

CCRA

California Court Reporters Association

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California Court Reporters Association

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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.

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P R E S I D E N T ' S M E S S A G E

By Carlos Martinez, CSR, RPR, CMRS
President, CCRA

November brings my favorite holiday of the year, Thanksgiving. It's not about gifts. It's about family. It's about food. It's about Black Friday shopping just to be out together at 4 o'clock in the morning for no better reason than to hang out. It's a good time to look back and think about what you're thankful for in your life. It may be health. It may be a job. It may be licensure. It could be as simple as breathing in each day or as complex as looking back and watching how one life-changing moment during the year has changed your life by the end of the year. Whatever it is, it's never too large or too small to be thankful about.

So what am I thankful about this year? I'm thankful once again that I have a strong back. Three years ago I had back surgery for both ruptured and herniated disks in my low back. In the months before the surgery, a good day for me was walking from my bedroom to the kitchen and back... without help...a trek of 54 feet each way. There were many days during this time when I wondered if I'd ever walk again normally or pick up anything heavier than a pencil. Now, three years after surgery, I'm fully recovered and involved in Crossfit which to do pullups, jump rope, run, and deadlift 405 pounds. It has also given me an avenue in which to compete in sports again. So my thankfulness is twofold, both for a talented surgeon who fixed my wrecked back and for a sport that has me healthy and active again.

I'm also thankful for a career that has given me the ability to provide for my family a life that wasn't possible for me. I'm thankful for a career that has put me in a place every single day where I learn something new about the law. Yes, it's boring at times, and the administration of the courts makes me want to pull my hair out, but it's really a cool job. I get to watch our legal system work. It's not a perfect system, but it is the best that the world has to offer.

And speaking of my family, I'm thankful for them. It's been my privilege to watch my children grow. It's been rewarding and challenging, but I've had the chance to watch both of my daughters grow into beautiful young ladies.

And, lastly, I'm thankful for CCRA. It is such a blessing to be a part of the Premier Court Reporting Association in California. I have made so many new friends and acquaintances in this past year

both on the national and the state level. I have had the privilege to travel all over California speaking on behalf of our association and pushing to continue to strengthen this time-honored profession. I have been able to help shape this profession, along with our board, and it is a terrific experience. Everybody wants to be a part of the change at some point in their lives, and I've realized that chance, and it's an exciting ride.

So my question to you is what are you thankful for this year? Maybe it wasn't a very good year for you. You possibly didn't pass a test, or maybe you lost a job, lost a parent, or were separated from a loved one. Maybe it was a great year. Maybe you passed a test, got a new job, got married, had a child, celebrated 25 happy years of marriage, or fought a battle against cancer and won. Whatever it is, whether light or darkness, find joy in where you are right now and where you have been this year. Travis Barker said, "Thank you for life, and all the little ups and downs that make it worth living." So remember, it's the journey, not the destination, that makes it exciting.

Happy Thanksgiving.





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DSA RECIPIENT 2014

A TRIBUTE TO OUR MOM, CCRA'S DSA RECIPIENT 2014

As the recipient of the Distinguished Award last year, I have the esteemed honor to present this award to our 2014 winner.

The DSA award is conferred to a person who has been selected on the basis of demonstrated performance and distinguished service toward the improvement and benefit of the court reporting profession over a period of at least ten (10) years.

Because of what the Distinguished Service Award represents and the persons who have received it over the past 100 years of CCRA's existence, presenting it is both a privilege and an honor.

Before talking about this year's honoree, I'd like to do two things. First, a heartfelt thank you to the other members of this year's selection committee: Connie Parchman, Doreen Perkins, Allen Edelist and Tom Pringle.

Second, would all the people who've received the Distinguished Service Award in the past please stand. These people are indicative of the character of CCRA's DSA, for they represent a diverse tradition of talent, and that service speaks not only to their own excellence but to the range of activities characteristic of the reporters who make CCRA their professional association of choice.

Now to this year's recipient, who truly is an individual deserving of recognition as a result of the many hours he/she has dedicated to our profession.

As a member of CCRA, he/she has held the following positions:

- Member of the Board of Directors
- Chair and a member of numerous committees
- Integral in supporting and leading the work for our online magazine
- Creating and developing and maintaining our Facebook site
- Past President

This year's recipient has been a superb spokesperson for our profession before

the legislature, both the senate and assembly judiciary committees. She/he is always prepared, articulate and poised.

Beyond the work SHE has done at the state level, she has served on numerous committees of the National Court Reporters Association, including as chair of the Steno Opportunities in the Courts Committee.

But it doesn't stop there! This reporter has touched and made a difference in many reporters' lives. Most likely, everyone who meets LESIA is affected in a positive way. She is so passionate about her profession and always encourages other reporters, including her daughter Bree, to improve their skills and broaden their court reporting experiences. In fact, this reporter represents us/our profession on a worldwide basis by captioning UN meetings, traveling to important political events to caption – doing all of this work at the highest level and meeting the highest standards while providing this prodigious service.

But there's more! As an excellent realtime writer and speed contest winner/participant, Lesia has been a sought-after speaker at other state association meetings. In fact, I think she has given her KISS, Keep it Short/Simple Steno seminar to most of the 50 state associations, giving up many weekends to educate other reporters on the intricacies of realtime writing.

Lesia has spent countless hours beta testing most of the steno machines produced by Stenograph, as well as beta testing their software products.

At a local level, she is the lead official reporter in Visalia, Tulare County. She has an open door policy and makes herself available to any reporter – no matter the situation. She has negotiated many contracts between court admin and the reporters.

Lesia is remarkable!

Members of the association, the recipient of the 2014 CCRA Distinguished Service Award is LESIA MERVIN!

Plunging into a new era of financial independence and career possibilities rarely previously afforded to even her own mother was no trivial feat. As women continue to fight for exceptional achievement in the workplace, they are also tasked with exceptional achievement with the family. Despite our mom's high ambition and successes, never once was her family ever neglected or forsaken. Years later, as young adults, we would learn of the realities of other hard-working mothers and the particular sacrifices that their families had to make, only to come to a realization that, despite a demanding but fulfilling fulltime job, our mother was never missing in action. Being a mother and a faithful wife was always her primary job and her exceptional career in court reporting coming in a distant second.

It is not surprising to our family that, even after all the outstanding successes and recognitions our mom achieved, they dwarf in comparison to the effort she has put into our family. What great achievements she might have achieved previously or here today she did so juggling two children and a husband while still typing over 300 words a minute. So imagine the weight and respect this award carries as well as the amount of effort needed to even approach an extraordinary career and double it. That's how much our mom put into our family.

To us it seemed like she had superpowers. Examples being her typing out our 10-page handwritten reports as we read them as fast as we could 10 minutes before going to school, knowing the most esoteric words possible AND how to spell them, and most of all her lessons in leadership including being magnanimous yet confidently assertive. All of her successes don't only define just our mom but now they also define us too.

