:

- Direct Speech in Legal Settings
- Equal Access as it Relates to Translation and Interpretation
- Information for Court Administrators
- Language Assistance for Law Enforcement
- Modes of Interpreting
- Onsite Simultaneous Interpretation of a Sound File is not Recommended
- Preparing Interpreters in Rare Languages
- Summary Interpreting in Legal Settings

Two of these papers were cited in Carla Mathers' new book, *Sign Language Interpreters in Court: Understanding Best Practices*. Other position papers are in preparation.



## Transcription & Translation Project Report

This information was presented to the NAJIT membership and conference attendees at the Houston Annual Conference.

Thanks to the notes and articles you have sent us, we have produced a first draft on the subjects listed below:

- Why Transcribe and Translate a Sound File?
- Tapes and Transcripts: Legal Issues
- Participation in Title III Operations
- Forensic Experts for the U.S. Attorney's Office
- Forensic Experts for the Defense
- Admission of interpreters as expert witnesses
- Sources and Equipment – TT Ensemble
- Process
- Format
- Teaming
- Profile of the Practitioner
- Ethics
- Bibliography

We are happy to report that Sylvia Zetterstrand, the first chair of this project, has graciously agreed to review the drafts as the next stage. Other members of the project will be working on the following subjects:

- Orthography
- Punctuation – English
- Punctuation – Spanish
- Symbols
- Transcription of Verbal Content
- Transcription of Non-Verbal Content
- Transcription of Videos
- Translation Process
- Languages Other than Spanish
- Use of Non-Standard Language
- Client – Practitioner Relations
- Forensic Testimony

As a result of work already drafted, we have completed a position paper entitled *On-site Simultaneous Interpretation of a Sound File is Not Recommended*. This paper was prepared in response to an inquiry submitted by a fellow practitioner to NAJIT on this subject. Our thanks go to Roger Shuy, Silvia San Martin, Liliana González, and Nadia Smith for their feedback and editorial assistance. The position paper was well received at the conference, and we were proud to present it on behalf of the entire TT Project. This position paper will be posted shortly on the NAJIT website.

Other position papers on sensitive issues will follow as we proceed with the TT Guidelines. These position papers will provide the community of practitioners and service users with materials to review and comment upon, giving us input as we move toward completion of the TT Guidelines.

## Honors

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JUDICIARY  
INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS AND THE  
SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF TRANSLATION  
AND INTERPRETATION BESTOW THE  
MIRTA VIDAL-ORRANTIA AWARD UPON:

JANIS PALMA

FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE  
TO THE PROFESSION. GIVEN ON  
THIS 20TH DAY OF MAY OF 2006

ALEXANDER RAÏNOF, PH.D.  
CHAIR, NAJIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PETER P. LINDQUIST, PH.D.  
PRESIDENT, SSTI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Houston Conference also showcased innovative and informative presentations on TT. Attendance was high at Liliana Gonzalez's presentation entitled *TT: Did You Really Hear That?* The panel presentation including Liliana González, Shelley B. Lorenzana, Sam Mattix, Dagoberto Orrantia, Teresa Salazar, and myself on Teaming in TT was well received, and Jeck Navarrete's presentation *TT: Entering the Digital Age*, was truly enlightening and edifying. Maria Cecilia Marty also presented on the interesting Florida case in which TT revealed that an interpreter's work was substandard, resulting in withdrawal of an appeal.

Another exciting development at this conference is the innovative software idea proposed by Sam Mattix, entitled "TT Ensemble." This software would allow a practitioner to link audio and written records in a single file. It has the potential to revolutionize the way that TT work is done. A description of this concept is available on the NAJIT website. We are in discussions with Brigham Young University about developing a prototype for this software which would be freeware, available to anyone who needs it. The NAJIT Board of Directors strongly supports this project and has appointed Jeck-Jenard Navarrete as Chair of the Task Force devoted to it.

Thanks to all of you who are involved in TT work and who support NAJIT and our ongoing commitment to establish the vital guidelines and standards needed for this work. We appreciate your support and input, and will continue to keep you informed as we move forward.

Gladys Segal and Teresa Salazar, Co-Chairs, TT Project  
May 25, 2006



## Student Outreach Project Report

The Student Outreach Project is very pleased to announce that the NAJIT Board of Directors has increased the stipend to be awarded to NAJIT Scholars for next year's conference. Up to six Scholars will be chosen, and each will receive a stipend of \$500 in addition to a free conference registration.

This year, NAJIT's Scholars represented five different translation and interpreting educational institutions. They were chosen by a panel of three judges nominated by this committee and approved by the Board of Directors. The application and selection process was coordinated by Amy Free, Scholarship Coordinator, and supervised by the SOP Chair. The translation and interpreting students selected in this year's contest were:

Darlene Phillips, Miami Dade College  
 Kristina Zakaryan, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
 Amy Griffin-Otterberg, La Guardia Community College  
 Ting Guo, University of Massachusetts-Amherst  
 Nancy Leveson, Bellevue Community College

The students served this year as NAJIT Scholars at the 27th Annual Conference in Houston, Texas and received commemorative plaques. Articles by two of the Scholars appear on pp. 18 and 20 of this issue.

Information about the upcoming 2007 NAJIT Scholar Program will be available in October 2006. In addition, the Student Outreach Project is pleased to be collaborating with SSTI in establishing the Mirta Vidal Scholarship Program and partnering with the NAJIT Mentoring Project.

Vanessa Ieraci, Chair

## NAJIT and Other Organizations

The following letter was sent to the Co-Chairs of the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care.

May 16, 2006

Ms. Wilma Alvarado-Little and Ms. Maria Michalczyk  
 Co-Chairs, National Council on Interpreting in Health Care

Dear Ms. Alvarado-Little and Ms. Michalczyk:

It gives me great pleasure to inform you that the Board of Directors of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, which is an organizational member of the NCIHC, has endorsed the NCIHC National Standards of Practice for Interpreters in Health Care. We will provide copies of these standards to all attendees at our forthcoming annual conference. We appreciate Ms. Carola Green's willingness to give a presentation on them at our conference. Thank you for all the careful work that has gone into preparing and publishing these standards.

