

CCRA *online*

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President Debby Steinman and former Assembly Member Anthony Pescetti

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for over 100 years. >>>

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the California Court Reporters Association

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CCRA MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the California Court Reporters Association is to advance the profession of verbatim shorthand reporting by promoting professional reporting excellence through education, research, and the use of state-of-the-art technology; establishing and maintaining professional standards of practice; and advocating before legislative and regulatory bodies on issues which impact the judicial system and others served by the court reporting profession of California.

President Debby Steinman's Acceptance Speech – October 17, 2010

*By Debby Steinman, CSR, CRR, RDR, CMRS, CPE
CCRA President*



Good afternoon, everyone. It's good to see all of you here. I'm honored to be here today as your next president. I must admit that the responsibility is a little daunting, but then, again, it's extremely exhilarating, and I thank you for your trust and confidence.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce my family and friends who have come to support me today — my wonderful husband David — I'm not quite sure he's fully aware of what he's in for, but I know he'll be totally supportive — and he's done good this weekend; my stepdaughter's in-laws and our good friends, Dan and Robin Miller; my very precious stepdaughter, Allison, and her wonderful husband, Scott.

And guess what! WE'RE PREGNANT! Our new addition arrives in April.

Thank you for attending our 100th convention in this great city of Sacramento. This is where everything that we do at the local and state level finally comes to fruition. This is where we fight our fight through our lobbyist, our union reps, our senators and assembly persons, and through the efforts of many of our fine members who give freely of their time — by taking vacation time and sick leave or days off — to appear before the legislature and also visit our representatives' offices. You got an idea of the legislative process yesterday.

CCRA has been accused of crying "The sky is falling, the sky is falling!" But the actual moral of the Chicken Little fable teaches the necessity of deductive reasoning and subsequent investigation. That is what CCRA does for you. We research everything, stay informed, and are ready to act as soon as it's necessary. To quote John F. Kennedy: "The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining." Or if you prefer what Star Wars' Obi-Wan had to say: "Don't get cocky. Remember predictions of victory aren't a substitute for hard work." CCRA works hard, stays informed and is ready to act when the time is right, and we make sure the sky doesn't fall.

CCRA has been successful because we've had people working both behind the scenes and in the forefront for the last 100 years. I don't know what the next 100 years will bring except continual change, as each decade has. That's the one thing we can always count on: Change.

I'm not sure exactly how reporting started, but I believe the early scribes chipped at rocks, then came the quill and scroll, the pen writer, the steno machine and the Stenorette — for you millennials, we used to dictate our notes and someone listened to the tape and transcribed them using typewriters, not to mention carbon paper — and now we use computers and the paperless writer. And, of course, realtime. CCRA is committed to staying steps ahead of everyone else and ready to act.

I feel very fortunate — and so should you — that I have a very well-informed and brilliant team at my beck and call — past presidents, past board members, present board members, California Action Team Training (CATT) graduates, and working reporters. And I'll take this opportunity to say that one thing I excel at is delegating, and I intend to delegate. For all of you who said, "Just call me any time, I'm more than willing to help," I've made "The List," complete with phone numbers, text numbers and e-mail addresses — and now I have to learn to tweet — and I intend to use "The List." You can't hide and you can't run.

Let me give you a brief rundown of some of the things that CCRA and people with great foresight have done for you!



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Gary Cramer was kind enough to give me his bio with all this information.

CCRA created the Transcript Reimbursement Fund to stave off a — well, at that time it was probably a tape-recorder threat, a little before electronic recording or ER;

CCRA fought and won payment for transcripts on diskette;

CCRA fought and won additional payment for one-person dailies;

CCRA fought and won indemnification for rough-draft realtime transcripts, meaning they can't be used, quoted or cited;

CCRA has fought and won authority for official reporters to not be required to produce rough-draft transcripts

CCRA has defeated all ER legislation up to now but the fight is here to stay;

CCRA has defeated a bill to reduce the sale of copies;

CCRA has created both official and freelance compendiums of all laws and rules pertaining to court reporters;

CCRA fought for and won a law to prohibit selling or giving away copies of court reporter transcripts, and I was able to use my official compendium to inform counsel that it was against the law for him to provide a copy to opposing counsel, and as I showed him the law from my Official Compendium, Judge Perk told counsel from the bench, "You're gonna lose this one, Buddy." So go get your Compendium.