Congratulations and thank you, mom, for everything you've done. Nothing will ever parallel or exceed the example you've become in our lives. This award you're about to receive to us is not about your career success but what a badass you are as a mom!

Joshua Mervin, Bree Mervin

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WHY I AM RE-ENLISTING IN BOOT CAMP 2015



By: Ramona de la Torre

Arm yourself with information, inspiration and motivation at CCRA'S BOOT CAMP 2015.

The challenges of court reporting students are many. It can indeed seem like a roller coaster ride at times. For example, the community college I attended, Cerritos College, in Norwalk, California, was forced to close its court reporting program after 38 years due to budget constraints affecting community colleges across the state. Fortunately, I was able to earn all of my court reporting associate degrees, even my undergrad degrees, in English and Spanish Literature, at CSU Dominguez Hills, before the program's closure.

Being at 180 words per minute, I thought it important to reach out for support by becoming a member of CCRA. My first CCRA event was the very first CCRA BOOT CAMP, which was a success. It brought together students, new court reporters, seasoned court reporters, CART captioning providers, agency owners and court reporting vendors at the beautifully quaint Pickwick Gardens in Burbank, California.

Our own CCRA President, Carlos Martinez, was the master of ceremonies. His energy and enthusiasm created a fun atmosphere at the event. Christy Cannariato's presentation about how to mark exhibits and tactful interruptions at depositions proved memorable and valuable when I interned with freelancers at depositions. I paid special attention to Toni O'Neill, who talked about the Court Reporter's Board and how to keep your license out of jeopardy, information that I must know since I aspire to be a CSR. It was interesting and entertaining to listen to Phil Liberatore, a tax expert for court reporters, give advice about taxes. I left BOOT CAMP motivated and inspired.

Currently, I am a transfer student at Downey Adult School in the 200 words per minute class. Every day I attend class to pass a 10-minute testimony dictation that will make me a candidate for the CSR exam. Again I am reaching out and taking advantage of BOOT CAMP for further inspiration and motivation in my arsenal as a court reporting student. Because CCRA BOOT CAMP 2015 is around the corner, I want to encourage all court reporting students, professionals and firm owners to attend.

The information and training offered at BOOT CAMP are invaluable, covering client relations, deposition and courtroom

procedures, marketing and job-seeking advice, even insurance, bookkeeping and taxes. Attendees have the opportunity to engage with and be inspired by some of the best and brightest in our field. BOOT CAMP provides networking and mentorship opportunities and serves to bridge the gap from school to work. It gives professional insight into lucrative opportunities and best business practices. I'm looking forward to the educational sessions at BOOT CAMP because they are empowering to students and professionals alike.

Personally, it was Saba McKinley's informative presentation about CART that inspired me to take a closer look at this alternative career in court reporting. At BOOT CAMP I learned that growth in CART and captioning is expected as need for these services grows exponentially. Attending BOOT CAMP as a student was motivating to me because I learned that my steno skills can actually make a difference in the lives of people who are deaf or hard of hearing. It makes me appreciate my accomplishments as a student, discern how far I have come, and excited about joining my court reporting peers out in the field.

Save the date for BOOT CAMP of January 10th, 2015, and register as soon as possible. You do not want to miss out on this fun and exciting event. There are prize drawings, and professionals receive .75 CEUs for attending. The first 200 to register will get a flash drive with a lot of helpful resources. Register early not for the incentive but to ensure that you will have a seat. See you there.



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WHAT BOOT CAMP RECRUITS SAID ABOUT BOOT CAMP 2014

"Absolutely amazing! The presentation from Toni O'Neill from the CR Board was a good review and reminder of how to be a professional. Christy (Cannariato)'s depo seminar was a wealth of information. CCRA's BOOT CAMP was definitely worth my time and money to be here. Networking, meeting professionals...just a great day!"
– Maurice King

"The networking was fabulous. I was networking and just got offered my first job by one of the firm owners at CCRA's BOOT CAMP!"
– Joy Chiou

"Very positive experience and very valuable information. Warm atmosphere and the nicest and experienced of people."
– Kevin Kaufman

"The event was very well put together."
– Natalie Parvizi

IMPRESSIONS OF EACH SEMINAR:

Rachel Passarella, "Stand Up and Stand Out: Marketing, Networking and More"

"I really enjoyed Rachel's presentation. It's very motivating to know a new reporter has had the ability to go so far in her career already."
– Kristina Denapoli

"Very encouraging to us as the younger generation of students."
– Renee Rodriguez

"Awesome speaker. Very, very motivational."
– Shivaneer Sujata

Christy Cannariato, "Depos 101"

"It went great! It was funny but serious. Loved it!"
– Jessica Guardado

"So funny to listen to! She had a lot of very good information to pass along. I wish she could have had more time. I really enjoyed her as a speaker."
– Traci Homan

"Christy is very entertaining and informative. She is one of the best speakers I have listened to in three years in the profession." – Nicholas Steckel

Toni O'Neill, "How to Keep your CSR License out of Jeopardy"

"Toni is a great speaker! Nice to have an inside look at the Court Reporters Board."
– Jill McDonald

"Didn't know you could check status of your license on website or that you could sign up for email notification for changes in codes and procedures."
– Stephanie Feese

"Scared straight! Thank you!!" – Susan Biard

Saba McKinley, "What is CART and is it for you?"

"AMAZING!" – Tina Dolezal

"Saba was very motivational. I wish I had attended her 2012 CART seminar. I'll definitely attend her next one!"
– Cynthia Brostrom

Passionate & dynamic speaker. Very informative. Super motivational!"
– Lisa Barrett

Carole Browne and Phil Liberatore, CPA, "Court Reporting Dollars and {Sense/Cents/Scents}"

"Phil was dynamic and offered useful tax deduction tips. Carole was really funny when she gave out the prize. Everyone got really excited when looking for a Post-it under the chair."

"Very good information that I never thought could be written off. Very funny."
– Pat Jensen

"Oh my! There's no way I would have known most of what Mr. Liberatore said had I not been here! So glad! Priceless!" – Ann Sheffer

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MY BOOT CAMP AND CCRA

By Shivaneer Sujata

If it wasn't for last year's BOOT CAMP, I would have never become so active with this organization. BOOT CAMP changed my life for the better. It brought so many wonderful people into my life, and I sincerely thank each and every individual who has lent me a hand in my journey. I loved my profession from the start, but the more I interact with other court reporters makes me love it more and more. I was never really active on Facebook until last year's BOOT CAMP. They had a scholarship going on for BOOT CAMP via Facebook, and I was the lucky winner. It gave me the opportunity to experience last year's BOOT CAMP free of cost.