NAJIT recognizes and values the fact that legal and medical interpreting are different fields with somewhat differing expectations. We would like to mention for the possible interest of your board and members a few observations

that have occurred to us in reviewing the Standards of Practice, as given in the enclosed comments. We hope that these will be of value to you and to NCIHC members as you continue to help develop the field of medical interpreting in the U.S. and throughout the world.

Sincerely yours,  
 Alexander Rainof, Ph.D.  
 Chair, Board of Directors

### Additional Comments on the Standards of Practice for Interpreters in Health Care, from the Perspective of the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators

The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators endorses the Standards of Practice for Interpreters in Health Care. In addition, we would like to suggest the following comments:

#### 1. Sight Translation

We believe that sight translations should be conducted only in the presence of a doctor, nurse, or other person authorized to read a medical document to a patient. In addition, however, there is another aspect of sight translation that interpreters and healthcare providers should take into account: since documents sometimes have difficult terminology and legal ramifications, specific training and skills may be necessary to render an accurate sight translation of complicated documents. The interpreter and provider should make sure that any interpreter who undertakes sight translation possesses the required skills and is fully capable of performing this activity. If the material is too difficult or complex for an on-the-spot sight translation, it may be necessary for the document to be translated and presented in written form (which can be read by the interpreter to the patient), or for an interpreter with specific qualifications in medical translation to be sought.

#### 2. Advocacy

We believe that it is essential that medical interpreters serving in workman's compensation cases or in any medical setting where there are legal implications remain neutral at all times and refrain from any advocacy activity. If the interpreter is unaware of this limitation of his/her role in a setting that has legal implications, the interpreter is put at risk and could leave himself or herself, as well as the healthcare provider, exposed to legal challenges.

#### 3. Cultural information

We believe that when serving in any medical setting where there are legal ramifications, the interpreter must remain neutral at all times and refrain from providing cultural advice or advice of any kind. Cultural advice should only be provided by (a) anthropologists with specialized training and knowledge of the particular country and region from which the non-English or limited-English speaker originates, or by (b) interpreters who have been qualified and hired specifically as cultural experts. Interpreters working in a field where an individual's health, safety and life are at stake should be made aware of these requirements and the limitations on providing cultural information. If the interpreter is unaware of such requirements and/or limitations, the interpreter could put the LEP patient at risk or put him/herself at risk of exposure to legal challenges.

May 16, 2006

NAJIT exhibited at the California Health Care Interpreters Association conference held June 2-3 in Los Angeles, California. ▲

## NAJIT MEMBERS IN ACTION

Compiled by Lois Feuerle

**Janet Bonet**, former NAJIT Director, published an article entitled "O Pioneers! A Commentary on Nebraska's Translators and Interpreters" in the February 2006 *ATA Chronicle*.

**Karen Borgenheimer**, former co-chair of the NAJIT education committee, published an article entitled "Interpreting for Civil Litigation Depositions: Guidelines for the New Professional" in the March 2006 *ATA Chronicle*.

**Corinne Cline** presented "Court Interpreter Training: An Overview and Curriculum Analysis" at the ATA Conference in Seattle.

**Andrew Erickson** translated the California Megan's Law website into Portuguese for the California Department of Justice. <http://www.meganslaw.ca.gov/>

**Nancy Festinger** presented at a New York state court interpreters seminar in White Plains, NY in June, 2006 on "Creating a Professional Interpreter Corps."

**Lois Feuerle**, NAJIT Director, presented a paper on language access issues for speakers of indigenous languages in April 2006, at the 9th annual conference of the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages in Madison, Wisconsin. Other presentations were at the annual meeting of the Oregon Municipal Judges Association (on the interpreter code of ethics) and at a bar association-approved attorney CLE, "Working with Clients from Indigenous Communities." She co-presented and participated in a panel at the annual Ethics CLE organized by the Oregon Law Institute of the Lewis and Clark School of Law.

**Isabel Framer**, NAJIT Director, participated in a day-long CLE session on LEP issues organized by the Federal Executive Board in Cleveland in April 2006. She was also a panel member at the Ohio Homeland Security Symposium, "To Serve and Protect in All Languages: Responding to Limited English Proficient Population." She presented at the Ohio Criminal Justice Services Statewide Law Enforcement LEP Conference, "Interpreters and Their Impact on the Criminal Justice System: Working with Interpreters" and at the Ohio Criminal Justice Services Statewide Law Enforcement Training Columbus for Defiance, Lorain, and Montgomery County, "Working With Interpreters and Basic Survival Spanish."

**Vanesa Ieraci**, chair of the NAJIT student outreach project, developed and implemented a cross-cultural communications initiative "Talking with the Police" for Nuestra Casa and the East Palo Alto Police Department.

**Holly Mikkelsen** published the first of three new interpreter training manuals on CD in her Edge 21 series. The first manual is devoted to consecutive interpreting. She anticipates that the manu-

al on simultaneous interpreting will be available this summer.

**Gladys G. Matthews** is currently working on a project with the McGill University Law School (Montreal, Canada) to develop a 3-volume trilingual, English, French and Spanish Pan-American dictionary on franchise law. She researches Spanish equivalents for selected French and English terms and finds appropriate contextual references to illustrate their use. Since franchising is a relatively new business concept in the Spanish-speaking world this dictionary will meet a real need.

**Joanne Moore**, public member of the SSTI Board and head of the Washington state office of the Public Defender, presented with Director Feuerle on "Working with Interpreters" at the Lewis and Clark School of Law's Oregon Law Institute's 18th Annual Ethics CLE. Moore and Feuerle also participated in a panel on "Immigrants in Court" with Justice Paul De Muniz, Chief Justice of the Oregon Supreme Court.

**Dagoberto Orrantia** conducted a two-hour workshop, "Coping Strategies for Interpreters," for the Delaware Valley Translators Association in Philadelphia in June 2006.

**Michael Piper**, member of the SSTI Board, has been appointed interpretation and translation instructor at the Des Moines Area Community College in Des Moines, Iowa, which has just started an Associate of Science degree and certificate program in judiciary interpretation and translation, and healthcare interpretation and translation. In addition to teaching three courses and getting the DMACC program approved, Michael also just completed his first year at Drake Law School.