CCRA constantly reviews all bills and the amendments introduced in the state legislature, which for years was done by Gary Cramer, and is now done by Sandy Bunch Vanderpol and Carlos Martinez. Honestly, that is one monumental task and I'm personally glad they're doing it.

CCRA constantly appears before the legislature and walks the halls of the Senate and House fighting for our jobs and also attends campaign functions for those people who support us;

CCRA hired Justice Served to do a comparison of the costs between Court reporters and ER for presentation to the legislature and which has been so effective that it has now been used by other states and NCRA.

Now, I'm sure you're wondering: "Gee, CCRA has done all this for me. What can I do in return?"

Well, let me give you a few ideas.

Many of you have been recruited to speak to one of your local reps. Many of you have attended CATT training. That's where it starts — with you — one person talking to another, then talking to someone else. One person explaining our profession to those who seek to abolish it and helping them understand what it is we do. It works. And this is where it comes together. That's what you can do. When CCRA calls and needs someone to go talk to your local representative, step up to the plate. It's a little scary, but oh, so fulfilling when you're done. Oh, and take your camera. They love it when you want a picture.

What else can you do in return? Realtime. If you're not doing realtime, it's time to start. Apart from the personal attention to detail that reporters give, and the excellent service we provide — i.e., realtime, dailies, rough drafts, readback — realtime is the one huge, major difference that separates the reporter from other methods.

If you're concerned that your realtime is not perfect, I'm here to tell you that neither is mine — and I'm sure Judge Perk probably has the hint of a smirk on his face — but I still do it. I hate it when he's looking at my realtime and I see that perplexed look on his face. You all know the look!

I have a tendency to stack — and I'm sure I'm not the only one here who stacks — but I can read through

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it, and so can you, so just do it! I just spend a couple of minutes at the recess taking care of those pesky untranslates and then move on till the next recess to correct the next batch of untranslates.

Talk to your judge. We all hear that judges aren't supposed to talk to us about our profession and realtime. But talk to your judge anyway. It's amazing, but they like us. They really, really like us. And most of them use and love realtime, and they'd probably be lost without it.

My passion has always been education and I think that's very important. CCRA will never give up stressing education and keeping students in school.

Education is important for all of us. Keep up your skills by attending seminars, by practicing, and taking the NCRA skills tests. Be the best you can be!

Take the time to mentor students and new reporters. CCRA has a mentoring program. Sign up! Think back to when you were a student or new reporter and how much you appreciated the reporter who took the time to stop and answer your questions or show you how to do something that you didn't understand, gave you tips on how to do something more efficiently, or how to handle a difficult situation.

CCRA has a new Speaker program where reporters volunteer to go out to schools in their area and talk to the students. I remember when "real-live reporters" used to come to my school. I looked at them with such awe, man, they're the real thing, and I couldn't wait until I could be a "real-live reporter." It not only gives the students a good feeling, but it will also give you a great feeling, and it's also just a lot of fun.

What else can you do? Go to Career Days at a high school and demonstrate court reporting and realtime. Teach a class. Talk to the students. Promote your profession! Promote CCRA.

You may wonder why we need to bother with students. Why? Because they're our future. CCRA builds bridges. If we don't plan ahead, then we will

just fade away. I analogize the importance of bridge building this way. We all have family — children, grandchildren and hopefully more children to come — and we want to leave a good, safe and prosperous world for them. The same is true for reporting. We want a good profession for ourselves, our new reporters, our students, and our future students. That's why we fight so hard — not only for ourselves, but for our future.

A few years ago at a seminar, I read a poem called The Bridge Builder, written by William Allen Dromgoole. I won't read the whole poem, but it's about an old man who crosses a chasm that held no fear for him and then he turned to build a bridge. Another man asked him why he was doing that, because the old man would never pass that way again.

