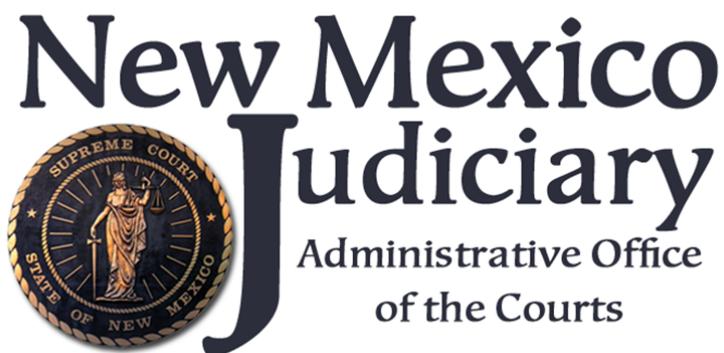


Language Access Services Annual Report

**2018
Issue IV**



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“Celebrating diversity, advancing equality.”



Paula Couselo-Findikoglu
Senior Statewide Program Manager,
Language Access Services
NM Administrative Office of the
Courts

WELCOME!

"I am delighted to share with you our 2018 annual report.

As you will read in this report, major accomplishments for this year include the implementation of Spanish-English domestic violence and domestic relations forms, a pilot project to assess scribing needs in our courts, improved access to languages not available in New Mexico through the use of video remote interpreting, and the development of an avatar that will soon be available on our language access website to make our web content more accessible.

We serve some of the most vulnerable community members in our state and these are difficult times for many of them. Included in this report, you will find the voices of those we serve describing the significant impact our program has had in their experience interacting with the judiciary. In many cases, this

has changed their perception of our courts, and ultimately our Justice System.

I have had the great opportunity to work with judges, court staff, community organizations and interpreters in these projects and I am grateful for the unwavering support from our Supreme Court and administrative authority. Very special thanks go to the Ninth Judicial District for their willingness to spearhead the scribing project pilot, the members and chair of the NM Judicial Translation Team Project for their work on the implementation of the bilingual domestic violence forms, Justice Clingman, and of course, my amazing team!

I dedicate this report to my father, R.I.P., and to all of those who, like him, have dedicated their lives to public service."

"We serve some of the most vulnerable community members in our state and these are difficult times for many of them. Included in this report, you will find the voices of those we serve."

- AOC Senior Statewide Program Manager Paula Couselo-Findikoglu

The Language Access Services Unit of the New Mexico Administrative Office of the Courts develops and delivers guidance, policies, procedures and training for employees working in the courts to ensure comprehensive language access inside and outside the courtroom for Limited English Proficient, deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title II of the ADA and Executive Order 13166.

The program supports the NM State Courts through: language access planning, training, signage, assistive listening devices, in-person and remote interpreting services and translation of documents.



From left to right: Anabel Vela, Peggy Cadwell, Paula Couselo, Alex Araiza, Pip Lustgarten, Joshua Kahawai, Eileen Spoonhoward, Janie Hernandez



**Hon. Gary L. Clingman,
NM Supreme Court Justice
& LAAC Chair**

“Good morning my fellow New Mexicans.

For the last several years, I have been honored to serve as a member of the Language Access Advisory Committee (LAAC) and for the past year, I have served as its chair. As a District judge for 21 years, I have had the opportunity to watch and be a part of the process by which Language Access has grown from an idea to an obtainable reality.

My how times have changed and

changed for the better. Much of this progress is due to the leadership of AOC’s Senior Statewide Program Manager Paula Couselo-Findikoglu and former LAAC chair, the Hon. Edward Chávez. However, all would be naught but for the willingness to accept change on the part of judges and court personnel. They are the ones who implement change and make it work in real world New Mexico. They are the ones who make sure that the courts are equally accessible to English speakers and NES (non-English speakers) alike and to the hearing and deaf alike.

They are the ones who see and recognize inequality and do not tolerate it, even when it means more work and inconvenience to them. Speeches are made by the speechmakers but goals are achieved by those who do the work.

I began this greeting with “Good morning.” I did so because I strongly believe that we are still in the early stages of our effort to remove language barriers in the courts and thereby to provide access to the court. I invite you to take pride in LAAC’s many accomplishments but understand it is still early in the workday. There is much work yet to be done! Join us as we move forward to use Language Access to the courts as a means to provide Access to Justice. Thank you for your help. “

“[Judges and court personnel] are the ones who see and recognize inequality and do not tolerate it, even when it means more work and inconvenience to them. Speeches are made by the speechmakers but goals are achieved by those who do the work.”