**Maira Pujols** is executive director of the non-profit organization, *contratiempo*NFP, that publishes the monthly cultural and opinion journal "*contratiempo*" ([www.revistacontratiempo.com](http://www.revistacontratiempo.com)), published in Chicago and run almost entirely on a volunteer basis, including writers and visual artists as well as the translators who translate articles submitted in English. *Contratiempo* also offers literary workshops twice a month.

**Alexander Rainof**, NAJIT Chair, presented "Proverbs and the Translator and Interpreter" at the American Translation and Interpretation Studies Association 3rd Biennial Conference in San Diego last March, and "Ethics and Training for Interpreters in the Medical Sector" to the California Workers' Compensation Interpreters Association in April 2006, where he was presented with a plaque in recognition of his dedication and commitment to the betterment of the interpreting profession. He represented academic interpreting programs at the Salt Lake City Translation Summit in March.

> *continued on next page*

## HEARD IN COURT

*In this issue, Proteus begins a new column on the difficulties, routine and otherwise, that court interpreters encounter daily. Our first contributor recounts a deadly combination of heavily accented English, ballistics testimony and courtroom acoustics. It's the sort of thing that happens at 4:30 pm on a Friday, after a grueling week on trial.*

*To contribute, please email [proteus@najit.org](mailto:proteus@najit.org)*

# NO EASY SHOT

Andrew Erickson

**W**e had a ballistics expert from India in the Rodríguez trial today. For the entire afternoon a colleague and I played Placer County Superior Court's hottest game, "Guess What the Witness Is Saying."

Imagine Gandhi in a suit, hard of hearing, in an echo chamber; make him nervous and easy to confuse; turn off the microphone; and lead him through the following exchange while chairs scrape, papers get shuffled, jurors cough, and other extraneous noises chip away at your concentration. Read aloud in a heavy Indian accent.

DA: So, Mr. Unpronounceable, could you please tell the jury whether or not it isn't true that you examined what your colleague, Ms. Shniffenheimer, identified as items 12 and 13 in your report dated 5/5/05, here in People's 5 and 6 for identification?

Witness: Uh, I'm so very sorry, sir. I am hard of hearing. Could you please repeat your question?

DA: Did you and Mrs. Sheimenfeffer examine item number 5 – I'm sorry – examine item 12 as it is identified in your report, and then marked as People's 5? Well, 5 and 6 – and did you not identify them as bullets with identical groove marks that could have only come from a semiautomatic handgun?

Def atty: Objection. Compound. Leading. Assumes facts.

Witness: No, sir, I did not object to Ms. Shniffenheimer's analysis because it led me to the same results. I assume, uh, I do not know what is compound in this context, sorry.

Judge: No. We have an objection pending. Sustained. Rephrase.

DA: What do you have there?

Witness: Here, sir? My briefcase. I have many files inside of that.

DA: Up on the table. Marked People's 5 and 6.

Witness: Oh, yes, sir. This is a red, slightly discolored, probably lead-tipped bullet. This is what I examined with Ms. Shniffenheimer with my eyes and with the scope, or microscope. Sometimes we say scope to mean microscope. It's like shorthand for when we are talking to make the conversation go more quickly. I measured the diameter of the bullet and the veedth of the dreedges on this bullet and on the other one.

DA: The width of the ridges?

Witness: Yes, sir. The veedth of the dreedges. We had a maximum of point 019 and a minimum of point 0107 in our measurements.

I hear the People are going to call a Cambodian fingerprint expert and the defense will be putting on an Armenian gang expert later in the trial. Who says our job isn't exciting? ▲

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### MEMBERS IN ACTION *continued*

**Claudia Samulowitz**, Membership Committee Chair, made a presentation, "Beyond Translation," at the local YWCA as part of its monthly network luncheon program. She was also the keynote speaker for the Carroll County Bar Association lunch; the title of her talk was "Through the Language Barrier."

**Silvia San Martin** presented a paper at ATISA on forensic linguistics on non-English speakers suffering from severe cultural barriers (LCPs – Limited Cultural Proficiency) and the impact caused by the use of non-certified and certified interpreters who attempted to expand their roles. She also taught a one-day preparatory workshop for the California State Court Interpreter Exam at SDSU, Imperial Valley Campus in April.

**Vicky Santamaria** presented at the ATA conference in Seattle last November, "Prosecution in Mexico of a Crime Committed in Colorado: The Translator's Role."

**Sandro Tomasi** is a contributing author to the upcoming fourth edition of *Dahl's Law Dictionary, Spanish-English/Inglés-Español* by Henry Saint Dahl.

**Judge Ricardo Urbina**, honorary NAJIT member, chaired a panel discussion on court interpreting issues arranged by the Washington, D.C. Bar Association last March. Gladys Segal, Co-Chair of the NAJIT transcription/translation project, also participated.

*To inform the membership of talks, seminars and publications by NAJIT members, Proteus will make this column a regular feature. Please send relevant information of recent activities to [lois.m.feuerle@ojd.state.or.us](mailto:lois.m.feuerle@ojd.state.or.us). ▲*

## CONFERENCE NEWS (Houston)

# ON THE LOOSE IN HOUSTON

Daniel Sherr

At the Houston conference, while browsing through the varied collection of dictionaries that InTrans Book Service regales us with every year (astoundingly, \$400 worth of books disappeared during the conference — talk about a code of ethics violation!), I heard a voice say, “My girlfriends always ask me if I meet any interesting men at the conference. They don’t know that those type of people don’t come to these things.”

As a man, and hopefully an interesting one, the comment did give me cause for reflection. We all know that our profession is predominantly female. Among the many statistics NAJIT classifies by (language, state, credentials, last name), gender is not included. However, on the website of the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC), one can see that a full three-quarters of the members are women.