The old man replied: "Good friend, in the path that I have come, there followeth after me today, a youth whose feet must pass this way. This chasm that has been naught to me, to that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be. He, too, must cross in the twilight dim; Good friend, I am building the bridge for him."

We, CCRA, help build bridges for the students who will follow us.

What else can you do? Be a member of your associations. You've heard that there's power in numbers. It's so true.

I occasionally hear from reporters who say they can't afford to be a member in their associations. But the reverse is actually the truth; you can't afford not to be a member! Who would have done all the things CCRA has done if there was no CCRA? Where would we be? We would've been outta here a long time ago. Take pride in your profession. It's been good to you!

The cost of membership is minimal, way less than a cup of coffee, a bottle of wine, a day of golf, retail therapy, or a Friday night on the town. You all pay your dues, but we have a lot of reporters who ride our coattails.

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Let me break it down. Let's just start with CCRA. At \$135 a year, divided by 365 days a year, that comes to .370 cents a day. 37 cents a day! What a bargain.

Let's now add in your local association fees —

Oh, I have another "What can you do for CCRA?" If you don't have a local association anymore, why not start one up again? If your county is not big enough, join with another county or join a couple of counties together. Local associations are invigorating, motivating, informative, fun, and a very important lifeline for CCRA. We need your input!

But back to where I was going before I got sidetracked. If you join your local association — dues for my local are \$125 a year, which is approximately .345 cents a day, 34 cents — plus CCRA at \$135 and \$125 for my local, equals \$260 a year, divided by 365 equals .712 cents a day for both.

71 cents. See, that's still way less than a cup of coffee or even a glass of beer or wine. If you set aside a dollar a day, at the end of the year you can pay your dues and get change back.

I feel like I'm beginning to sound a little like an infomercial, but I would feel remiss if I didn't mention PACCRA and the Special Fund. Both are funded by donations. Our dues fund CCRA. The Special Fund is a donation to supplement our dues to meet unexpected CCRA expenses.

PACCRA donations fund our legislative expenses and can only be used for legislative expenses. The PACCRA Fund Run supports our legislative expenses. I'd also like to point out that PACCRA donations are bipartisan and don't reflect any political position by CCRA except to support those who support us. So when you're asked to donate to PACCRA, or asked to buy PACCRA tickets, you now know that it's a donation to protect our jobs and our profession.

As an aside, our PACCRA donations would not support someone like Assemblywomen Sims and Mervin, but we might use Special Fund money to have someone go talk to them and explain why court reporters are indispensable.

I'd also like to thank the Orange County Superior Court Reporters Association, OCSCRA, for sponsoring the reception in the Presidential Suite Friday and Saturday night. I'd also like to thank the Orange County Superior Court Reporters Association for the photo of all the reporters in the brochure. I understand that it was similar to a Keystone Kops Kaper getting that done without me finding about it, and I'm very touched. Not many things get me very emotional, but that brought tears to my eyes and I thank you.

Once again, I'm truly honored to be your 100th president, and I hope you will join me in supporting CCRA as we move forward this year into our second century and continue to deal with our changing world. Let's commit to work together. It can only be a win-win victory for all of us.

Thank you and enjoy the rest of the convention.

The Bridge Builder

***An old man, going a lone highway,
Came at the evening, cold and gray,
To chasm, vast and deep and wide,
Through which was flowing a sullen tide.
The old man crossed in the twilight dim;
The sullen stream had no fears for him;
But he turned when safe on the other side
And built a bridge to span the tide.***

***"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim near,
"You are wasting strength with building here;
Your journey will end with the ending day;
You never again must pass this way;
You have crossed the chasm, deep and wide —
Why build you the bridge at the eventide?"***

***The builder lifted his old gray head:
"Good friend, in the path I have come," he said,***

***"There followeth after me today
A youth whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm that has been naught to me
To that fair-haired youth may a pit-fall be,
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building the bridge for him."***

Will Allen Dromgoole



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CERRITOS COLLEGE ALUMNI, PLEASE CONTACT US AND LET US KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP TO!

