



WASCLA 2008

# Improving the Quality of Interpreting Services

- Minnesota Interpreting Stakeholders Group
- Minnesota Roster of Medical Interpreters
- Minnesota Training Programs



# Upper Midwest Translators and Interpreters Association



The Upper Midwest  
Translators and Interpreters Association (UMTIA)  
A Chapter of the American Translators Association (ATA)

## Welcome to UMTIA!

*What's New!*

[ATA Exam —Minneapolis, MN—January 25, 2009](#)

**2009 Conference: Save the Date  
June 20-21, 2009**

[2009 Conference Committee Meeting Schedule](#)

[Minnesota Department of Health Roster of Interpreters  
Be part of creating it. Meeting Schedule Times](#)

[Legal Interpreting Committee Activities](#)

[Medical Interpreting Committee Activities](#)

[Translation Committee Activities](#)

[Interpreting Stakeholder Group Activities](#)

**UMTIA'S MISSION**

To promote quality in  
the field of translating  
and interpreting in  
Minnesota,  
Wisconsin, Iowa,  
South Dakota, and  
North Dakota.

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# Meeting of Stakeholders

- At the October 2003 UMTIA conference, UMTIA sponsored a meeting of stakeholders.
- Over 40 people attended and decided there was a need to meet on an ongoing basis to address these issues.
- The Interpreting Stakeholders Group was established in January 2004 as an ad-hoc committee of UMTIA.



# Members

- Medical, legal and educational interpreters
- Institutions training interpreters
- Interpreter service agencies
- Health care organizations
- Human service organizations
- State agencies (Human Services, Health, Commerce, Labor, Education)
- Area Health Education Centers



# ISG Mission

- To improve the delivery of spoken language interpreter services in Minnesota, and to promote the professionalization of the interpreting industry as a whole.



# Goal

- Equal access to health care and human services for limited English proficient populations.



# Objectives

- Identify and promote interpreter training opportunities among prospective interpreters and employers across the state in order to increase the number of interpreters who have completed at least a minimum of interpreter training.
- Identify and implement internships for interpreters who would benefit from shadowing other professionals.
- Discuss effective evaluation mechanisms for quality of interpreting (standardized pre- and post-testing, consumer feedback, health care provider/user input).



## Objectives (cont'd)

- Explore options for enhanced interpreter service delivery models in MN.
- Seek funding opportunities to expand avenues of training, evaluation, and partnerships.
- Address issues that would help make the profession of interpreting more attractive (e.g., appropriate reimbursement for qualified interpreters, employment opportunities, education of providers, legislative advocacy, etc.).





# Structure

- 3 years ago ISG explored becoming a separate organization
- Since then has backed back into being a committee of UMTIA
- UMTIA revised its By-laws to include outreach committees whose members do not need to be members of UMTIA
- ISG currently operates as an outreach committee under UMTIA.



# Meeting Schedule

- Meets monthly to share expertise among the Stakeholder members and/or inviting experts in the field to present to the group.



# 1<sup>st</sup> year Accomplishments

## Creating Shared Knowledge and Breadth of Motivational Base

- Created a table of interpreter training options (currently being updated).
- Developed a presentation which outlines the importance of addressing interpreter issues and how various partners can play a role (business case).



# 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year Accomplishments

## Developing Shared Background Knowledge

- Sponsored presentations on
  - the current status of interpreter certification in the courts
  - in health care
  - in ASL
  - the requirements of the ASL interpreter internship program at the College of St. Catherine's
  - internship models, and apprenticeship models.
- Developed a table of interpreter mentoring models.