I’ve heard two theories regarding the predominance of women in the interpreting profession: one social and another, biological. The social theory holds that when you get started as a freelancer, work is sporadic. Thus, the theory goes, if your spouse or partner has a full-time job, you have the ability to slowly start to build a clientele, one occasional job at a time. With an uncertain volume of work and an unpredictable income, interpreting was not well suited to men, who have traditionally been the breadwinners.

The biological theory posits that men’s and women’s brains are wired differently, that men have greater spatial coordination and women better language skills, which gives them a head start for the interpreting profession. According to Dr. Rex Jung of the University of New Mexico, co-author of a recent study on women’s and men’s use of white and gray matter in the brain, “Men tend to excel in tasks requiring more local processing, like mathematics and map-reading, while women tend to excel at integrating information from various brain regions, such as is required for language skills.” Dr. Marianne J. Legato of Columbia University, founder of the Partnership for Gender-Specific Medicine and author of *Why Men Never Remember and Women Never Forget*, commented in a recent radio interview, “Men use only one part of their brain to process a task, whereas women have apparently many more connections between the two halves of their brain and light up multiple centers in processing things. It is alleged, therefore, that we have, as women, an ability to multitask.” My completely unscientific observation corroborates this. I’ve seen various female conference interpreters receive calls on their cell phones while interpreting in the booth, push the cough button, answer the phone, and then continue interpreting. For me, such dexterity is an absolute impossibility.

Dr. Legato suggests that men and women could greatly benefit from examining how the other sex excels in certain fields, adding,

“The brain is not cast in stone.” Would it be possible for men to emulate female interpreting skills?

Getting back to the NAJIT conference, I was struck by the fact that many of the female Spanish interpreters from South America were living in places like Covington, Kentucky, or Norfolk, Nebraska. They all talked about the culture shock they had experienced when relocating. I could only surmise that their life circumstances (i.e. marriage) had caused them to leave Buenos Aires, Caracas, or San José and end up in the American heartland.

These interpreters spoke about the poor working conditions they have to contend with daily and their struggle to improve them. Curiously enough, their fight to educate the legal world in their districts about best practices in interpreting seemed to be quite empowering to them. These women are riding the edge of the interpreting wave in their communities. Their professional lives have become imbued with purpose precisely because they settled in communities with low interpreting standards.

The conference was also the opportunity for me to be reunited with a college friend I had not seen in 12 years. GD and I both studied Spanish language and literature at college and shared a passion for the language and culture. With a wife and four kids to support, GD became an engineer. Now, as his oldest kids get ready for college, he’s contemplating a career change and wants to move into interpreting. GD had driven to Houston from Austin to attend a wonderful seminar on test-taking with Dagoberto Orrantia and Ana-Cecilia Rosado. He found it extremely useful as an indicator of the skill areas he has to improve in. I was truly moved when I introduced him to other conference attendees and he said (in Spanish, of course), “At this point in my life, I have decided I want to be an interpreter. I know it will not be easy, and it will take a lot of work, but this is a dream I think can come true.”

GD was unable to stay for the conference. He had asked if he might attend at the student rate. Though not a full-time student, he is contemplating a mid-life career change, and has to take time off work to get training and observe other interpreters. Denied the student rate, GD couldn’t afford the additional expense. Yet, just as NAJIT provides a student rate and offers scholarships to interpreting students, it might consider offering a discount to attendees in special circumstances. The executive director or the board could be vested with discretionary power to grant such partial dispensation.

I’m chagrined to say that I didn’t see many colleagues from the Southern District of New York at the conference. As a matter of fact, I know many are not even NAJIT members. The fact is that interpreters working in the federal courts in the Southern District

> [continued on page 19](#)



## NAJIT SCHOLAR: FROM TREPIDATION TO INSPIRATION

Nancy Leveson

On the first day of the NAJIT conference, I entered the hotel lobby with mixed emotions. On the one hand, I was thrilled to have been selected as a NAJIT Scholar and to have the opportunity to attend the conference. On the other, it was a bit intimidating. I was about to mingle with crowds of highly-qualified and experienced translators and interpreters. As an aspiring interpreter with so much to learn, it was easy to feel out of place.

At the registration desk, I was checked in by no other than Ann Macfarlane herself, who recognized my name and immediately gave me a very warm welcome. Suddenly I felt a sense of belonging. I attached the “scholar” label to my nametag and for the next three days I was a NAJIT Scholar. Throughout the conference my fellow scholars and I were consistently made to feel not only that we were welcome, but that we were an important presence, part of the “future of the profession.”

Luckily, the nametags made it easy for the five scholars to find each other. We were a diverse group, representing Spanish, Chinese, Russian, and even American Sign Language. It was interesting to discuss our backgrounds and the differences and similarities in the programs and work we were pursuing.

On Friday we attended the court tour in the morning, an orientation with Janet Bonet in the afternoon, a Scholars reception in the evening, and the dinner dance that night. Of everything we experienced in that busy and overwhelming first day, for me the most important advice came from Janet in our orientation. She counseled us to think carefully about what we hoped to get out of the confer-

ence and what we could do to best meet those goals. This became my guide over the next few days. It helped me make difficult decisions among sessions and encouraged me to seize opportunities to speak with people involved in activities that interested me.

The next two days passed in a whirlwind of activity, sessions, and conversations on a wide variety of topics, extending well beyond things exclusively legal. The sessions I attended included one describing a project training students in interpreting in the Highline School District, where I live; a session on medical terminology by Cindy Roat, my first interpreting instructor and initial source of encouragement in this field; and a panel discussion on domestic violence and interpreting, which was of interest to me because I do extensive volunteer work in this area. I also attended a very practical session by Peter Lindquist about how to analyze and improve simultaneous interpreting skills. This last session was especially useful, since I have plenty of work ahead in the skill-building arena. I remain amazed by the range of topics provided at the conference and how well I was able to find sessions that fit so closely with my own background and interests.

By the end of the conference, I was inspired and energized. Although I am still very much in awe of the great skill, talent, and experience that I saw all around me, I am even more impressed by the friendliness, encouragement, and willingness to share that I encountered at every turn. I will always be grateful for this opportunity and to all those who made it possible. ▲

## A NAJIT SCHOLAR ON THE ART OF COMMUNICATION

Darlene Phillips

Last December, when Miami Dade College’s translation and interpretation program director, Humberto Cerna, distributed applications for becoming a 2006 NAJIT Scholar, it seemed like a long shot, but I sent in my application, essay and recommendation and hoped for the best. A letter in March sent by NAJIT student outreach program director, Vanesa Ieraci, changed my perspective on the role of translator and interpreter.

