

Interpreter's Digest

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General Sessions Judicial Conference

The court interpreter program recently presented on court interpreter issues at the annual general session's judicial conference held in Memphis, TN on September 17, 2008. The purpose of the presentation was to address issues the court interpreter community encounters as well as reinforce aspects of the overall court interpreter program, including Tennessee Supreme Court rules that govern interpreters and differences between certified, registered, and non-credentialed interpreters.

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Other topics that were discussed included the fundamental skills needed for interpretation, the preference of appointing an interpreter, unacceptable examples for interpreter use, and the use of law enforcement as interpreters. Judges participated in a "role play" consecutive exercise in which they were the defendant, prosecutor, judge, interpreter, and defense attorney. The goal of this exercise was for judges to gain first hand knowledge of the difficulty of relaying testimony from English to English and to imagine the complexity an interpreter would have translating from English into the target language. Overall, the presentation was well received with much interaction from the judges. The majority of the judges in attendance said they use credentialed interpreters and was pleased with their performance.

Newly Certified Interpreters

The TN Court Interpreter Program is pleased to announce our newly certified interpreters as of August 2008: Eric Henton, Monica Barringer, Rory Villafuerte, and Maureen Villalobos. Congratulations to all of our newly certified interpreters!



A native of Ecuador, **Rory Villafuerte** has been interpreting professionally for 10 years and currently is a full time interpreter for the courts. Rory, also a paralegal, has been in the U.S. for 26 years and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mass Communications from the University of West Florida. Prior to becoming an interpreter, Rory worked in TV production in Florida and Tennessee and also worked as a disaster inspector for FEMA.

Born and raised in San Jose, Costa Rica, **Maureen Villalobos** studied English and international trade and gained experience in interpreting and translation in finance and informatics. She moved to Los Angeles, CA in 1993 and worked as a social services liaison and interpreter/translator



for a Head Start program in Palmdale, CA. In 2003, she moved to Nashville and continued her work in human resources. Now, Maureen is a freelance interpreter working primarily at General Sessions Court in Davidson County and other locations. Maureen states, *"It is not a secret that getting certified requires a lot of time and hard work, but it is surely rewarding."* Maureen thinks it is important that the interpreter profession is willing to lend newcomers a helping hand, which is the reason why the profession is growing and gaining the respect it deserves.

Born in Bogota, Columbia, **Monica Barringer** moved to Miami in 1980. In 1988 she went to France to study French and travel throughout Europe. In 2001, Monica came to Tennessee where she got married and received a bachelor's degree in communications from the University of Memphis. In 2004, Monica started interpreting professionally and has worked for the U.S. Marshalls, FBI, TN Courts, TN Department of Human Services, TN Department of Labor, and has performed public service announcements in Spanish, TN campaigns, video voice overs, and medical and immigration appointments. Monica says, "I am delighted to have become a TN certified interpreter and I look forward to continuing my exploration and studies in both languages to further cultivate my skills in this exciting world that is interpreting.



Born in Petersburg, VA, and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina, **Eric Henton** graduated cum laude from the University of Memphis in 1999 with a B.A. degree in History and Spanish. He is in his last year at the Cecil C. Humphrey's School of Law at the University of Memphis. Upon graduation in May 2009, Eric plans to practice primarily in immigration law. Eric is married and has two children and is expecting another child in December.

Spanish Oral Exam November 10-14

Registration forms are available on the AOC website at www.tncourts.gov to register for the November oral exam. The exam will be held November 10-14. To register, please follow the steps listed below:

- 1) Select Programs and Services
- 2) Click on Court Interpreters
- 3) Scroll down and select the exam and date under Registration Forms and Information
- 4) Submit registration form

Please note that this will be the last Spanish oral exam for 2008. The deadline for registration is Friday, October 31st.

Interpreter Availability

Effective immediately, if you are no longer available to interpret in court due to temporary or permanent circumstances, please notify the AOC of your availability. When selecting interpreters, court personnel will be able to identify those that are available and contact them for upcoming cases.

ID Badge Usage

If you are in need of a photo id, and do not reside in surrounding counties or find it difficult to stop by the AOC, you may send us a scanned photo image along with a copy of your driver's license and your badge will be mailed to you. This option is not available for those that currently possess a badge, only newly registered interpreters without one.

Mentoring Program

The court interpreter program is anticipating a mentor program to assist interpreters in passing the written and oral exam. For some candidates, support is greatly needed in these two required areas of the program. One of the goals is to increase the number of LOS (languages other than Spanish) interpreters for FY 2009. In doing so, more interpreters can be available and recommended for hard to find languages. Court personnel will also be able to meet the needs of those with limited English proficiency for these languages. If you have any ideas on how this initiative may be effective, please feel free to forward your comments or contact Sheila Morris at 615-741-2687 or sheila.morris@tncourts.gov.

Interpreter's in the News

Certified interpreters Mike Zogby and Rory Villafuerte were recently featured in the article *Translators break legal language barrier* from *The Leaf Chronicle*, a local Clarksville newspaper on September 10, 2008. Spanish and Korean interpreters are in great demand in the Clarksville area and Zogby and Villafuerte are assisting with bridging the gap for those with limited English proficiency throughout the state. In the article, Villafuerte stated, "it (interpreting) is a skill that must be learned and polished: it is not natural to speak at the same time someone else is talking and it's more unnatural to do it at the same time in another language." Zogby commented "to have the capability of communicating the law and protecting people's rights in a different language who wouldn't have a clue what was going on if you weren't there makes me feel good about my job."

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2009 Testing Schedule

Event	Date(s)		Location	Fee
Written Exam	February 19-20 May 21-22 August 20-21 November 12-13		Administrative Office of the Courts Nashville	\$0
Spanish Oral Exam	March 16-20 June 2-5 October 5-9		Administrative Office of the Courts Nashville	\$150
Languages Other Than Spanish	April 6-10 September 7-11		Administrative Office of the Courts Nashville	\$150
Oral Proficiency Interview(s) <u>Knoxville</u>	January 22 - 23 February 26 - 27 March 26 - 27 April 23 - 24 May 21 - 22 June 25 - 26 July 23 - 24 August 20 - 21	September 24 - 25 October 22 - 23 November 19 - 20 December 10 - 11	Supreme Court Building Knoxville	\$104
Oral Proficiency Interview(s) <u>Nashville</u>	January 22 - 23 February 26 - 27 March 26 - 27 April 23 - 24 May 14 - 15 June 25 - 26 July 23 - 24 August 20 - 21	September 24 - 25 October 22 - 23 November 19 - 20 December 10 - 11	Administrative Office of the Courts Nashville	\$104
Oral Proficiency Interview(s) <u>Jackson</u>	January 26 - 27 February 23 - 24 March 30 - 31 April 27 - 28 May 26 - 27 June 29 - 30 July 27 - 28	August 24 - 25 September 28 - 29 October 26 - 27 November 23 - 24 December 28 - 29	Supreme Court Building Jackson	\$104
Oral Proficiency Interview(s) <u>Chattanooga</u>	Please call Marian Badgerow at 423-634-6344 for available dates		Supreme Court Building Chattanooga	\$104