

# Interpreters Division 2016 Annual Meeting San Francisco

**Leadership Council members present:** Farah Arjang, Milena Calderari-Waldron, Paula Irsity, Helen Eby, Cristina McDowell, Lorena Ortiz-Schneider and Tianlu Redmon.

**Call to order** at 4:50 pm by Assistant Administrator Marsel De Souza

## **Initial remarks**

Division Administrator Carol Velandia is currently in India pursuing her Social Work studies. She hopes to become a language access advocate for the US. Marsel read aloud a letter sent by Carol **(see letter attached below)**.

After serving for two years, Marsel De Souza is stepping down as Assistant Administrator. Lorena Ortiz-Schneider is the newly elected Assistant Administrator. The Leadership Council is adding two councilmembers: Gio Lester and Teresa Roman.

Pictures taken by Paula Irsity. Please inform her if you do not wish for your picture to be published.

Cyril Flevov and Robyn Dean have donated autographed books to be raffled during the ATA ID annual dinner. This year's dinner is a joint event with the Medical Division.

## **Getting It Right – Interpreting**

Marsel De Souza was a member of the team that translated “Getting It Right – Interpreting” into Portuguese.

## **Meeting our membership's demands**

The ATA ID's survey results had been previously presented at last year's conference in Miami and a report is posted on the ATA ID blog.

- Total number of respondents: 536
- Restricted to Interpreters Division
- Survey again in 2017 with lessons learned
- Maybe extend survey to all ATA members

This year we present the progress made to address members' concerns identified by the survey.

*Q: How do you think the ATA ID can raise the standards of the interpreting community?*

A: Over 50% of respondents want provision of information on certification and credentialing opportunities.

ATA ID posted on its website the interpreters' credentialing opportunities table. ATA ID will continue to promote articles comparing interpreter credentials.

A: Just under 25% of respondent want interaction with other stakeholders.

ATA ID leadership council members:

- participated in the drafting of the ASTM F2089-15 Standard Practice for Language Interpreting;
- have a close working relationship with ATA Interpreter Policy Advisory Committee (IPAC); and
- partnered with ATA Medical Division to publish an article in Caduceus comparing different medical interpreter certifications.

*Q: What do you think should be the primary focus of the ID for the next two years?*

A: Membership's top two focuses:

- Developing on-line training. ATA ID points out that this is ATA Professional Development Committee's responsibility.
- Social media outlets. ATA ID is presenting statistics at this annual meeting.

*Q: What are the main challenges facing our profession?*

A: Lack of awareness regarding standards with untrained interpreters taking jobs away from professional interpreters.

ATA ID urges its members to advocate at the state and federal levels through legislation and regulations. ATA ID published an article on the Association of Language Companies (ALC) survey to promote data-based understanding of the role of freelancers in the profession.

A: Declining standards and/or rates as a result of commoditization of the profession.

ATA ID notices several improvements such as:

- online platforms for scheduling/invoicing/paying interpreters;
- procurement reform by divorcing administrative cost (intermediary) from service cost (interpreter);
- capping administrative cost at 15% so that interpreters receive the remaining 85%; and
- unionization in some states (CA, WA), language companies (Purple Communications) and hospitals (SEIU).

## **Distinguished Speaker**

This year, ATA ID's guest speaker is renowned ethicist **Robyn Dean** and our featured topic is "Interpreter Ethics". Robyn Dean has been a nationally certified American Sign Language interpreter for over 25 years specializing in health care. She has over 20 publications, all of

which focus on the theoretical and pedagogical frameworks used to advance the practice of community interpreters. She is currently an assistant professor at the Rochester Institute of Technology, where she is the lead instructor for the Institute's postgraduate degree in health care interpreting. She also teaches courses for postgraduate degrees designed for sign language interpreters in Europe.

**You Did What? Making Sense of Conflicting Codes of Ethics**, a 2-hour panel moderated by Helen Eby. Panelists: Robyn Dean, Milena Calderari-Waldron, Cristina Helmerichs and Marina Hadjioannou Waters. The panelists discussed the professional duties of interpreters and the expectations placed upon them across different areas of interpreting referencing the codes of ethics from four organizations: ASTM International; signed language interpreting (National Association of the Deaf - Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf); health care interpreting (National Council on Interpreting in Health Care); and court interpreting (federal courts). The panelists began meeting in July 2016 through conference calls. There were many interesting conversations regarding commonalities and common challenges in interpreting ethics situations. The ATA ID will publish a report on the panel in its blog.

**Returning to Ethics: A Meta-Ethical Analysis of Community Interpreters' Codes and Standards of Practice.** Robyn Dean discussed the challenges associated with the ethical framework offered to community interpreters. Metaphors (e.g., conduit/advocate) are often employed to describe practitioners' behaviors and have since emerged in pedagogy and training material as an ethical device (e.g., interpreters should or should not be a conduit). However, the devices used to describe behaviors are not the same as those used to propose or evaluate behaviors. Normative ethics dictates the use of terms that evaluate the consequences of decisions in light of a profession's values. The speaker proposed an alternative framework of ethical decision-making similar to a garden with forking paths.

**Critiquing and Deconstructing Metaphors: A Normative Ethical Framework for Community Interpreters.** Robyn Dean wants interpreters to enhance (or at least not prevent) cooperation between interlocutors of other languages/cultures. This proposition is in alignment with ideals from morality scholarship: cooperation is the highest form of ethical reasoning. In community interpreting, this ideal is arguably evident in the frequently used metaphor "member of the team." The speaker distilled the "interpreter-as-team member" metaphor into a series of professional values and proposed a framework that aligns with a cooperation-based, ethical framework for interpreters working in community settings.

## **Social Media**

Tianlu Redmon presented a statistical analysis of the ATA ID's social media. From July 2015 until October 2016:

- Facebook went from 877 followers to 1,688 representing a 92% growth;
- 1,689 total Facebook page likes as of November 3, 2016;
- Facebook fans are 72% female and mostly younger 40% between 25-44 years old;

- About half of Facebook fans (797) are located in the US followed by Mexico (166), Egypt (91), Brazil (87), Argentina (73) and Spain (47).
- Most people view Facebook on a mobile device;
- Twitter went from 17 followers to 143 representing a 741% growth; and
- LinkedIn went from 27 followers to 112 representing a 322% growth.

## **Blog and Website**

The editor in chief responsible for:

- Bi-weekly calendar of postings
- Author contact spreadsheet

Articles posted in 2016 included topics such as:

- medical interpreting;
- interpreter education/training;
- UN interpreting;
- professional development;
- Lessons from Court Interpreting real life situations;
- a report from the largest annual conference on Community Interpreting; and
- a dispatch from an ATA Board meeting.

Interviews posted in 2016:

- Robyn Dean
- Holly Mikkelson
- Sheila Shermet
- Daniel Tamayo
- Cyril Flerov

## **We are stronger together**

ATA ID actively collaborated with the Interpretation Policy Advisory Committee (IPAC) to evaluate the different interpreter credentials for the Credentialed Interpreter tag for the ATA online directory. The goal was parity with translators when requesters search the ATA online directory. One of the byproducts of this joint effort is the publication of an article comparing the various healthcare interpreter certifications in the US.

Call for volunteers. There is a particular pressing need for proofreaders and editors with strong English language skills. There is also the ever-constant need for authors for the blog.

Other ways of participating are joining the ATA ID Listserv and becoming an ATA voting member!

**Adjournment** at 5:55 pm.