My first impression of the 27th Annual NAJIT Conference in Houston was of something extremely important, with people bustling from registration to the conference rooms and colleagues greeting each other. Ann G. Macfarlane, NAJIT’s executive director, welcomed the scholars to this prestigious event. She notified me of the court tour leaving shortly and suggested I meet the other four scholars before we boarded the bus.

My fellow scholars, translators and interpreters were: Amy Griffin-Otterberg, ASL; Ting Guo, Mandarin; Kristina Zakaryan, Russian; and Nancy Leveson and myself, Spanish. We were all from

different countries and spoke several languages amongst ourselves, yet we had one goal in common: to improve our language and communication techniques and to be avid observers of the conference.

The court tour took us to downtown Houston’s court district; this enabled us to observe several hearings being held at the civil, criminal and federal levels. Interviews with federal court interpreters and a judge were scheduled to discuss court cases and the responsibilities they each had, not only to the court but also in becoming the non-English speaker’s voice.

Upon returning to the conference we were introduced to board member Janet Bonet, who explained the importance of having been chosen to be a NAJIT scholar. The program would allow us to learn about the different aspects of the needs and functions of interpreters and translators, to hear informative sessions on ethics, skills workshops, special programs such as NGO’s ( non-governmental organizations), state certification and consortium

> [continued on page 20](#)



# IN THE SWING OF THINGS

## My First NAJIT Conference

Andrew Erickson

I didn't know what to expect when I got on the plane in Reno, bound for a NAJIT conference where I hardly knew a soul, in a city I had never seen. It was late evening when I landed. By the time I got to the hotel, the opening dinner dance was over. As I checked out the layout of the conference rooms for the next day's events, I saw someone in the hallway who my sixth sense told me was another interpreter. Upon introducing myself to her, I learned she was NAJIT board member Isabel Framer. We had had telephone and e-mail contact but had never met. "Oh, so you're Andrew. It's so nice to meet you. Welcome to Houston." Right there I knew my first NAJIT conference was going to be enjoyable. And I wasn't wrong.

The following two days were educational and exciting. The first workshop I attended was Ann Macfarlane's Jurassic Parliament. Ann is the executive director of NAJIT. We had met briefly at an interpreter conference in California in 2005 and had exchanged a few phone calls and e-mails. At the end of her presentation I introduced myself and received another warm welcome.

From there I went from informative session to session, meeting fellow NAJIT members and wonderful representatives of our profession. Lorena Martin's presentation on court security was timely and a welcome real-world presentation on an important yet oft overlooked facet of interpreting. Jeck-Jenard Navarrete's session on transcription technology was right up my alley. Tony Rosado's federal interpreters roundtable was informative. Dr. Carolyn Kinney's update from the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts was quite helpful. For me, the most delightful aspect of the Houston Conference was the ability to talk with each presenter at the end of every session.

Along the way I got to meet and talk to several colleagues from all over the U.S. One attendee, Japanese interpreter Setsuko Poland,

lives near my home town in the Sierra Nevada foothills of California. We were practically neighbors and yet met for the first time in Houston. When I met a Portuguese interpreter from Massachusetts, Dr. Arlene Kelly, I inquired whether she knew another Portuguese interpreter who had recently moved from her state to mine. "Why, yes, I do," she replied. That's the small world we work in.

For the past ten years I've been involved in medical, administrative hearing and court interpreting — along with the politics of our profession — in California. I consider myself well-versed in the laws and policies that govern our profession in the Golden State. In Houston, though, I learned that although individual issues in the field of court interpreting vary from state to state, and within the federal judiciary, we are all united in our desire to uphold the rights of linguistic minorities throughout the United States.

I can't wait for Portland next year. ▲

*[The author, a California and federally certified Spanish court interpreter, is also California certified in Portuguese and registered in Italian. He resides in Nevada City, California. He is a member of the Advocacy Committee and was the primary author of the position paper on modes of interpreting. In addition to this report on his first NAJIT meeting, he contributed the inaugural column of "Heard in Court" (see page 16, this issue).]*

### ON THE LOOSE IN HOUSTON continued from page 17

enjoy excellent working conditions. It's a sad irony that many of NAJIT's most active members come from jurisdictions where interpreters have to contend with non-recognition of certification credentials, refusal to hire two interpreters for long proceedings, and a general lack of respect for the role the interpreter plays in the courtroom. These interpreters see NAJIT as an ally in their struggle for better conditions. Interpreters from large urban areas (New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, etc.) overcame these barriers long ago and perhaps do not see any concrete benefits in affiliation with NAJIT. Hopefully, as NAJIT's working relationship with the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts and other governmental bodies using interpreters becomes increasingly solidified, these interpreters will have a more tangible incentive for joining, or, at least, attending the annual conference.

And for that unheralded minority of our profession — the men, there may be additional motivations as well. ▲

*[The author is a court and conference interpreter in French, Spanish and Catalan.]*

2006  
عام الطالب  
L'année de l'étudiant  
Year of the Student  
El año del estudiante  
Год студента  
学生之年  
National Association of  
Judiciary Interpreters  
& Translators