# Year 3 Accomplishments

## Grant writing

- SW AHEC
  - \$11,000 to develop 3-day interpreter orientation
- Bush Grant
  - \$233,000 to
  - Conduct 2 Train-the-trainer programs
  - Deliver training and scholarships
  - Develop training materials
  - Bring experts together to discuss developing a certification process



## Year 3 and 4 Accomplishments

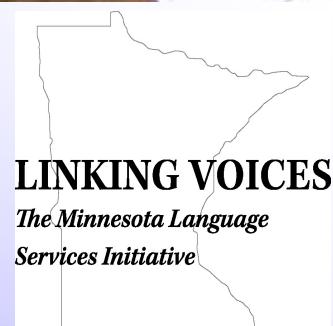
### Creating training and expertise

- SW AHEC
  - \$11,000 to develop 3-day interpreter orientation
- Bush Grant
  - \$233,000 to
  - Conduct 2 Train-the-trainer programs
  - Deliver training and scholarships
  - Develop training materials
  - Bring experts together to discuss developing a certification process



# 3-day Interpreter Orientations

## In 3 rural communities





# Rural Training Delivery

- Preliminary needs assessment
- Financial support
- Local partnerships/in-kind support
- Logistical challenges
- Press coverage
- Follow-up





# Credit Courses via ITV

- Adapt teaching materials
- Identify local leaders in the interpreting community and (assistant) instructors
- Award scholarship dollars
- Ensure follow-up



# Interpreter Trainer Training



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# Train-the-trainer

- 2-week program
- Cohort development
- Stipends
- Child care for those coming from Greater Minnesota



# Materials Development

- Identifying gaps in the market
- Time and resources
- Teamwork
- Evaluation



# 2007 Certification

- Hosted meeting of experts from across the country to further plan for cooperation in developing health care interpreter certification process.





# 2008 Certification

- ISG became a member of the National Coalition on Health Care Interpreter Certification (NCC).



# Legislation

- Clinics Group sponsored legislation in 2006
- A state legislator introduced a bill in 2007
- Health Plans sponsored legislation in 2008
- ISG became involved to provide expertise





# Interpreter Roster Legislation

- 2008 legislation created a statewide roster of spoken language health care interpreters.
- Legislation also requires MDH to work with ISG to:
  - develop the roster, and
  - a plan for a registry, and
  - plans for interpreter certification after the establishment of a national certification process.





# Preparing for a Registry

- Working with interpreters and industry to utilize voluntary roster and help interpreters complete training (anticipated requirement of registry).



# Subcommittees

Three work groups:

- **Education/Training:**
  - Chair is Peter Turpin  
([peter.turpin@swsc.org](mailto:peter.turpin@swsc.org))
- **Interpreter Registry Development:**
  - Chair is Tara Gibbs  
([tara@visi.com](mailto:tara@visi.com))
- **ISG Communications:**
  - Chair is Carol Berg  
([cberg@ucare.org](mailto:cberg@ucare.org))



# Challenges/Priorities

- Address particular challenges of meeting needs for rarer languages and service needs in rural areas.
- Address service delivery improvements and financing of interpreter services.
- Support collaborative approach to establishing national certification process.
- Securing funding for project staff support.



## Next Steps

- Seek additional funding for orientation sessions around the state (including ITV).
- Seek funding for certification-related activities.
- Finish provider training module on how to work with interpreters and disseminate.



# Overall lessons learned from ISG's experience

- We would not have been able to get the project grants we had without having a large group of diverse stakeholders united around a common goal and meeting regularly with each other.
- Creating the common goals and work plan were essential.
- Be willing to take on challenging issues, even though consensus may be difficult to achieve, is essential.



# Overall lessons learned from ISG's experience

- Having diverse public and private sector reps at the table allows us to identify and address system issues.
- Emphasize common ground while working out differing view points on how to address the complex layers of improving interpreter training and service delivery.



# ISG Registry Committee History



# Formation

- A committee looking at certification and licensure formed in 2004.
- Initially it investigated the system and requirements used by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.
- It also looked at differences between licensure systems, registry systems, certification systems, and rosters.
- Within the topic of licensure, it looked at alternative paths to licensure.