* **Realtime captioning** requires training in court reporting on the stenotype machine and is the most commonly used method in Broadcast Captioning for live shows. Realtime captioning skills are also used in CART reporting using the computerized stenotype machine to translate speech to written text for instantaneous display for classrooms or meetings or a variety of other situations where realtime captioning is required.

* **Offline captioning** can be done typing from a computer keyboard (**no steno skills necessary**) to create and apply captions to various media whenever there are audio or video files that need to be transcribed into text format and made into captions.



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Avoid Unsecure Wireless Access

Q. We are renting a vacation home for a month that has wireless, but it is not secured by a password. The people we rent from are good people and the house is in a nice area. I had planned to access our brokerage account online to check balances while we are gone. How vulnerable is my computer and my information, if I use this wireless access?

A. In a word, vulnerable. That doesn't mean your data or identity will be stolen or your system hacked or victimized by any of a number of evils that can result from using an unsecured wireless network, but could it happen? Absolutely. Unfortunately, the security of the network has nothing to do with how nice the owners of the house are or the lovely neighborhood.

When you use an unsecured wireless network in the manner you describe, you're effectively saying, "I know it's not secure and I know there's a small chance that my data may be stolen, but I'm willing to take that chance." The only person you have to answer to is yourself, so if you're comfortable with that decision, have at it.

When all is said and done, you'll probably be fine, but could there be a problem? Yes, there certainly could. Personally, I would suggest focusing on your vacation and not spending time online, if you can possibly avoid it. If you must check your balances, most banks and brokerage firms provide toll-free numbers for that purpose.

Q. I understand that software programs load into memory (RAM) when being used. But when a program is closed, is it removed from memory and returned to the hard drive?

A. In theory, yes; in reality, not quite. Memory works like a blackboard that is constantly overwritten with new data. The data stored in memory is temporary, which is why you must save data before turning off your computer.

When software programs are shut down, they are supposed to tidy up after themselves and remove everything loaded into RAM. Unfortunately, most programs leave a trail behind and don't completely remove themselves from memory. Over time, this unsightly data build-up can cause your computer to become sluggish. To purge RAM completely, simply reboot your computer. If you normally leave your computer on 24/7, as I do, restarting the computer once a week should be sufficient.

Q. How can I change a color photo into a black and white picture?

A. Irfanview (www.irfanview.com) is a free program that can convert your photo to an artsy black and white image. To transform your photo, open Irfanview, display your image by clicking File > Open, navigate to your photo, click to select it, then click the Open button.

With your image displayed, click Image in the Menu Bar, then click Convert to Greyscale. Your image will then, not surprisingly, appear in greyscale. Grayscale images are distinct from black-and-white images which, within the

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context of digital photography, are images with only two colors, black and white; grayscale images have many shades of gray in between.

If you want true black and white, click Image in the Menu Bar again, then click Decrease Color Depth. In the window that appears, click to select “Two Colors,” then click the OK button to save your changes.

If you are satisfied with your new colorless picture, click File > Save As. Be sure to give your black-and-white photo a new name or you will overwrite the original color photo. Click OK to save the new image.

Mr. Modem’s DME (Don’t Miss ‘Em) Sites of the Month

TypeRacer

Test your typing skills against other players for the chance to win money, fame, fabulous prizes — well, maybe not, but it’s a nice thought. Play as a Guest or create your own account. Once your account is created, when the countdown to the green light tells you to start, type like the wind — but don’t blow any words by making any typos.

<http://play.typeracer.com>

VideoMD

A library of physician-created, educational videos. Whether a physician wants to introduce patients to his or her practice, or discuss complex procedures, VideoMD provides a platform for that purpose. The site demonstrates that with modern, online video capabilities, combined with an array of searchable content features, video is an excellent way to deliver useful patient-oriented information in an easy and understandable format. When it comes to the healing arts, I am a practitioner of bowlistic healing, which is based on the premise that there is nothing that can’t be cured with a nice bowl of chicken soup.