## CALENDAR

- September 30, 2006. Columbus, OH.** Community and Court Interpreters of the Ohio Valley Training on Forensics & Hostage Taking.
- October 6-8, 2006. Long Beach, CA.** California Federation of Interpreters Conference.
- October 13-15, 2006. Newport Beach, CA.** California Court Interpreters Association Conference.
- October 17-20, 2006. Seattle, WA.** 5th Biennial Conference on Quality Health Care for Culturally Diverse Populations.
- October 18-21, 2006. San Diego, CA.** Conference of Interpreter Trainers 26th Biennial Conference.
- October 18-21, 2006. Bellevue, WA.** American Literary Translators Association 29th Annual Conference.
- November 1-4, 2006. New Orleans, LA.** American Translators Association 47th Annual Conference.
- November 3-5, 2006. Zurich, Switzerland.** International Federation of Translators 8th International Forum on Interpreting and Translating at Court and for Public Authorities.
- November 17-29, 2006. Nashville, TN.** American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages Annual Conference.
- December 5-6, 2006. Havana, Cuba.** 6th Symposium on Translation, Terminology and Interpretation in Cuba and Canada.
- April 11-15, 2007. Sydney, Australia.** Critical Link V: Community Interpreting.
- May 18-20, 2007. Portland, OR.** NAJIT 28th Annual Conference.
- May 31-June 3, 2007. Cleveland, Ohio.** ATA Medical Division Mid-Year Conference.
- August 3-8, 2007. San Francisco, CA.** Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Biennial Conference.
- October 31-November 3, 2007. San Francisco, CA.** ATA 48th Annual Conference.
- May 16-18, 2008. Pittsburgh, PA.** NAJIT 29th Annual Conference.
- August 1-7, 2008. Shanghai, China.** International Federation of Translators XVIIIth World Congress.

*NAJIT offers this calendar as a service to its members. No endorsement of courses or events offered by other organizations is implied.*

### ART OF COMMUNICATION

*continued from page 18*

exams, medical and legal terminology and the dire need for qualified people in this ever-giving profession. Janet also gave us an in-depth look into her day-to-day interpreting and translating assignments, stressing the importance of relaying the message and meaning to the best of one's ability, especially when someone's life may depend on your rendering into the target language.

Over the next two days I attended many informative sessions. "Medical Translation and Interpretation and the Courts," a lecture by Alexander Rainof, explained the importance of medical interpreters helping to bring down the barriers of communication and their participation in the courtroom. "Introduction to Medical Terminology" by Cynthia E. Roat presented personal plans for building medical vocabulary, plus an overall framework and resource guide to serve in health care settings and courtrooms; and Martin Roldan, chief of the language services unit in the Executive Office of Immigration Review, gave us a review of immigration court functions and the wide variety of languages needed for this governmental office to function properly, along with the guidelines and resources translators and interpreters need in order to obtain employment.

The scholars were invited to observe the annual meeting, in which NAJIT chair and committee members were introduced, elections were held, proposals and arguments were presented, and members cast their votes and participated in discussions. Yet among all the hoopla, the NAJIT scholars were also honored for our participation in this conference. It was a proud moment to be presented a plaque from this prestigious organization and to represent our colleges and universities.

While the whole conference was an intense learning experience, I would also like to recognize the time-consuming task it is to organize the program and to choose the students who will benefit the most from such a vast source of real-life scenarios presented by experienced and successful translators and interpreters. This is why all of our educational institutions should consider more intensive programs in learning a second, third or fourth language. Vanesa's dedication to this program is greatly appreciated, especially since through her guidance there is a new generation of translators and interpreters entering the workforce. And hopefully we will relay the message of the NAJIT scholars program to others who are truly interested in succeeding in this ever-changing field, be it in the courtroom, an international negotiation, in the boardroom, or at a workman's compensation mediation. We should all remain passionately focused on the art of communication. ▲

2 In June, 2006, Montenegro voted to declare independence from Serbia.

3 Typical procedure in Spanish courts. The interpreter does not interpret everything. Rather, he intervenes at the request of the judge and interprets what the judge instructs him to.

4 This should not surprise us in the states. It would be akin to requesting a Chinese interpreter when a Fuzhou speaker is needed, or a French interpreter when the defendant speaks Haitian Creole, or a French interpreter when the defendant is from Belgium and speaks Flemish, or a Spanish interpreter when the defendant is from Brazil, all of which have actually occurred.

5 Not so well, really (*see footnote 1*). As we see here, a court interpreter in Barcelona may make \$24 for a morning's work. He could earn \$480 for a half day conference. Few conference interpreters accept work in the Spanish courts for this reason. ▲

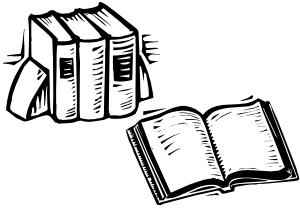
### LOST IN TRANSLATION *continued from page 4*

Then I'll answer: "No, Your Honor," and get paid.

The justice system is slow and incomprehensible. But it pays well.<sup>5</sup>

Footnotes:

1 Kamel actually exists, and his agency has a contract with the Autonomous Government of Catalonia (Generalitat) to provide interpreting services in the courts of the province of Barcelona. Agencies such as his have been criticized for charging the government a high hourly rate, and then paying their interpreters a much reduced fee. Note that the interpreter is paid by the half-hour. His compensation of 20 euros is the equivalent of \$24.



## Book Review

Terri Shaw

### How to Succeed as a Freelance Translator

Corinne McKay

Two Rats Press

ISBN: 978-1-4116-9520-7 • Price: \$19.95; 141 pages

When my neighbor asked me to give advice to his bilingual daughter, Martha, who is thinking of becoming a translator, I was not sure how to start. Now I can start by recommending this book.

Corinne McKay, an ATA-certified translator who also teaches an online course on becoming a freelance translator, has put together a useful manual for the beginner translator, as well as helpful ideas for others with some experience. She includes a cursory discussion of interpreting that, unfortunately, has some inaccuracies.

The book is organized in outline form, so it is easy to find information on specific topics. For the beginner, there are good tips on job hunting, résumés and cover letters, with nice examples of the

latter. (I have already “borrowed” some of her phrasing for a cover letter of my own.) The book discusses at some length details about being an independent contractor and working from a home office. For Martha, who is the mother of a toddler, there is a good section for parents with suggestions about how to organize your work while at home with the children. For example, McKay suggests working at night for translation agencies in other time zones, when your children are—or should be—asleep. But she fails to mention another good option, doing telephone interpreting at night.

McKay is particularly good at discussing issues that had not occurred to me when I started out, some of which I learned the hard way. She explains the importance of specifying terms of service, doing research on a client before accepting a job, proper invoicing, what to do when a client pays late or not at all and the difficult task of managing cash flow.