- Supreme Court Justice Gary L. Clingman



“During 2018 Language Access Services (LAS) took significant steps to broaden access to courts for those with limited English proficiency. At the same time, LAS showed very efficient management of resources. Creation of the LAS Fund allowed more effective management of resources that resulted in development of a fund balance that is needed to address contingencies as they arise.

This year, LAS introduced acceptance of non-English domestic violence forms. The ability of LAS to provide prompt translation of the forms made statewide adoption of this practice a success. Other innovations included dedication of personnel and equipment to Video Remote Interpreting with the assistance of the Second and Ninth Judicial District Courts, as well as a pilot project with the Ninth Judicial District Court to scribe documents for individuals with low literacy and computer literacy skills.

The New Mexico LAS program continues to be a national leader in the scope and quality of services provided to all people who would otherwise find language a barrier to access to courts!” - Arthur W. Pepin, Director, NM Administrative Office of the Courts

SCRIBING PILOT

PILOT SITE: NINTH JD

Our sincere thanks to the Ninth Judicial District Court for volunteering to be the host court for the pilot program. We asked court management to share their thoughts with us:

Kevin Spears, Court Executive Officer:

Q. Why did you volunteer your courts for the scribing pilot?

A. I believe that we are an open-minded and innovative Court that consistently explores ways to improve services and better serve the public.

Q. What, if any, impact are you seeing on your staff and resources?

A. Our staff is focused on providing excellent customer service and therefore willingly available to scribe if needed. We are obviously a rural court but staff and resources have not been impacted in a negative way.

Q. Do you have any additional comments about the pilot program?

A. Our staff is genuinely proud to provide this service. They do an excellent job of determining the actual need of the customer and whether the use of the scribe service is appropriate in those particular situations. We set very high expectations regarding customer service in the Ninth Judicial District Court and the scribe pilot increases our ability to reach our goals.

In March 2018, a scribing pilot program was launched in the Ninth Judicial District Courts (Curry and Roosevelt counties). The pilot is the culmination of several years of research and input from the Literacy Challenges Working Group, a statewide team comprised of disability rights advocates, literacy organizations, judges, attorneys, and AOC staff.



The Working Group concluded that a current New Mexico rule prohibiting staff from filling in court forms on behalf of Self Represented Litigants should be amended to include an exception for those who are unable to read or complete forms due to disability, illiteracy or Limited English Proficiency. In October 2017, the Supreme Court authorized a scribing pilot program to compile data on the need for and impact of providing these services.

Court staff are not allowed to give legal advice, and that prohibition remains strictly in place under this program. Rather, the scribing program enables Judicial Specialists and Language Access Specialists to assist by reading aloud, sight translating, or filling in the blanks on forms using the words spoken by the client. Out of respect for courts' limited resources, participants must sign a Statement of Need attesting that they qualify for the service due to disability, illiteracy or Limited English Proficiency.

By the Numbers

From March through December 2018, the following number and types of Self Represented Litigants received services under the scribing pilot program:

Roosevelt County (Portales)

- 11 Limited English Proficiency
- 8 Illiteracy
- 1 Disability + Illiteracy

Curry County (Clovis)

- 3 Limited English Proficiency

Thoughts from Vicki Wilkerson, Judicial Specialist Supervisor:

"I absolutely love the scribing program!"

In small rural communities such as ours, there are no agencies that assist pro-se filers. There are no free or reduced-cost services nor are there any self-help programs. Therefore, the scribing service is greatly needed and appreciated in our community.

Over the past several years, cases have shifted from those where litigants were predominately represented by lawyers to those where pro-se filers are most common. According to the Odyssey case management system, in Roosevelt County in 2018 approximately 96% of Domestic Violence cases were filed pro-se, 76% of Dissolution with Custody cases had at least one pro-se party and Kinship/Guardianship was at 75% pro-se. I think it's safe to say that in these areas of the courts, pro-se is no longer a matter of growth, but rather the status quo at a saturated level.

The courts have responded to the growth of Self Represented Litigants by becoming more user-friendly. Pro-Se packets are available and some courts provide a monthly Domestic Clinic. Information is available through the Internet which includes an online Self-Help Guide and downloadable forms in multiple languages, as well as new interactive fillable forms. The larger courts are fortunate enough to have self-help centers that provide information, directions and answers for an array of procedural questions. But if the Self Represented Litigant cannot use the tools provided to them due to disability, illiteracy or a language barrier, then they are of no value to the filer.

Again, in our small rural communities, attorney services are out of reach for some, and free or reduced-cost services are not readily available to those who need assistance. The New Mexico Courts have taken long strides to accommodate people's differences. Now it is now time to implement the next step: Scribing."