Being an active CCRA member and attending seminars not only boosts my self-confidence but makes me feel positive and assured for a great future ahead in the court reporting career. The seminars at BOOT CAMP were very informative. You know, we court reporters are learning every day. BOOT CAMP is the place to expand your knowledge and assuage your nerves for your first job! After all, it's called "BOOT

CAMP" for a reason. You come out sophisticated and ready to start on your career path.

I am looking forward to making connections with students and other court reporters at the upcoming BOOT CAMP. Networking is vital, and the more you advertise yourself with your physical presence at events like BOOT CAMP, the more people will know who you are. Yes, they may not remember your name after meeting you once, but when they meet you again, they will remember seeing your face from before. Boom! You just made a new connection for your adventures in this profession.

We all have friends, but court reporter friends are special. No one will understand our jokes or our endeavors in our field better than another court reporter. Lastly, remember, you are your own investment. So invest in your career by coming to our next BOOT CAMP!

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JUSTICE AT STAKE

By Connie J. Parchman, CCRA Vice-President

"My Court Reporter is still my sister." - Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye

In yet another way, our CCRA President, Carlos Martinez, has made us again visible to the judicial system.

On a beautifully clear San Francisco evening, in a room with the most expansive, unobstructed view of the city I've ever seen, I was honored to attend a reception hosted by Justice at Stake, "A National Partnership Working for Fair and Impartial Courts." Their major purpose is to stop the politicization of the bench. Because bench officers are elected, many states in the country are experiencing huge influxes of campaign money to influence elections. I must admit, some of the campaign commercials shown were a little frightening. One particular comment was that the current judge was just too liberal and might be "Groovy" for some, but not for the citizens of "fill in the blank."

Our presence at yet another judicially related function just keeps our profession in front of our customers and clients: lawyers, judges and administrators. We need to be visible and we need to be loud so we are not overlooked!

Upon meeting Chief Justice Tani Cantil-Sakauye, her immediate reaction to me was, "My court reporter is still my sister." Her court reporter is Karen Nowak from Sacramento. Interested in who she is? Wait until next month and we'll tell you all about her and her experience working with the Chief Justice before she was the Chief Justice.

Thanks again, Carlos, for finding ways to keep us in the loop!



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Q&A WITH KIM THAYER

By Amanda Scott

Kim Thayer & Associates is a locally-owned reporting firm in Fresno, California, and Ms. Kim Thayer herself was kind enough to spend some time sharing her perspective on the profession as a firm owner.

Q: Why did you decide to become a firm owner?

A: The firm owner I was working for was looking to sell the firm she had established 26 years prior. She asked me if I wanted to buy it and carry it on. It had not been a dream of mine to own my own firm, but when the opportunity presented itself, I decided it would be a positive move for me.

Q: Is the job of a firm owner what you expected it would be?

A: I truly don't think I had any expectations when I decided to buy the firm and become a firm owner. This honestly is probably why I love what I do so much and I have been successful. I have learned how to be flexible and take it day by day.

Q: Have there been any unexpected situations or surprises you've encountered?

A: I did not know our business could be so cut-throat. I did not see that as a reporter. Once I became a firm owner, I saw that the competition was a lot greater than I had known or seen. I am surprised at the gift-giving and ways some of the court reporting firms gain business.

Q: What are some of the rewards of owning a firm?

A: The reward comes with having a successful business and the continued growth. What I find most rewarding is reporting a difficult hearing/trial/job, with technology challenges, producing daily or expedited transcripts to make my clients' job easier. I measure my feeling of success with the continued accolades I receive from my clients of the quality service they continue to receive. The greatest reward is when a client refers your business to another attorney!

Q: What are some of the challenges of owning a firm?

A: One challenge is balancing time between being a wife, a busy mom of three kids, a working court reporter continuing to stay up with technology, and then being a firm owner trying to market and meet clients' needs. Another challenge is having enough work for each reporter, generating the clients and workload, yet not having more work or type of work than my reporters can handle.

Q: Over the time you've been a firm owner, has the job gotten easier or more difficult?

A: The job has gotten easier for me as the years have passed. I had to learn to just do "my thing" and not to worry about the day-to-day small things. Once I learned that I will never please everyone that works for me, life got easier. So long

as our clients are happy with our end product, our service, and the calls are taken in a professional manner, that is what really matters.

Q: What are your goals as a firm owner?

A: My goals as a firm owner? Not sure I have really set those in stone. I am glad this was asked, it made me ponder a bit. As a firm owner, I want to continue to give the personal service our clients desire. I hope to help keep our profession as court reporters in high regard and to always provide a great firm to bring in the top reporters and help my reporters to love and respect our profession so they will carry it on and pass it on. If I can empower my reporters to want to continue to learn and practice being the best, they can pass that on and our profession can grow stronger in the years to come.

Q: How does being a firm owner compare to being a freelance reporter before owning a firm?

A: The biggest thing here is, as a firm owner, I have the worries of covering all of the overhead and payroll, making decisions for multiple people, and a much heavier weight on my shoulders than when I was just a freelancer and only had to worry about my personal costs, making decisions that only affected myself and being sure I could cover my house payment.

Q: What do you wish freelance reporters would give more consideration to when working with a firm?

A: I wish reporters would consider court reporting as a profession as opposed to just "a job." One of the most important skills set to be a successful court reporter is noticing details. I am seeing more and more mistakes, misspellings, and inconsistencies in a transcript from our newer reporters. Another important skills set is to never stop learning. Keeping up with technology is a must. It is about choices we make. Yes, \$500 is a lot of money to keep our equipment insured and/or up to date. But in order to be the best, this is a must. Forego the Starbucks every day and keep your equipment "aka profession" current.

Q: If you had it to do over, would you still make the choice to be a firm owner?

A: Absolutely! It has been challenging at times, but truly a rewarding part of my life.

CASE STUDY: THE COURTROOM OF THE FUTURE

By: Debbie Dibble (Reprinted with permission)

When NCRA exhibited at the American Bar Association Techshow in March 2013, the Hon. David A. Nuffer, a federal court judge in Salt Lake City, Utah, approached the reporters at the booth to see if what he wanted to accomplish in his courtroom setting could become real. He wanted a realtime solution where a reporter on any CAT system could walk into any courtroom and begin sending realtime over the Internet, a judge could receive it on his personal computer, and an attorney, no matter his software, could also receive the realtime feed.

Judge Nuffer wanted to implement such a new and innovative realtime system for state-of-the-art record delivery in the brand-new, 10-story courthouse being built at the time in Utah. The federal reporters in his court worked on different systems, so Judge Nuffer wanted a solution where the reporters could use their own systems. He wanted attorneys to be able to use whatever software they desired. The system also needed to provide secure access to the realtime stream through two systems: The attorneys would not be allowed onto the courthouse secure server and would need access to the feed through the public Wi-Fi, while the judges would stay on their secure intranet so they could access files and email throughout the day to conduct their other business. Judge Nuffer wanted all of these things to occur simultaneously and seamlessly.