And I found some parts of the book helpful for those with some experience as a translator or interpreter. I hope to be disciplined enough to adopt some of her suggestions about productivity and record-keeping. I read her description of contracts with great interest, and will post on my bulletin board her list of “key questions [to ask] before the project starts.”

The information about interpreting is sparse and inaccurate in

> *continued on next page*

## New York State Courts Develop Action Plan

Sandra Bryan

In April, 2006 the New York State Unified Court System announced a Plan of Action which will evaluate and revamp court interpreting services across the state to better meet the needs of litigants. The goal of the plan is to improve the recruitment and assessment of interpreters and manage limited interpreter resources. Thirty percent of New York residents—nearly five million people—primarily speak a language other than English at home. In all, over 160 distinct languages are spoken in the state. While the diversity of people and their languages is one of New York’s strengths, it is also a challenge to the court system. Although only parties to a criminal action are legally entitled to an interpreter, the New York courts offer interpreting services in as broad a range of proceedings as possible. Aside from the criminal courts, New York routinely provides court interpreters in matters before the Family Court, Civil and Small Claims Court, Housing Court and IDV (Integrated Domestic Violence) courts.

Some of the key components of the Plan of Action are:

- Increased pay rate for per diem court interpreters. As of May 1, 2006, the rate went up to \$140.00 for a half day and \$250.00 for the full day. Overtime for protracted sessions are calculated pro rata.
- Improvement of certification procedures. New York state has expanded its testing and requires potential interpreters in the following languages to undergo written and oral language assessments: Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, French, Greek, Haitian Creole, Italian, Korean, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish,

and Vietnamese. Language assessment examinations are being currently developed in additional languages. Interpreters in all languages are now also required to pass a new written English proficiency test. And of course, all court interpreters must successfully undergo a criminal background investigation.

- Training programs for new court-employed interpreters and expanded training for judges and court personnel. All interpreters are required to attend seminars on ethics. Other programs offered include skills enhancement and training in courtroom protocol and procedures.
- A Working Group on Translation, which will develop and oversee a plan for the translation of print, on-line and video materials and identify portions of the court’s website to be translated.
- An e-scheduling system, to be implemented statewide. This on-line program will allow court managers to quickly find and schedule interpreters in real-time.
- Since in-person interpretation can be a challenge in parts of the state where resources are scarce, there will be an expansion of remote interpreting services via video conference or telephone.
- Team interpreting will be piloted in trial courts in September, 2006.

For a copy of the plan, call 212-428-2500 or go to:

[www.nycourts.gov/whatsnew](http://www.nycourts.gov/whatsnew).

[Sandra Bryan is Coordinator of Court Interpreting Services for OCA, Division of Court Operations, New York state.]

## DISASTER RELIEF APPEAL

**N**AJIT is delighted to announce that over 540 interpreters and translators have signed up with the National Virtual Translation Center in response to this appeal. Thanks to all the NAJIT members and colleagues in sister organizations who have generously agreed to serve in time of need. The opportunity is still available for those who would like to help. Please note that this is an NVTC initiative and address any questions to them at [www.nvtc.gov](http://www.nvtc.gov).

Dear Colleagues:

Last year during the Katrina and Rita Hurricanes many NAJIT members as well as colleagues from the medical, sign language and other sister organizations of the interpreting and translation community expressed interest in assisting the non-English, deaf and hard of hearing, the LEP population and the government with competent interpretation and translation services.

Interpreters are the bridge across the linguistic divide that sometimes separate people in need of help from the agencies and organizations that can provide the help they need. This critical function of interpreters was underscored last year when the scope of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita overwhelmed the ability of on-site resources to provide limited English proficient persons and the deaf and hard of hearing population with timely emergency information and services. In the face of these disasters, many members of NAJIT and its sister organizations expressed a willingness to fill the breach, and offered to help, either through on-site deployment or by telephone. In response, the leadership of NAJIT sought to establish some formal national mechanism through which agencies and organizations responsible for providing critical emergency information and assistance could locate and utilize the services of competent interpreters and translators.

Among the possible mechanisms discussed was the creation of an internet link through which volunteers could identify themselves to aid providers. While a number of these providers

expressed interest in making use of the special language skills of NAJIT members and sister organizations, the scope and depth of the required infrastructure, among other reasons, made it impossible to finalize the necessary procedures. Nonetheless, NAJIT has continued to pursue efforts to more efficiently link government entities with competent interpreters and translators should future national or natural disasters arise.

On Saturday, May 20, 2006, in his keynote address, Mr. Everett Jordan, Director of the National Virtual Translation Center (NVTC), a government entity, announced that three years ago the federal government passed a law to create a National Civilian Linguist Reserve Corps designed to make the best use of people with translation and interpretation skills whenever a national need arises. Mr. Jordan noted that although it is the Defense Department that is charged with organizing the database of language skills, the NVTC is also participating so that those with language skills can either volunteer their time or be hired for occasional assignments before the next disaster strikes.

Mr. Jordan further expressed the NVTC's interest in building relationships with NAJIT and its sister T & I organizations and exploring a variety of potential volunteer services and employment opportunities for NAJIT members among others and the NVTC or other government agencies during national emergencies. The NVTC has agreed to take the lead by placing a link on its web site through which members of NAJIT and its sister organizations consisting of qualified translators and interpreters in sign language, medical and legal can indicate their willingness to provide aid to their neighbors in times of an emergency. The link is located at: <http://www.nvtc.gov/forms/linguist.php> or <http://www.nvtc.gov/>.

Some of us have already made use of the NVTC link to indicate our willingness to be part of the response to future national and natural emergencies. Hurricane season has already begun, therefore, we encourage our colleagues that are interested in joining in these efforts and are willing and able to assist to sign up as soon as possible. ▲

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### BOOK REVIEW *continued*

some details. For example, the rate she quotes for conference interpreting seems low. And she says the federal court interpretation exam is given in Navajo and Haitian Creole, which is no longer the case.

The book is readable, but on two occasions the same sentence is repeated in different sections of the book — one of the drawbacks of editing on a computer.