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Future Court Reporters

By Jene' Torrence

To be a reporter is no easy task. There are many qualities that a reporter should possess to be successful. Persistency is key. Anyone can try to become a reporter, but only the ones that dedicate themselves will make it. There will be many tests taken and many tests failed while you are trying to get through school, but when you finally receive a test pass, you get that feeling of great satisfaction knowing that you can do it, and you press on.

Another quality that is a must to become a successful reporter is honesty. I believe that honesty goes hand in hand with integrity. It is your job to make sure that you take down everything verbatim, whether you like it or not.

You do not want to ever do anything to make a lawyer or judge question your ability to stay honest, so you must put your own feelings aside and do the right thing in everything that you do.

The third crucial quality that is a building block for a successful reporter is self-control. There are many things that happen in a courtroom that may be heartbreaking, silly, or frustrating, but as an unbiased party, the reporter must be able to keep a straight face and consistently have a handle on their emotions.

Reporters are a special breed. Not everyone can become successful in the reporting world, so we should value the special qualities that they do have to overcome and succeed.



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Sponsor a Student Campaign

The SOS committee has in place a student membership sponsorship program. Here's how it works:

As a member, you send in \$30 for each student membership you'd like to sponsor. Then the SOS committee will distribute certificates to CR schools. The administration of each school will distribute the coupons to students in the 200 level for them to become members of CCRA for a year. If you would like a particular school to receive your sponsorship, just indicate on the attached Student Sponsorship Form.

There are 17 schools in the state, and CCRA would like every school to receive several sponsorships for distribution to their students.



TO MEMBERS WHO SPONSORED STUDENTS AT THE 100th ANNUAL CCRA CONVENTION:

Sandy Bunch VanderPol
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California Court Reporters Association

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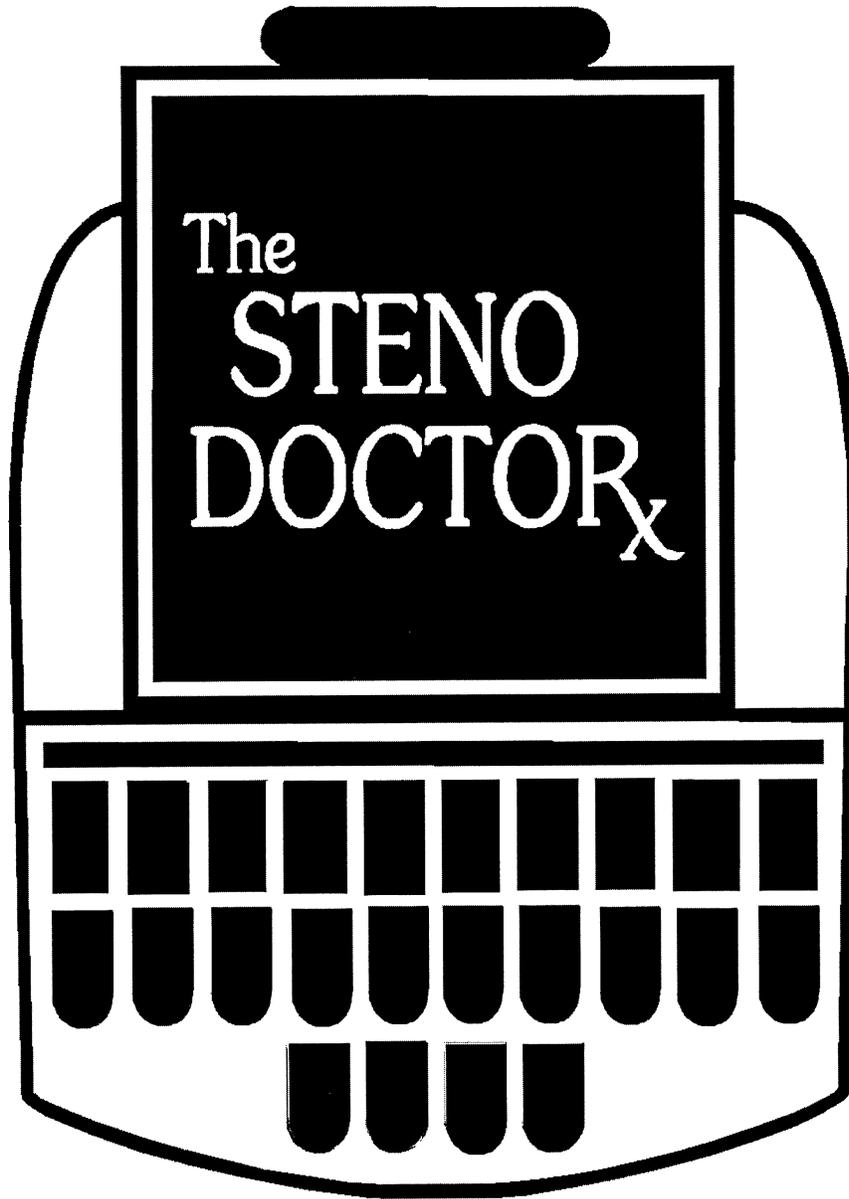
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Briefs Online