# The Question of Certification

- Since certification development is a long and expensive process, it was decided that this would be better done at the national level, and the committee refocused on the questions of licensure, registry requirements, and rosters.
- In 2005 this committee became the ISG Roster Committee



# Registry vs. Roster

- A roster is a listing of people. There are no requirements for being on the list. Information is *not* verified. It is *not* standard-setting.
- A registry is a listing of people who have met certain requirements, such as particular training, or particular levels of demonstrated skills. Information is verified. It *is* standard-setting.



# Voluntary vs. Required

- A roster or a registry may be voluntary or required.
  - Listing on the MN Court Roster is **required** to interpret in court.
  - Listing on the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) or the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) is **required** to interpret ASL.
    - The American Disabilities Act **requires** a qualified interpreter, and this is defined by the RID and NAD registries.
- This roster is **voluntary**.
  - On August 11, 2000, Executive Order 13166 was issued with clarifying guidelines defining what it means not to discriminate against someone based on their national origin (Title VI of the American Civil Rights Act of 1964).
  - The guidelines require a qualified interpreter, but there is no law or executive order defining who is qualified to interpret spoken languages.
    - (MN Courts, however, have created a Rule which has the



# Benefits of a registry

- In languages of greater diffusion, a registry provides the ability to distinguish between those of greater skill and those of lesser skill.
- A roster simply duplicates and centralizes the current state of knowledge.



## Benefits of a roster

- In languages of lesser diffusion, there are unlikely to be many people meeting the qualifications of a registry.
- In this case, a roster does NOT duplicate information already available, because most people do not know where to find any interpreters for the language, and a roster listing would represent an increase in current knowledge and resources.



# What is a language of greater/lesser diffusion?

Although there are over 7000 languages spoken in the world today, there are fewer than 400 languages spoken in Minnesota.

Of those, 5 accounted for 90% of all court interpreter encounters in 2004.

19 languages accounted for 99% of all court interpreter encounters in 2004.

Languages of greater diffusion are languages which are frequently encountered in MN.

Languages of lesser diffusion are languages which are rarely encountered in MN.



## Most common languages in court interpreter encounters 2004

	Language**	Population of non-English speaking residents in MN*	Number of hours invoiced by 7/04 for the period 1/04-6/04	Percentage of requests covered
1.	Spanish	175,000	9625	59.7%
2.	Somali	25,000	1838.11	71.1%
3.	Hmong	60,000	1778.14	82.1%
4.	American Sign Language	64,000	803.08	87.1%
5.	Russian	12,500	385.33	89.5%
6.	Vietnamese	25,000	345.8	91.7%
7.	Arabic-Standard	?	231.65	93.1%
8.	Khmer (Cambodian)	7,500	177.15	94.2%
9.	Lao	13,000	166.9	95.3%
10.	Bosnian (Serbian, Croatian)	3,000?	109.75	95.9%
11.	Amharic	2,750?	102	96.6%
12.	Oromo	3,750?	94	97.1%
13.	Nuer	500?	64	97.5%
14.	Chinese, Mandarin	1,500?	61	97.9%
15.	Korean	1,500?	46.45	98.2%
16.	Tigrinyan	1,000?	36.25	98.4%
17.	Arabic-Levantin	?	34	98.6%
18.	French	?	24.75	98.8%
19.	Anuak	100?	18.5	99.0%

\* Numbers without question marks are taken from "Estimates of Selected Immigrant Populations in Minnesota: 2004 by Barbara J. Ronningen.