Judge Nuffer was immediately connected with NCRA Director Sue Terry, who enlisted NCRA's Tech Ed committee and me, a Utah reporter and NCRA Director. Over the next several months, the assembled group discussed software needs, IT issues, and possible solutions to Judge Nuffer's request.

Finally, in March 2014, Sue and I personally met with Judge Nuffer and his IT specialist for a hands-on demonstration of possible solutions to making this courtroom of the future a reality. We first met with Ed Young, a long-time federal reporter, and Larry Garland, the courthouse IT specialist. We cleared up a few issues, such as the manufacturers of CAT systems and writing machines. Then the feed was launched and sent to four mini iPads and the judge's laptop via Internet.

We called several of the manufacturers of streaming products, and they efficiently answered the judge's questions about their specific products. They also gave some IT remedies for some of the connection issues the courthouse staff had been having.

The judge then invited us to his courtroom upstairs, where we, within moments, were streaming, via the public Internet, to two iPads, the judge's laptop and phone, and simultaneously, via the court's restricted intranet, to the judge's bench computer. The judge was thrilled as all of the



obstacles he had encountered were overcome.

The federal reporters then joined us, and they were all taken from boot-up on the sending computer to receiving the live feed on iPads and on their personal phones within moments. These reporters excitedly and energetically took on this new challenge. They are examples to all of us of how to step up to the plate and continue to grow and improve as we continue to show the world that court reporters are the premier method of keeping the record.

In a video interview I conducted with Judge Nuffer for the conference for the National Association of Court Management, he talked about his first experience with realtime: "I became convinced that this is what I wanted in my hearings and in my trials because I was so much better able to focus my attention, track what had really been asked and answered, and carefully evaluate objections on evidence as they were made.

"So when you met with us, it was with the idea of helping us understand how we could integrate Wi-Fi into the courthouse and realtime that Wi-Fi. So we've been very appreciative of your help to make this really a state-of-the-art system," Judge Nuffer said.

To view the 10-minute interview between Debbie Dibble and Judge Nuffer, visit NCRA's YouTube page at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8d9mIVCd9E>.

Debbie A. Dibble, RDR, CRR, CBC, CCP, is a freelance reporter in Salt Lake City, Utah, and a member of NCRA's Board of Directors. She can be reached at ddib06@gmail.com.

MY MOST SUCCESSFUL ECLIPSE TIP EVER: SHORTER WRITING !!

By: Steven Kosmata

How many seminars have we been to where the goal was to learn a new trick or phrase to write shorter, fewer strokes and not feel exhausted at the end of a long day! I had a merit writer share this tip with me several years ago, and I've been so grateful ever since. In fact, about once every six months or so now, I do this little exercise to make my writing even shorter. And can you believe it...Eclipse had it all along in your dictionary. Everyone I've shared this easy tip with can't believe how powerful your own dictionary can be in aiding you in writing fewer strokes.

Now I think I've got your attention! And what is it you ask? I shared this tip in my very first Vlog on Eclipse and people were shocked at how easy it was to do.

Okay. Okay. I will finally share it with everyone because that's the kind of guy I am.

With your Eclipse open and looking at the Splash screen, hit F-9 on your computer to go to your dix file. When you do that, your dictionary should be highlighted in blue on the bottom of your screen. Hit the "enter" button on your keyboard to open your main dix.

Now that you are in your dictionary, have you really ever paid close attention to all of the headings at the top? There is one for this tip that is especially important, and that is the hashtag (or the pound sign as us older folks knew it). Now do a "find" so hit "F." On the left-hand side, click on the "3 strokes or more," and hit your "OK" or "enter" on your keyboard. Now you have parsed your dictionary into all words that you stroke with three strokes or more. This is huge and the key to your success.

Now that your dix file is parsed, go back to your hashtag at the top and click on it until you have an arrow pointing down. Go all the way to the bottom of the list by doing CTRL + PG DN. Here's how powerful your now customized dictionary can work for you. These are the words or phrases that you write the most in three strokes or more that you should find briefs for immediately. I was taking five words every two weeks or so, asking everyone I knew how they wrote my five words, picked what I liked, and started practicing and memorizing them. Before you knew it, I was writing so much more comfortably and with confidence because I wasn't being bogged down with all of these three-stroke words or phrases that I wrote the most. And in a couple more weeks, did the same exercise. And before you knew it, in as little as six months, I couldn't believe how much easier my reporting became. And now this little easy secret allows you to concentrate more on that heavy-accented expert doctor that we always seem to get stuck with ALL DAY!

Now get out there, make your list, and start writing easier and more comfortably.

If you'd like to be included as a recipient of my weekly Vlogs on Eclipse, please send me your name and email address to kosmo10s@kosmo10s.com. Please put in the subject line Vlog.

I'll see you again soon.



TECH GADGET OF THE MONTH

Outlets To Go Power Strip with USB:

This compact affordable power strip will serve any court reporter well in those situations when you need to plug in your computer, if you forgot to charge your writer battery, or if you need USB power. Just the other day, I had an attorney ask me if she could charge her smartphone in my computer because she had forgotten her charger. What a perfect option for her when I simply pulled out this power outlet!

This Outlets To Go Power Strip with USB boasts the following features:

- Provides 3 AC outlets to power laptops, PDAs, MP3 players, digital cameras, and other accessories when traveling.
- 3 AC outlets for convenient power and charging.
- Recharges electronics that use USB with integrated USB port.
- Ultra compact design to fit into luggage and briefcases.
- Dual-side design maximizes outlets space, minimizes bulk.

CAPTION IT FORWARD: PARAPHRASING VS. VERBATIM

By: Regina DeMolive, CSR

I am often asked what the difference is between paraphrasing and verbatim writing. Let me tell you that both of these writing styles take skill. They are both unique in their own way and have pros and cons to both. I will explain my experience of both and why I think both are important.

In a deposition or court setting, reporters MUST be verbatim. The attorneys expect a 100% accurate record of the proceedings. We are taught in school to be at least 97.5% accurate but always strive for perfection. The nice thing about a depo or court setting is the reporter has control over the room. If we do not hear a question or an answer, we can have the attorneys or witnesses repeat themselves. If two people are speaking over one another, we have the ability to ask them to slow down, repeat what was said, and speak one at a time. We also have the ability to use audio technology. This allows us to record the proceedings and go back later to edit our transcripts before submitting them to our agency.

In a CART or Broadcast setting, that is not the case. CART providers and Broadcast Captioners are all real time with rare exception. Our consumers rely on our real time in the moment. They do not rely on the transcript to be delivered later. What that means is that we MUST be accurate during the actual time of the job. In CART and Broadcast, we do not have the ability to slow down the speaker or ask the speaker to repeat what they said.