By Doreen Perkins

Looking for a quick brief for those hard-to-write words or common phrases? If you have a word or phrase that you would like a brief for, let me know, and I will publish your requested brief in the next CCRA Online. If you have briefs that you would like to share with our members, please send them to Doreen Perkins, CortReptr1@aol.com or 1100 Van Ness, Dept. 50, Fresno, CA 93724-0002

With attorneys and parties speaking faster and faster, it's time to employ one-stroke briefs for the commonly used "Do you" phrases in Q & A. If you can incorporate these phrases into your writing style, it will not only save you time but your hands, neck and back will appreciate it, too!

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| | | Do you wish to say | DAOURBTS |
| | | | |
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Public Workers Highly Paid? Not Exactly

*By Marisa Lagos, Chronicle Sacramento Bureau
Tuesday, October 19, 2010
(10-19) 04:00 PDT Sacramento*

Public workers in California earn 7 percent less on average than private sector employees, but make about the same amount after benefits and other compensation are factored in, according to a study released Monday.

The study by economists at UC Berkeley and Rutgers University found that the similar wages and benefits exist despite the fact that 55 percent of public employees in the state have a college degree, compared with just 35 percent of California's private sector workers. Education levels are usually the most important factor in determining wages, but public employees do not get the same return for their education level as private sector employees, said co-author Sylvia Allegretto.

Allegretto, deputy chairwoman of UC Berkeley's Center on Wage and Employment Dynamics, co-authored the study with Jeffrey Keefe, an associate professor of labor and employment relations at Rutgers University.

Allegretto said the findings should put to rest some of the arguments over high public compensation, which has been a huge issue this election season and one that became particularly acute in California on the heels of a public corruption scandal in the Los Angeles County city of Bell.

"There's no significant difference between public and private sector workers in California. ... It's basically a wash," Allegretto said.

5,000 workers studied

The researchers examined the wage and demographic data of 5,000 workers in a monthly household survey conducted in 2009 by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Self-employed, part-time, agricultural and domestic workers were excluded from the sample. Benefit information was culled from the Department of Labor's Employer Costs for Employee Compensation survey.

The study — which says that government workers have been "vilified" in California — concludes that public employees are not overpaid when you make an "apples-to-apples" comparison of employees' education, experience and other factors that might influence pay.

The study did not compare workers with similar jobs in the private and public sector because its authors felt there were too many differences to draw accurate conclusions. For example, the study notes that there are no private sector police officers or firefighters; and that teachers at a public school face far different challenges than those at a private school.

Instead, the study relied on education levels — "the single most important earnings predictor" — and other factors widely found to affect compensation levels, such as gender, race, ethnicity and disability, to compare the two sectors.