\*\* Languages in purple are languages for which certification exams are available

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# Hours invoiced 1/04-6/05

**Russian**  
385.33 hrs  
6 cert

**ASL**  
803 hrs  
5 cert.

**Hmong**  
1778.14 hrs  
1 cert.

**Somali**  
1838 hrs  
0 cert.

**Spanish**

**9652 hours**

**55 certified interpreters**

- Spanish
- Somali
- Hmong
- Sign Language - American
- Russian
- Vietnamese
- Arabic - Standard
- Khmer, Central
- Lao
- Bosnian
- Amharic
- Oromo, Borana-Arsi-Guji
- Nuer
- Chinese, Mandarin
- Korean
- Tigrinya
- Arabic - Sudanese
- French
- Anuak

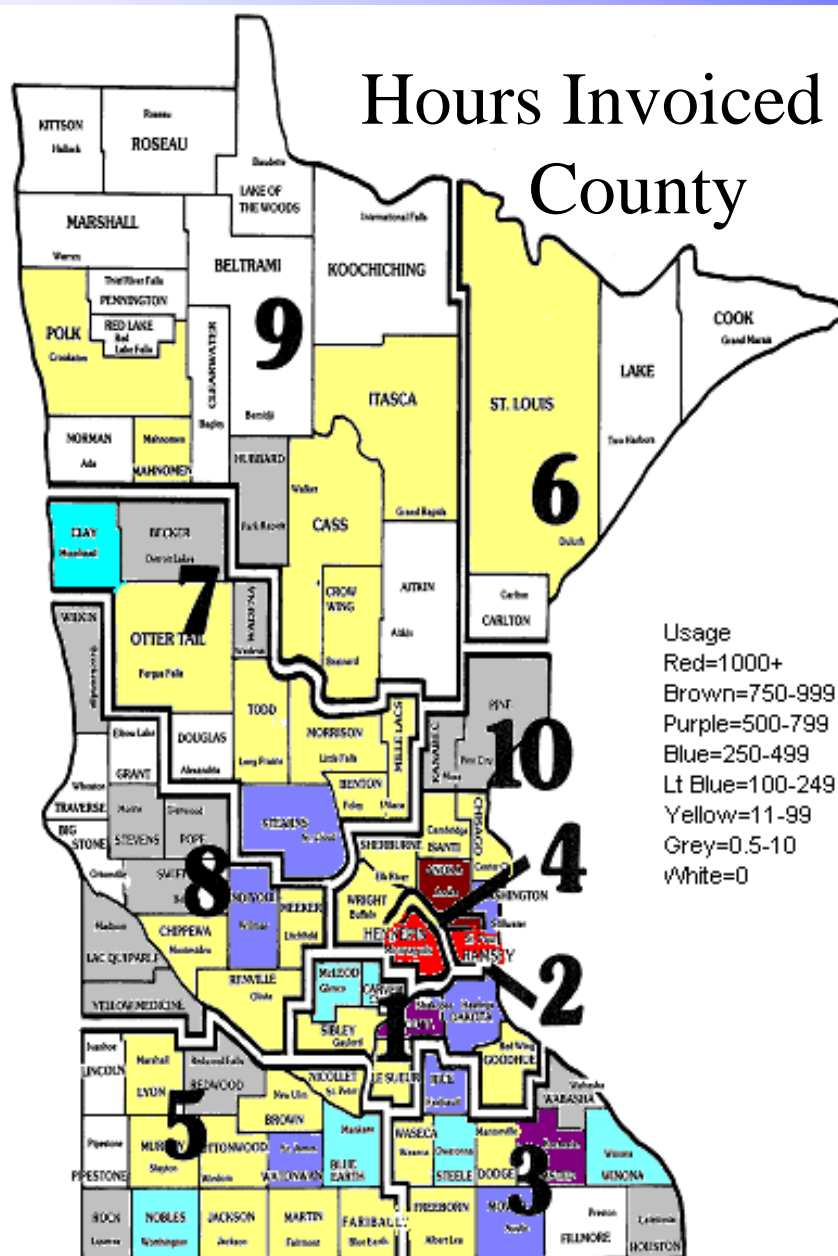
Just a few languages made up most of the interpreting hours invoiced to the courts in 2004

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## Hours Invoiced by County



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January 1, 2004-June 30, 2004



# Review:

## Benefits of a registry

- In languages of greater diffusion, a registry provides the ability to distinguish between those of greater skill and those of lesser skill.
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# Review:

## Benefits of a roster

- In languages of lesser diffusion, there are unlikely to be many people meeting the qualifications of a registry.
- In this case, a roster does NOT duplicate information already available, because most people do not know where to find any interpreters for the language, and a roster listing would represent an increase in current knowledge and resources.