CART jobs can be very dense; medical classes, anatomy classes, high-class business meetings, etc. Most of the time, these jobs have speakers who are passionate about the information they are presenting. When humans become passionate about a topic, this leads them to speak much faster (225-260+ wpm) in order to attempt to make their point clear. As we cannot ask them to slow down so we must take matters into our own hands and improvise. Of course, when you write at these speeds on a consistent basis, your speed will increase automatically. However, there are occasions where speeds can reach much higher than 260 wpm. In this case, we do what's called "selective dropping" or "paraphrasing."

"Selective dropping" is a skill that is acquired through experience and allows captioners to keep up with the fast speeds without changing the context of what is being said. I did not learn this skill in school or through any specific course. I learned this through hands-on experience in the CART environment. I will give you an example of selective dropping from a newscast situation.

Situation: Two news anchors in the newsroom and one anchor out in the field.

What is actually said:

News anchor one: "That's it for me. Now back to Jill at the desk."

News anchor two: "Thanks, Joe. Now, let's go to Jane out in the field with weather."

News anchor three: "Hi, I'm Jane Smith reporting live from downtown Los Angeles where it's a beautiful, sunny day."

An example of what I would write if the anchors were speaking at high speeds:

News anchor one: "That's it for me. Now back to Jill."

News anchor two: "Thanks, Joe. Now, let's go to Jane with weather."

News anchor three: "Hi, I'm Jane reporting live from Los Angeles where it's a beautiful, sunny day."

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Unemployment Claims



"...It got so boring I just started typing 'yada, yada, yada.' Anyway, that's why I was fired as a court reporter."

Of course, we all strive to be verbatim, but there are times when the news gets so fast that verbatim becomes secondary to context. So this would be an example where I am selectively dropping certain words that aren't going to change the context of what is being said in order to help me keep up. There are all sorts of variations to this. I could leave in "Jane Smith" but change "Los Angeles" to "LA," etc. It just depends where in the sentence you start falling behind.

Some might think that selective dropping is unacceptable and should never be used. I highly disagree. The speeds that I caption at can get overwhelming at times. It's not that I am dumbing down my writing to pick and choose what I want to go out to

the consumer. I am merely taking what I hear and writing it in a way the consumer still gets the same point but allows me to keep up.

I have been told by many consumers they prefer the paraphrasing over verbatim writing. It also allows them to weed out the unnecessary information they don't need. Each consumer is different, of course, but in a CART and broadcast setting, you learn to adapt to your consumers' needs.

Either way, I feel paraphrasing in the CART and Broadcast environment and writing verbatim in a court and depo setting are both vitally important. We are all a team in this amazing field for the same reasons. So whichever field you choose to go into, remember to be thankful for what you do. Not many people have this skill, so be proud of yourself!

Happy Thanksgiving!



ASK MR. MODEM

www.MrModem.com

Explore Gmail Settings

Q: How can I explore the various settings in Gmail without messing up what I currently have? Is there any place I can see demonstrations of what the various Gmail features and options do? Thanks, Mr. M.

A: Any changes you make to Gmail through its user settings are easily reversible by returning to the setting in question and changing it back to the way it was. As an alternative, since Gmail is free, you can create a test email account for yourself, then experiment until your head explodes. If you test settings in this manner and find something you particularly like, you can then apply it to your primary account.

Q: In using Excel spreadsheets on my Windows 7 computer, I cannot establish a uniform procedure to enter dates. If I enter 8/2/2014 it may appear as 8.2.14 or 8-2-14. How can I format my dates so they appear the same every time? If I could not rely on your help, Mr. M., this old goat would hang it up, so thanks for being there.

A: By default, the "short date" display format for Windows (and thus Excel) is "M/d/yyyy," so August 2, 2014 would be displayed as 8/2/2014.

For various reasons, you may want to zero-fill your dates and have August 2, 2014 appear as 08/02/2014. Doing this actually involves a Windows setting, not an Excel setting. I only mention that because if you change this format, it will affect how dates appear throughout Windows and other programs running under Windows. It is not just confined to Excel, so caution is advised. I would suggest jotting down any changes you decide to make in case you aren't enamored with the result, so you can then change things back to what you had originally.

To change the default date format in Windows, go to your Control Panel and select "Regional Settings" or "Region and Language." In the Short Date format list, select whatever format you prefer, then click OK when you're done.

From this point forward, unless the dates in Excel were formatted using Excel's Format menu for a given spreadsheet, they will display as you have defined them.

Use Promo Code TURKEY when entering your six-month subscription to Mr. Modem's award-winning weekly computer-help newsletter and receive one month for free! Visit www.MrModem.com.

Q: At work we just converted to Linux Ubuntu for our computer operating system and I will attend training next week. One thing I've been wondering about: If I send clients an attachment using a word processing or spreadsheet program, will they be able to open it?

A: As long as you save it in a file format your client's computer can accommodate, there should be no problem. If you use a program such as OpenOffice or LibreOffice (comparable to MS Office, but free and frequently used with Linux) to create a document or spreadsheet, you will be able to save it in a format that Windows or Apple systems can read. I use LibreOffice and I work with a large number of publication editors who require .DOC-formatted articles. It is not a problem to simply select the .DOC format when saving my document as opposed to the native LibreOffice .ODT format.

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

Chordify – Chordify transforms music from YouTube, SoundCloud or your private music collection and converts it into chords that you can play along with on a guitar, ukulele, or piano. It's a freemium service, meaning it is available in free and paid versions. The free version allows you to keep three songs in music storage, a maximum song duration of 10 minutes, a maximum file size of 10 MB, and .PDFs of the chord diagrams. Visit <http://chordify.net/premium> to compare the freebie to the Premium version. In the center of the page is the field where you can either upload a song from your collection or the field below it where you can paste in a URL to the song you want to convert. The page created displays the chords to your selected song and a Play button. When you click or tap Play, it starts the song and the chord field begins scrolling. Very cool! chordify.net

Greatist – Not just another health-oriented Web site, the focus here is not to tell you what healthy means, but rather to help you define what healthy means to you. It takes all the typical fat-shaming/skinny-shaming, fad preaching and tosses it out the window. The link below will take you to the site's About page so you can read more about its mission. After reading it, click the Menu icon at the top and select one of the three main topical areas: Fitness, Health, Happiness. If you prefer tropical areas, check out The Seychelles, Maldives or Bali. greatist.com/about

Great Language Game – When you begin, you will hear a short recording of a language being spoken. You are then given multiple choices from which to select your answer. You can make three incorrect guesses before the game terminates. If you have an ear for languages, give it a try. If it all sounds like Greek to you, better skip this one. greatlanguagegame.com

WHY CART MATTERS

By Nanci Linke-Ellis

It's hard to understate the impact that captions have on a child, student, young adult or older person.