The study determined that public agencies generally pay college-educated workers less than private employers do, and that the differential is greatest for professional employees, lawyers and doctors. But the public sector "also appears to set a floor on compensation," so less educated public sector workers generally make more than people with the same level of education working for a private company. The study attributed this in part to the fact that "the earnings floor has collapsed in the private sector."

While public employees make about 7 percent less than their counterparts in private industry, the study found there is virtually no difference between the two sectors once you consider that state and local governments contribute nearly 6 percent more to benefits such as health insurance and retirement funds. But public employees also receive "considerably" less supplemental pay and vacation time, the study found.

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Public Workers Highly Paid? Not Exactly

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Fewer workers today

Allegretto defended public workers, saying that there are 60,000 fewer government workers at the state and local level today than before the economic downturn began.

And she noted that despite the attention being paid by the governor and other politicians this year to rising public pension costs, those costs make up a small fraction of state spending.

“It is important to keep in mind that a huge state like California needs a lot of workers to keep going — and by and large they are highly educated, skilled workers who need to be fairly compensated,” she said. “This tells me that the problems in California certainly could not have been caused by pensions and cannot be cured by pensions.”

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has repeatedly targeted state employees in budget cuts since February 2009, when he began imposing unpaid furloughs. Soon after, the furloughs were expanded from two to three days a month, amounting to pay cuts of about 15 percent a year. The governor has also often criticized the public employee pension system and has pushed for state workers to contribute more to their own pensions.

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This article appeared on page A-1 of the San Francisco Chronicle.



Cal-e-licious

By Lowe-Fat Living by Robert & Leslie Cooper

SWISS DIJON CHICKEN ROLLS

At the convention, I was asked to provide more low-fat, low-calorie recipes, so here you go. Thank you for reading and for your input. Gerie

Ingredients:

1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
¾ c. shredded Jarlsberg light Swiss cheese
6 Tbsp. evaporated skim milk
¾ c. bread crumbs

4 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
2 tsp. dried tarragon or basil
Freshly ground pepper

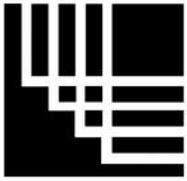
Preheat oven 375. Lightly coat an 8" X 8" baking dish with non-stick spray. Place chicken pieces individually in a plastic bag; pound with mallet to about ¼" thickness. Place an equal amount of the Swiss cheese in the center of each breast. Set aside.

In a small bowl, mix the milk & mustard. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, combine the bread crumbs, Parmesan, tarragon and pepper to taste.

Roll up each chicken breast, beginning with the smaller end; dip each roll into the milk mixture and then into the bread crumb mixture to coat completely. Place in the prepared baking dish with the rolled end down. Cover and bake for 30 minutes; uncover and bake for 15 minutes more, or until golden.





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Steno Opportunities in the Courts Study Update

*By Lesia J. Mervin, CSR, RMR, CRR
Steno Opps Task Force Chair*

The NCRA Board of Directors held a conference call Monday evening, October 25th, to consider the Task Force recommendation that the Hon. William Dressel/National Judicial College be selected to conduct the Steno Opportunities in the Courts study, as outlined in his proposal. As Task Force chair, I participated in the call. Board liaison SueLynn Morgan presented the issue.

The Board engaged in an extended and far-reaching discussion on the merits of the project as well as the specific proposal itself. A wide variety of views were expressed and debated, mirroring many of the same concerns that the Task Force itself had engaged in and struggled over at its first meetings.

The Board voted to go forward with the project proposal as submitted by Dressel/NJC and as recommended by the Steno Opportunities in the Courts Task Force.

The Board directed staff and legal counsel to work up a more concrete contractual agreement with the NJC and asked to review the contract before it is executed.

Specifically, the Board was concerned with:

- **Budgetary Control.** The Board asked that various benchmark steps be defined for the project with each phase costed individually.
- **Future Focus.** The Board was very adamant that the objective is to identify and document future opportunities and new models, not to document past history.

Staff and counsel are already at work on contractual agreements to address the Board's expectations. We do not anticipate any problems reaching agreement and beginning the work.



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