The weakest part of this book is the discussion of computers. A superficial explanation of the hardware and software a translator needs, with a quick listing of various types of translation memory software available, only scratches the surface. While the section on computers is couched as a basic explanation, some parts seem to assume more than basic knowledge on behalf of the reader. For example, I was perplexed by this sentence: "Whatever backup system you choose, it is extremely helpful to have one that runs unattended, meaning that you don't have to remember to start it."

What kind of backup systems are these? Where to you get them? How do they work?

*How to Succeed as a Freelance Translator* can be ordered at [www.translatewrite.com](http://www.translatewrite.com) ▲

*[Terri Shaw, who switched to a career in translation and interpretation after many years in journalism, is an ATA- and TTIG-certified Spanish to English translator and a federally certified court interpreter.]*

### Print Version of Membership List Available

NAJIT members may now order copies of the print version of the Membership List by sending \$10 to headquarters; the price includes postage and handling. The list is also available for download from the Member Portal of the website, [www.najit.org](http://www.najit.org).



# CERTIFICATION EXAM ANNOUNCEMENT

An examination leading to the credential of

**NATIONALLY CERTIFIED JUDICIARY INTERPRETER AND TRANSLATOR: SPANISH**

The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators is pleased to offer members and non-members the opportunity to register for the written component of the National Judiciary Interpreter and Translator Certification Examination.

The examination is being administered in Portland, Oregon before the 28th Annual NAJIT Conference.

## DATES

**Written Examination:**  
May 17, 2007

**Oral Examination:**  
May 17-18, 2007

## PLACE

Embassy Suites Portland Downtown  
319 SW Pine Street  
Portland, Oregon 97204

For test information and registration contact:

Stephanie Richie  
Measurement Incorporated  
**1-800-279-7647**

Or visit the NAJIT web site:  
**www.najit.org**

Contact NAJIT directly for conference information

# NATIONAL JUDICIARY INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS CERTIFICATION EXAM

## MAY 17-18, 2007

Embassy Suites Portland Downtown  
319 SW Pine Street  
Portland, Oregon 97204

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE: MONDAY, APRIL 23, 2007**

### YOU MAY REGISTER BY:

**1) MAIL: Measurement Incorporated /attn: Stephanie Richie**

423 Morris Street, Durham, North Carolina 27701

**2) FAX: (credit card only) USING THIS FORM BELOW** Fax to: 919-425-7717

**3) PHONE: (credit card only) 1-800-279-7647**

## REGISTRATION FORM PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Home Ph. ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Business Ph. ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Pager ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Cellular \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

### FEE SCHEDULE

Written Examination	<u>Member</u> \$125.00*	<u>Non-Member</u> \$150.00*
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*\*Cancellation Policy: A \$35.00 service charge will be deducted from any refund. In order to receive a refund, the cancellation request must be submitted in writing and received by Measurement Incorporated no later than 5:00 p.m. EDT on Monday, April 30, 2007. Postmarks will not be accepted. Refunds will not be issued to candidates who do not appear on the day and time of their scheduled examination.*

### PAYMENT METHOD

\_\_\_\_\_ Check or Money Order (payable to Measurement Incorporated) \_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ MC

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of cardholder \_\_\_\_\_  
(REQUIRED FOR CREDIT CARD PAYMENT.)

**A Special Note for the Disabled:** NAJIT wishes to ensure that no individual with a disability is excluded, denied services, segregated, or otherwise treated differently from other individuals because of the absence of auxiliary aids and services. If you need any of the aids or services identified in the American with Disabilities Act, please call Measurement Incorporated at 1-800-279-7647 by Monday, April 16, 2007.





### APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title \_\_\_\_\_ Company Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Office tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pager: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION AND PAYMENT TO:

**NAJIT**  
 603 Stewart Street  
 Suite 610  
 Seattle, WA 98101-1275  
 Tel: 206-267-2300  
 Fax: 206-626-0392  
 headquarters@najit.org  
 www.najit.org

Languages (if passive, prefix with P-) \_\_\_\_\_  
**Credentials:**  NJITCE: Spanish  Federal Court certification:  Haitian Creole  Navajo  Spanish  
 State Court Certification: From which state(s)? \_\_\_\_\_  
 ATA: What language combinations? \_\_\_\_\_  
 U.S. Department of State:  Consecutive  Seminar  Conference

**Academic Credentials:** Instructor at \_\_\_\_\_

I am an  interpreter  translator  freelance instructor  
 I am applying for the following class of membership:  Active  Associate  Student (NAJIT may validate applications for student membership)  
 Corporate Sponsor  Corporate  Organizational (nonprofit)

*(Corporate sponsors receive a longer descriptive listing on the website about their organization, one free quarter-page print ad in Proteus per year, and the grateful thanks of fellow members for their support of NAJIT and our profession.)*

Check here if you have ever been a NAJIT member  Check here if you do NOT wish to receive emails from NAJIT  
 Check here if you do NOT wish to be listed in the NAJIT online directory (Student and associate members are not listed in the NAJIT online directory.)  
 Check here if you do NOT wish to have your contact information made available to those offering information, products, or services of potential interest to members

I certify that the above information is correct and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief. I agree to abide by the NAJIT Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibilities.

Applicant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### PAYMENT SCHEDULE

	Active	Associate	Student	Corporate Sponsor	Corporate	Organizational (nonprofit)
Dues	\$105	\$85	\$40	\$300	\$160	\$115
Suggested voluntary contribution to SSTI	\$35	\$25	\$10	\$100	\$100	\$65
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$140</b>	<b>\$110</b>	<b>\$50</b>	<b>\$400</b>	<b>\$260</b>	<b>\$180</b>

### PAYMENT METHOD

Check or Money Order (payable to NAJIT)  MC  VISA  Amex

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
 Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (REQUIRED FOR CREDIT CARD PAYMENT.) Amount

*Contributions or gifts to NAJIT are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. However, dues payments may be deductible by members as ordinary and necessary business expenses to the extent permitted under IRS Code. Contributions to the Society for the Study of Translation and Interpretation (SSTI), a 501(c)3 educational organization, are fully tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.*