Even after having grown up without captioned TV, videotapes, pagers, movies, live theatre, or a full classroom experience, I still can't envision my life before captions. One of my most angst-filled events as a child was "hearing" an announcement over the school PA system and seeing the entire class get visibly distraught, only to learn an hour later that the President had been assassinated.

Can you imagine taking your child to a live sing-a-long of "Frozen" and their not knowing who Elsa or Olaf are? I grew up without Disney (you can't read the lips of animated characters) so I know how painful it was to be excluded. No child now has to ever be left out of such a social experience.

Once network TV captioning came into existence, it was awe-inspiring to watch – the news (only the news at that time).

Now my life is totally immersed in social and cultural experiences unheard of 20 years ago. Live captioning and performance captioning have brought me into the mainstream with my friends and family:

- Get realtime captions on my Smart Phone for voice phone calls
- Go to class and have a CART captioner near me or remotely (yes, get a degree!)
- Serve as a juror (yes, previously unheard of)
- Go to a lecture like the Dalai Lama or see best-selling author Michael Connelly discuss his brand-new book on my iPad.
- Attend a meeting with more than four people present
- Participate in a business or board teleconference with the aid of CART captioning
- Have a Skype session with CART captioning
- See a captioned Broadway musical like "Jersey Boys" or "Lion King"
- Go to the Hollywood Bowl for the 50th anniversary Beatles Concert
- Hollywood Bowl's annual Sound of Music Sing Along (now dialogue and music and costume parade are all captioned by a live writer)
- And, of course, the Academy Awards and the three-hour red carpet shows

At the Hearing Loss Association of America's annual convention, every single workshop, keynote speech and session relies upon realtime captions.

As the Southern California HAAA chapter coordinator for 12 chapters, the mandate is that no meeting be held UNLESS there is a CART captioner.

The need for more CART captioners has turned into a crushing demand. Because once you have a fully inclusive experience with CART, you'll never do without it again.

And no matter what tech pundits say, voice recognition won't happen in our lifetimes, because it's all about language, not spelling or letters.

The ability to understand cultural idioms and abstract thought begins to develop with children in middle school. Post-graduate studies such as neuroscience are way beyond the ability of a Communications Assistant, which is a person who repeats words into text, to deliver complex ideas and details that are literate. It requires the high-level expertise of a skilled CART writer with a very detailed dictionary.

Everywhere I look, I see places (DMV, Hospital ER) where CART captioning could make the difference in a life of quality and equality.

Technology will continue to evolve – but the need for a live CART captioner is only becoming greater. And the shortage seems to be growing.

I would not have the life I have, had it not been for CART. And it can be found everywhere.

Nanci Linke-Ellis is a Partner and General Manager of Captionfish, the premiere web-based search engine for captioned entertainment. Nanci is a bilateral cochlear implant user and well-known captioning advocate. She has devoted the past 20 years to work on captioning and technology issues critical to people with hearing loss. In 1993, she started an open-captioned film program for movie theatres, which led to the creation of InSight Cinema, a 501c3 nonprofit that oversaw the distribution of open-captioned prints around the country. InSight forged partnerships with all of the major studios and theatre chains, which has led to the inclusion of captions on major film releases. In 2012, Regal Entertainment Group became the first chain to fully deploy accessible technology in all of their theatres using the SONY Entertainment Access system, which provides captioning glasses and a descriptive video channel in its audio system. Linke-Ellis continues her advocacy for accessible technology by serving as a City of Santa Monica Disabilities Commissioner and as a Board Member of the World Institute of Disabilities, a think tank based in Berkeley. She also serves as the Hearing Loss Association of America's Chapter Coordinator for Southern California.

5,500 NEW COURT REPORTER JOBS PROJECTED ACROSS U.S.

September 8, 2014

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[Washington, D.C.] - According to an independent study conducted by Ducker Worldwide (Ducker), one of the nation's leading marketplace analyst firms, demand for court reporters will exceed supply within five years, yielding a nationwide shortage. By 2018, there will be 5,500 new court reporter jobs available in the U.S. with the greatest demand occurring in: California, Texas, Illinois and New York, according to the 2013-14 Court Reporting Industry Outlook Report.

Currently, there are approximately 32,000 court reporters working in the U.S. However, the workforce population is aging, as 70 percent of court reporters are 46 years or older, researchers note. Retirement rates are a primary driving force for the projected shortfall. Additionally, new rules adopted by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in 2014 to improve the quality of broadcast captioning will result in a greater need for court reporters in the coming years.

"Projected shortages in the stenographic court reporting profession come at a time when many graduates with traditional four-year degrees are struggling to find employment," said Jim Cudahy, CAE and Executive Director of the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA). "Court reporting is a career path with above average job security and earning potential, as compared to its more traditional counterparts. With opportunities for court reporters on the rise, students who graduate will hold more than a piece of paper - they'll hold a job."

With recent updates released to the Budget and Economic Outlook this August, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projected lower wages and salaries for Americans in the years ahead. Couple that with the CBO forecast which shows our economy will grow by just 1.5 percent in 2014 - a result of poor performance during the first quarter - and it makes job surges within professions like court reporting even more significant.

Ducker reports that the average starting salary for a court reporter is \$43,000. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the growth rate for court reporting salaries is expected to increase by 14 percent through the year 2020.

Those who perform well in the profession tend to exhibit the ability to text or type quickly, strong grammar skills and impeccable attention to detail. Court reporting also offers a technology-forward career and post-secondary certifications that promote continuous education and specializations within the field.

"Knowing that our profession as a whole will be experiencing a surge of opportunity in the coming years, NCRA encourages any potential student grappling with career choices to take note of stenographic court reporting," said Christina Lewellen, MBA, NCRA Senior Director of Marketing & Communications. "I have the honor of working alongside court reporters

every day who not only tout strong job security and earning potential, but the fact that their work is meaningful and rewarding in today's marketplace."

Despite the terminology, only 28 percent of stenographic court reporters actually work inside a courtroom day-to-day. Most operate in a freelance capacity for legal depositions or provide ADA-compliant captioning for medical transcriptions, educational settings and business meetings.

While there have been technological advances with voice-activated software, stenographic court reporters continue to provide the most accurate, reliable solutions for converting the spoken word into text. Court reporting schools are quickly able to connect their graduates with jobs, a trend that will strengthen as the shortage takes hold in the coming years.

For the full 2013-2014 NCRA Industry Outlook Report, or to learn more about the court reporting profession visit crTakeNote.com.