SCRIBING SERVICES' IMPACT ON COURT USERS



Grace Fair (pictured above) qualified for scribing help with the paperwork on her case due to disability and low literacy. Ms. Fair had this to say about the program:

"I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciate the support that we got from District Court on getting Guardianship of my great-grand-babies. I tried about two years ago; I have tried five different times trying to get Guardianship of these children. I have had them since they came home from the hospital, and I filled paperwork out and took it in and nobody could help me. They kind of put up their hands, like a brick wall between me and the person trying to help me.

And so I went to CYFD and they gave me paperwork and I filled those out three different times, brought them to the

court, and only to be told that these were the wrong papers and y'all could not help me, and was finally told that y'all had packets that I could purchase. I purchased a packet and CYFD helped me fill those out and I came back in and you told me that it was wrong and after awhile I threw my hands up.

And then I went in and you told me about a pilot program and I was so happy that you told me about it. But before I went in I told someone that I was going to panhandle at Wal-mart and I hope that it didn't embarrass my family and my friends if they saw me panhandling, because I needed money. I would do anything to keep these babies and I came into your office and you told me that there was a pilot program and you took the paperwork that I had and you showed me how to fill it out and you let me fill it out with my knowledge and by doing that I was able to get permanent guardianship of two of the babies and one temporary guardianship.

I don't know what we would have done if it would not have been for this pilot program. I just want to tell you how much I appreciate it. Now we are able to go to the welfare and fill out an application for these children and maybe we can get some help to raise these babies. I just want to tell you thank you very much, I love you all very much for helping me. This has been a joy."



María Rivero (pictured above) and **María Morales Dimas** are two court users who qualified for the scribing service due to Limited English Proficiency. They were kind enough to return to the court to answer some questions about their experiences, which we have translated from Spanish:

Q: *How was your overall experience with the scribing pilot program?*

MR: *My overall experience was good.*

MMD: *My experience was that at the time I entered the program, I found a complete solution to my situation.*

Q: *Before the scribing program, what was your experience*

as a pro-se filer?

MMD: *It was a frustrating, despairing, and totally stressful experience.*

Q: *Before the scribing program, where did you find help with your forms?*

MMD: *I didn't find help, and the "help" that was offered to me was not free of charge. I paid in every way, and even still it was refused for being filled out wrong.*

Q: *After the scribing, how long did it take to have your documents completed and ready for filing?*

MMD: *The process was completed the moment the personnel helped me, and we waited a month for the answer and then the resolution was ready.*

Q: *Would you recommend the Court permanently implement the scribing program?*

MR: *I believe the program would be a great benefit to the citizens of Roosevelt County.*

MMD: *Definitely yes. It was very comforting to find answers and an immediate solution to my problem.*

BILINGUAL DV-DR FORMS



DV & DR FORMS LAUNCHED

“After years of hard work and dedication by the Translation Project Team, the Domestic Violence (DV) bilingual forms were approved by the Supreme Court and implemented by all the District Courts throughout New Mexico in 2018. The DV forms can be filled out in Spanish and then filed with the court if the party chooses. This allows greater access to our courts for those people who don’t speak or read English proficiently. We implemented the Domestic Violence forms first because of the safety and sensitivity of these cases.

The Domestic Relations (DR) forms have also been translated and are available to the public. However, the DR forms are read-only and cannot be filed with the courts in languages other than English at this time. The Translation Project Team is going to fully assess the implementation of the bilingual DV forms prior to making any further recommendations to the Supreme Court.

Thanks to the Supreme Court, the Translation Project Team, Paula, Pip, the translators and everyone else who helped on this very important project for the people we serve on a daily basis in our courts.” - **Weldon J. Neff, Chair, NM Judicial Translation Project Team & CEO, Eleventh Judicial District Court**

“Having been actively involved with and in attendance at numerous meetings in 2018 with regards to AOC’s project, I am proud to say that this project has been very successful in our district. Our Court had some doubts in the beginning on how well this project would work; however, it’s been an easy transition on our end with the paperwork, but more importantly it’s been of great service to our litigants that don’t speak English. They’ve been able to walk through our Domestic Violence process with ease and with very few or no complications. I believe by implementing this project, we are serving our Self Represent-

ed Litigant community better and showing them that as a judicial agency, we care.

The Translation Team has been phenomenal. I can’t express my gratitude for their dedication to their work and getting the translations done in such an expedited manner.

