



Annual Report to the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts

Professional Issues Committee

April 2012

Prepared by Carmel Capati, Chair

2011 Voting Members:

Carmel Capati (Wisconsin)
Kelly Mills (Oregon)
Pam Sánchez (New Mexico)
David Sawyer (Alabama)
Camille Wiggins (Indiana)

2011 Interested Members:

Brook Bogue (North Carolina)
Ksenia Boitsova (Maryland)
Brenda Carrasquillo (New Jersey)
Maria Perez Chambers (Delaware)
Alejandra Donath (Connecticut)
Terry Ince (California)
Katrin Johnson (Washington)
Andrea Krlickova (Nevada)
Jennifer Singletary (West Virginia)

Consortium Staff:

Carola E. Green

Charge of the Professional Issues Committee

Under 3.4.1 of the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts' Agreements for Organization and Operation, the Professional Issues Committee is charged with addressing matters related to education and training, recruitment, interstate coordination, ethics and discipline, and other related matters as determined by the membership.

Meetings and Projects

Based upon feedback obtained during the Annual Business Meeting in 2011, the Professional Issues Committee ("the Committee") focused their efforts on several projects that seemed to reflect the priorities of the member states. Between May 2011 and April 2012, the Committee held twelve telephonic meetings. During the meetings members discussed the content, format and status of current projects embarked upon throughout the year. The primary projects the Committee worked on throughout 2011 and the early part of 2012 will be discussed within this report and include: Consortium Web Page Reorganization, Online Interpreter Training, Remote Interpreting Guide for the Courts, and Collection of LEP Resources. While conference calls are a necessary element with all committees, most of the work was completed outside of the calls in various sub-committees.

Consortium Web Page Reorganization

This project began in 2010 and was carried into 2011. The goal of this project was to improve the look and content of the Consortium web pages in order to be better organized and more user-friendly. Two members of the committee reviewed many pages on the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) site which included the Court Interpretation Resource Guide, the Consortium's main page as well as the Consortium's Members Only pages. Eight recommendations were developed and presented to the Executive Committee who approved them. Upon consultation with the IT staff at the NCSC it was determined that the cost of restructuring the web pages would be approximately \$5000 which was also approved by the Executive Committee. Work on the web page redesign has not yet begun by the NCSC but is on their list of projects to complete.

Online Interpreter Training in Collaboration with the New Mexico Center for Language Access (NMCLA)

In the past, the Consortium has typically offered in-person interpreter workshops in conjunction with the Annual Business Meeting. While the workshops have proven to be successful and well received by participants, the Committee determined that working with an institution of higher education to expand training opportunities might prove to be a more sustainable option. Upon execution of a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the NCSC, the Consortium partnered with the New Mexico Center for Language Access (NMCLA) to provide a the first pilot course on Simultaneous Interpreting for intermediate level interpreters which was held from March 5-April 1, 2012. Fifteen students were accepted to this language neutral course representing the following languages: Spanish (7); Vietnamese (1); Chinese (2); Korean (1); Polish (1); Russian (2) and Yiddish (1) from 13 states. In order to provide an evaluation of the course, one of the Committee's members who has served as a court interpreter was given the opportunity to audit the course. A second pilot course on Consecutive Note-Taking is being planned for June 2012 aimed at advanced students who hold certification.

Remote Interpreting Guide for the Courts (Draft Only)

To address to the increased reliance on technology to provide remote interpreting services throughout courts around the country, the Committee developed a Remote Interpreting (RI) Guide. According to the 2010 Professional Issues Committee Biannual Survey, 34 states responded that they used some form of technology to provide interpreting services (e.g. telephone, video conference, or VRI) The objective of this project was to provide a survey of the various audio and video technologies currently being used; pros, cons, costs, and technical requirements associated with each technology; practical and logistical issues for program managers and court staff to consider when setting up remote interpreting services; and recommendations for when remote interpreting should and should not be used. This guide is being presented in its current state as a draft with the anticipation that it will be more fully developed in 2012.

Collection of LEP Resources

In response to US Department of Justice's emphasis on the states' development of Language Access Plans (LAPs) and the different LEP tools available to assist in developing LAPs, the Committee compiled resources such as Executive Orders, statutes, MOUs, and LAPs from various entities into one user-friendly location. The objective of this project was to assist program managers in complying with language access requirements by collecting resources from different states, federal agencies, and other organizations as well as useful websites.

Other Projects

National Judicial Training Curriculum

The Committee began work on development of a training curriculum for judges at the national level with the thought that it could be offered as a training model at the National Judicial College in Reno, Nevada.

National Interpreter Registry

The Committee conducted preliminary investigation on the feasibility of creating a centralized interpreter registry which would include certified and otherwise qualified candidates from various states into one master listing.

Appreciation

I would like to thank all of the members of the Professional Issues Committee for the "second job" they held as members of this committee. For all the hours in committee and sub-committee conference calls which were absorbed into our daily work schedules and for all the unnoticed "homework" we performed outside of our normal workdays, I extend great appreciation for your commitment and your time. I would also like to express gratitude to Carola E. Green who provided the staff support necessary to help keep our projects on task, and also to Nikiesha Cosby who was always there to pick up the slack. Thank you for the opportunity to chair this superb committee...it's been a lot of fun.