About National Court Reporters Association

The National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) is internationally recognized for promoting excellence among those who capture and convert the spoken word to text for more than 100 years. Headquartered in Vienna, Virginia, NCRA is committed to supporting its more than 16,000 members in achieving the highest level of professional expertise with educational opportunities and industry-recognized court reporting, educator and videographer certification programs. NCRA impacts legislative issues and the global marketplace through its actively involved membership. For more information, visit NCRA.org.

About Ducker Worldwide

Ducker Worldwide, a premier consulting and research firm, is driven to help its clients achieve their most ambitious growth goals. Custom market intelligence, strategic consulting and financial advisory services are delivered by fully-engaged Ducker principals and a diverse team of global talent. With exclusive access to industry

leaders and opportunities, Ducker applies robust analytics and critical thinking to every engagement, delivering unique, fact-based solutions for our clients solutions which produce confident decisions to advance growth.

Ducker's headquarters is located in Troy, Mich., with offices around the world, including Bangalore, Berlin, London, Paris and Shanghai. Founded by William H. Ducker in 1961; Ducker celebrates over 53 years in business.

For more information, go to www.ducker.com.

If you or someone you know is interested in court reporting, Taft College at WESTEC will be starting a new theory class January 20, 2015. Contact their program manager, Gary Shaw.

Gary F. Shaw, Program Manager, Court Reporting Program
Taft College at WESTEC
P.O. Box 1210, Shafter, CA 93263-1210
661-387-1055 (office) / 661-477-4922 (cell) / 661-393-1015 (fax)

A DIFFERENT KIND OF MOCK

By Katherine Schilling

When we're nearing the end of school, "mocks" are at the forefront of our minds. They're the final step in our journey to qualifying for the official CSR. Some of us have even sat in at a mock CSR at a convention for a taste of the real thing. But I'm here to talk about a different kind of mock—mock depositions and trials. So often overlooked, mock depositions and trials are the closest thing a student will get to real-world court reporting experience during her time in school. School will help you work on your speed building, but mock events will test everything else that it takes to be the true keeper of the record.

Now, how it all started. When I received the email from my instructor about mock event opportunities for willing 180-200 wpm court reporting students, I'd barely read past the first line before signing up. Four mock deposition sessions at UC Berkeley's Boalt Hall and two simultaneous mock trials at the San Francisco Superior Court would be coming up in just a few weeks. For all of these events, we were being asked to provide a rough draft, which would be a lesson in turning in work within a designated time frame and submitting a transcript that was less-than-perfect, unlike what we're trained to do at school.

These mock opportunities were being offered by Ana Fatima Costa, CSR, RPR, of AFC Consulting Services. Ana's mission in life after retiring from the court reporting field is to guide students through school and prepare them for the real working world. This includes coaching and mentoring court reporting students and new CSRs and coordinating the court reporting side of several mock events in the Bay Area throughout the year.

As part of our preparation, Ana sent us 100-plus-page case files, along with other documents on protocol, that would make any working reporter weep for joy with how much information it gave us about the cases. The party names, backgrounds, and thorough summaries allowed us to start building our dictionaries weeks in advance. We were encouraged to review our dictionaries regularly before the event and share any useful briefs with our fellow mock-mates. A couple of phone conferences were also arranged ahead of time to have us touch base with each other and sort out any questions we had from onsite parking to what goes into (and stays out of) a rough draft transcript.

No matter how much preparation I had, though, there was still plenty to discover the day of the event; namely, I learned very quickly that my speed was the least of my worries. That's not to say that I was keeping up with the speakers easily, but that there was nothing I could do about it then, and I had to recognize that. It was the other participants at the mock, the student-attorneys and acting witnesses, who challenged me to embrace the role of court reporter for both our sakes. For many of them,

this was their first time working with a court reporter. They knew that one would be present, but their focus was solely on delivering their side of the case and getting the answers they wanted out of their witnesses; they were not consciously aware of what it took to make a clean record. This made the mock events, more than anything, an exercise for me in speaking up.

I never thought that I had a problem with that before. When instructors warned me that speaking up can be intimidating, I thought that didn't apply to me. But when I was on the job, fingers flying over the keys, I realized that I didn't trust myself to interrupt. Whenever someone started speaking too quickly, I held an internal dialog with myself debating whether to speak up at all. "No, no," I'd reassure myself. "I can do it. Just stick it out a little longer. I'm sure he'll finish talking and I'll have a chance to catch up." But by then, the record would be a sloppy mess and I wasn't doing anyone any favors by keeping quiet. I learned from Ana that whenever I began to have these hesitations about speaking up, that's exactly when I should do it. My brain was warning me that the record was slipping away, and if I wanted to keep the integrity of the record, I needed to swallow my doubts and say something. Ana is also a strong proponent of speaking up and makes a point to coach court reporting students on it for these mock events. What better place to run into these shortcomings and learn from them than here?

The best thing was that the students, and even the judge, took note when the court reporter was speaking. They may not have necessarily remembered to slow down just because I asked, but they were incredibly appreciative that I was trying to make an accurate record. Several law students came up to me and my mock-mates afterwards just to thank us for our participation. They recognized it as a learning experience for themselves as well, seeing as they'd be working with court reporters for the rest of their careers. Our participation surely helped to inspire these budding lawyers to work with court reporters in a productive and mindful manner when out in the field, and that benefits us all.

These mock events were more demanding than any apprenticeship shadowing I've done for school. After all, I alone was the keeper of the record for that time with a whole courtroom as my audience. Sure, it was painful at times, but the lessons I learned are already shaping the way I conduct myself and will stay with me once I'm out in the working world. Mock depositions and trials are something that every student can benefit from; so consider trying them at least once while in school. If you're interested in having the chance to be the keeper of the record for a mock event, you can reach Ana at afccoaching@gmail.com.

Katherine Schilling, a student at West Valley College, can be reached at kschilli@gmail.com.



GOOD LUCK, FUTURE CSRs!

The next CSR exam will be on November 21, 2014, at the Double Tree in Sacramento. CCRA will be there too, cheering you on and celebrating your achievement.

You've done all the hard work of building your speed, passing test after test and then passing a "qualifier" from your school. Now you ARE ready for the next big hurdle. Stay focused.

Remember to get a good night's sleep; eat a good breakfast the morning of to sustain you for the three-hour transcribing period; and most of all, remember to BREATHE!

For those students who are preparing to take the next exam, the CRB has not announced the date yet; but, historically, there is one offered in March.

CCRA will be offering our next MOCK CSR on February 14th, 2015. There will be three locations: north, central and south, TBA. These MOCKS are a perfect way to get the jitters out and also give you that additional confidence for passing the real thing.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

PECAN PIE BARS

(Gluten Free Option)

Crust

- 2 cubes butter
 - 2/3 cup brown sugar
 - 2 2/3 cups flour***
 - 1/2 tsp. salt
- ***For gluten free substitute 2 cups almond meal and 2/3 cup white rice flour.