# Roster Workgroup

- The roster workgroup came to the conclusion that it was not interested in the creation of a roster for languages of greater diffusion, but rather in the creation of a registry.
- For languages of lesser diffusion, however, it was interested in the creation of a roster.



# A Two-tiered System

- For these reasons, it was felt that a two-tiered system would be most useful
- The two-tiered system could become a three-tiered system when certification became available.



# Registry Committee

- Since the creation of a roster without requirements was pretty straight forward, in 2006, the roster committee changed its focus to defining what the requirements would be to be on a registry which would be targeting languages of greater diffusion.
- To reflect its new focus, early in 2007 the roster committee became the registry committee.



# ISWG

- In 2007, the state legislature formed the ISWG to make recommendations to the legislature regarding interpreting. (It disbanded in January of 2008.)
- The registry workgroup of the ISG continued examining different systems of qualification and drafted two alternative proposals for a two-tiered roster-registry system for ISWG.
- The recommendations were significantly simplified by the ISWG.



# 2008 Legislation

- In 2008, legislation was introduced by the Council of Health Plans in MN to create a roster of medical interpreters at the MN Department of Health.
- It also called for a plan for a registry to be developed by January 1, 2010.
- In June 2008, the legislation passed and was signed by the governor.





# Implementation

The legislation specifies 3 phases. This has been broken into 4 phases, due to the fact that the developer would have needed the finished specifications essentially one week after the legislation was signed.



# 4 Phases

- **Phase 1:**
  - Development requirements due: July, 2008.
  - Committee focus in June and July, 2008.
  - A list of people.
  - No requirements to be on the list (except \$50)
  - Purely contact information.
  - Interpreters can start entering themselves in Nov, 2008
  - On Jan. 5, 2009 people can begin doing searches of the roster
  - Voluntary



## Phase 2

- Development requirements due: January, 2009.
- Committee focus in October, November and December of 2008
- A list of people.
- No requirements to be on the list.
- Includes quality fields regarding language proficiency and interpreter skills testing, education, and training.
- Provides a password and account so interpreters can renew and update their profiles
- Expected: July of 2009.
- Voluntary



## Phase 3:

- Development of a plan for the creation and implementation of a registry.
  - Due to legislature January 1, 2010
  - Committee focus in 2009.
  - There is no commitment by the legislature that this plan will be acted on.



## Phase 4:

- Implementation of recognition of interpreter certification one year after it becomes available.
  - Future project with undefined timeline.
  - Commitment is unclear



# CHIA database side note

- In 2005 Cindy Roat, working on behalf of CHIA, began a series of discussions and studies to develop a database with substantial quality measures in it.
- In 2007, the CHIA database went live, which included very sophisticated database entries, where by people on the roster could upload information about their test scores, partially bridging the gap between the concept of a roster without qualifications and a registry which sets minimal qualifications.
- This has been the inspiration for Phase 2 development.



# Phase 1 fields

See appendix



# Phase 2 fields

See appendix





# 2006-2007 Registry Plans

See appendixes

Three versions attached



# Training Challenges

## Getting people to register for classes

- Solution: 3 day orientation with the objective of generating energy for semester classes.
- This has been very successful.
  - Trainers must view this as a place to hook people, not as a training that will be complete
  - Classes to enroll in need to be ready for registration when the orientation is offered



# 3-day Orientation

See Training Outline Appendix



# Training Challenges

Providing training opportunities for languages of lesser diffusion

U of M model requires

bilingual instructors, and  
a cohort of 3+ per class, and  
8 to offer the certificate.



# Century College

See appendix for 60-credit AAS degree program requirements.

Individual course descriptions  
available at:

[www.untia.org](http://www.untia.org)