Topping:

- 1 cube butter
- 1 cup brown sugar or organic coconut sugar
- 1/3 cup honey
- 2 tbsp. heavy cream
- 2 cups chopped pecans

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°. Line a 9x13 pan with foil with 2" overhang

To make the crust, cream the butter and sugar, then add flour and salt and mix well. Press crust into pan and bake 20 minutes.

For topping, combine brown sugar, honey, and heavy cream in a sauce pan. Heat until boiling, then simmer for one minute. Stir in pecans.

Remove crust from oven and immediately pour filling over hot crust and spread evenly. Return to oven and bake for 20 minutes.

Remove from oven and completely cool in pan. Use foil to lift out of pan. Peel off foil and cut into bars.

MADISON COLLEGE PROGRAM RECEIVES REALTIME GRANT

VIENNA, Va., Nov. 6, 2014—The National Court Reporters Association (NCRA), the country's leading organization representing stenographic court reporters, broadcast and CART captioners, and legal videographers, today announced that Madison College, School of Business & Applied Arts in Madison, Wis., was recently awarded a five-year \$550,000 grant by the U.S. Department of Education. The funding is part of the Training for Realtime Writers grants under the Higher Education Act passed by Congress in 2009.

The college plans to use the grant money primarily to implement a recently redesigned curriculum honed to better align with the priorities of the Training for Realtime Writers Program. The new curriculum was also adopted to better serve the needs of Madison students, allow for new enrollments throughout the year, and increase overall student numbers. In 2002, Madison College received grant funding that was used to expand its curriculum to include broadcast captioning as a separate career path and degree.

"We are very excited about the grant activities we have planned over the next five years," said Lisa "Lee" Carey, RPR, CRI, a court reporting instructor at the college's School of Business & Applied Arts and one of two instructors who spearheaded the grant process. "With the award, we will be able to fully implement our vision and ensure Madison's court reporting program continues to grow. Some of the funds will help purchase new equipment, support technology updates, develop additional curriculum, establish community partnerships, and market the court reporting profession," Carey added.

According to Lisa Jo Hubacher, RPR, CRI, a court reporting instructor at the college's program who also worked on the grant process, years three through five of the school's five-year plan will also include representation at the NCRA Convention & Expo with a goal to collaborate with other instructors.

"We plan to share with other attending instructors the results of data compiled through our grant projects in order to establish best practices for training realtime reporters nationwide," she said.

"We are excited about helping our currently small program grow into a national online program. Madison's court reporting program has its roots in the stenography program first offered by the college in 1913. The modern court reporting program was established in the 1950s. We

are excited to know that this grant will help the program continue to grow well into the future."

Key changes and new resources under the school's new curriculum include:

- A six semester program that features no more than 12 credits per semester, no more than two weeks between semesters, and the opportunity for new students to be admitted at the beginning of the fall, spring, and summer semesters.
- Core classes offered every semester enabling up to 17 classes to be offered at one time.
- The replacement of individual classes with "competency-based education," in which students are taught the competencies required under NCRA's Graduation Requirements and Minimum Standards.
- An online program that is somewhat self-paced based on each student's needs and capabilities and supported by online instruction supplemented with individual coaching/mentoring either in person or via Skype and/or AdobeConnect.
- A new "virtual one-room schoolhouse" located on campus open to students, both in-person and online, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays.
- A new state-of-the-art mock courtroom that can also be used as a conference room or office for student and professional technology training.

The U.S. Department of Education's Training for Realtime Writers grant program was, in part, approved due to a legislative campaign NCRA launched and supported throughout multiple legislative cycles. Since the Act took effect, NCRA has helped court reporting schools secure more than \$16 million in Training for Realtime Writers grants.

For more information, visit NCRA.org. Career information about the court reporting profession—one of the leading career options that do not require a traditional four-year degree—can be found at crTakeNote.com.

GREEN RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE COURT REPORTING PROGRAM RECEIVES REALTIME GRANT

VIENNA, Va., Nov. 11, 2014—The National Court Reporters Association (NCRA), the country's leading organization representing stenographic court reporters, broadcast and CART captioners, and legal videographers, today announced that the Green River Community College court reporting program, in Auburn, Wash., was recently awarded a five-year grant of nearly \$550,000 by the U.S. Department of Education. The funding is part of the Training for Realtime Writers grants under the Higher Education Act passed by Congress in 2009.

"The grant provides an exceptional opportunity for Green River's Computer Reporting Technologies program to build strategic partnerships both on and off campus to promote training of individuals as realtime writers through implementation of the Career Pathway to Realtime Writing ("Pathway") Project," said Sidney Wedele-Wallace, CRI, CPE, project manager and chair of the college's business division. Wallace also serves as faculty for the school's computer reporting technologies program and co-chairs NCRA's Court Reporting Program Advisory Committee.

According to Wedele-Wallace, the funding will support two main goals of the Pathway Project, which are increasing enrollment numbers and improving student learning. Under the project, increasing enrollment will be targeted through a nine-month introductory course series taught at a regional center that annually provides career and technical secondary education to more than 700 students from five area school districts. The center offers cost-effective, quality job training in programs that are too expensive to offer at every high school. The recent grant funding will support marketing of realtime careers to high school students seeking career and technical training, equipment purchases for a dedicated classroom to offer beginning theory classes, and on-site instruction.

"Students will earn both college credit and credit toward high school graduation, and upon graduation will continue their training through the program's regular campus and online course offerings," Wedele-Wallace said.

The Pathway Project will also provide advanced realtime students with innovative, hands-on experiential learning, multiple applied-learning experiences, and the opportunity to work with industry members by partnering with Green River's Disability Support Services office and with the Washington State Center for Childhood Deafness and Hearing Loss (CDHL).

"These activities will give students a more engaging, fulfilling, and career-focused education via contextualized and applied learning experiences, including training in online tools to provide remote, cost-efficient realtime writing experiences, captioning of instructional videos to comply with ADA requirements, and more," Wedele-Wallace added.

In 2012, Green River Community College received a realtime grant that was primarily used to support need-based scholarships and to implement a cohort model for new students designed to increase retention. Prior to 2012, the school's court reporting program was awarded two congressionally directed appropriations grants from U.S. Sens. Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray.

Founded in 1965, Green River Community College will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year. The first court reporting classes were offered on campus in January of 1973. Now called "Computer Reporting Technologies," the program offers Associate of Applied Arts degrees in court reporting and captioning as well as certificates in text entry and scoping. The program draws between 75 to 80 students annually who can participate in both on-campus and online classes. On-campus students train in state-of-the-art classrooms, while online students receive direct feeds and live broadcasts from the classrooms. The program also operates a dedicated four-station captioning suite for hands-on training for students pursuing broadcast and CART captioning. The college's Computer Reporting Technologies program also offers two independent retraining workshops for professional reporters.

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