Thank you AOC for your hard work and dedication to getting this project up and running.” - **Audie Rivera, Administrative Assistant 2, First Judicial District Court**

Training



The AOC hosted a two-day training on the bilingual forms, domestic violence and language access on May 31 and June 1, 2018 in Albuquerque. DV Staff Attorney Patricia Galindo obtained Violence Against Women Act funds that enabled us to cover travel, hotel and per diem for court staff from all over the state. More than 70 DV clerks and Language Access Specialists attended the training.

For those who were unable to make the training, it is available in video format at: <https://www.nmcenterforlanguageaccess.org/cms/en/training/language-access-specialist-certification>

Additionally, Language Access Senior Statewide Program Manager Paula Couselo led raining sessions for the leadership and staff of each individual District Court prior to each court’s forms launch.

“I feel like having the translations process has helped our Court tremendously. In the Lea County area, the main non-English language is Spanish and it is a highly common language. Now that we have the capability of sending the forms from our non-English speaking customers out to be translated, it has not only made processes easier but it makes the public feel more comfortable with what they are doing. Oftentimes Court matters can seem scary and uncomfortable, especially if you speak a non-English language. I truly feel like having this service available helps put the public at a little more at ease.

I have had nothing but good experiences when sending documents off to be translated. The staff is extremely polite, quick to respond, and doesn’t hesitate to ask any questions that they may have. Often times I receive the translations back within 30 minutes and if it is expected to take a little while longer, I am notified of such. I commend this process and feel like it better helps us serve the public.”

- **Jenifer Salcido, Judicial Specialist Senior, Fifth Judicial District Court**

“Thank you. I forget I am part of something very important. Thank you for the reminder!”

- **Training attendee**

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM AT THE SECOND JD



“Having the bilingual forms available for our Spanish-speaking community is a great benefit. The bilingual forms can be filled out without the need for an interpreter/translator, which eliminates a barrier for Self Represented Litigants who are Spanish-speaking.

Enlace Comunitario clients that contact us for help to fill out the forms are accommodated to see a case manager or legal advocate, since their emotional state might make it hard to complete the forms on their own. I have used the bilingual forms in such circumstances, and it makes it easier to read an accurate translation of the form to the clients. Having a bilingual form a client can refer back to in order to understand the contents of their requests and information is also vital.

I have seen some bilingual forms filled out by clients going directly to the courthouse to request immediate legal remedies. In my opinion, Spanish-speakers could feel included and welcomed by the judicial system when they know about or use the bilingual forms. “ - **Maria Ceballos, Legal Advocate, Enlace Comunitario**

Enlace Comunitario is a social justice organization located in Albuquerque whose mission is to eliminate domestic violence in the Latino community and promote healthy families in New Mexico through comprehensive intervention and prevention services in Spanish.

ReadWest provides quality one-to-one tutoring to adults in Bernalillo and Sandoval county seeking to transform their lives through enhanced literacy skills.

Enlace Comunitario has been training ReadWest volunteers to assist Self Represented Litigants with scribing domestic violence forms in the Second Judicial District Court.

“The inability to read limits people’s ability to obtain and understand essential information to function in society. Interpreting bus schedules, deciphering a prescription dosage, filling out forms and applications pose daily challenges for the adult with limited literacy. Low literacy adults have no or low income due to limited job choices. 64% of all jobs require a 6th-grade reading level. In New Mexico, 46% of the population reads at or below a 5th grade level, limiting them to poorer quality jobs. Illiterate individuals have more workplace accidents, misuse medications, and take longer to heal because they cannot read.



The lack of reading ability is intergenerational. In some families, little value is given to reading and education in general. With no reading support at home, a child becomes a non-reading adult and the cycle begins again.

*Concerning the New Mexico Courts: providing reading, writing, and language assistance are essential. “Chuck,” an adult basic literacy student at ReadWest Literacy Program related his experience with being called for jury duty. He was handed a stack of papers to fill out concerning jury selection. After determining he could not understand the first few pages, he looked around for someone to help him fill out the forms. The other potential jurors were all busy completing the forms. Scanning the room, he saw no friendly face that could help. Embarrassed, he went to the woman who passed out the forms and confessed he couldn’t read. In our state, Chuck’s lack of reading is not uncommon.”- **Muncie Hansen, Executive Director, ReadWest***

“I believe by implementing this project, we are serving our SRL community better and showing them that as a judicial agency, we care.”

- Audie Rivera, Admin Asst. 2, First Judicial District Court

COLLABORATION WITH UNM

NEW PARTNERSHIP!



"I am available as a phone interpreter one morning a week for the UNM Law Clinic. It has been exciting to be able to help clients in a low-pressure environment and gain more experience interpreting. Although I would have liked to be on site working directly with the clinic and the clients, I am thankful to have the opportunity to help remotely. Interpreting over the phone presents a different challenge and any experience I can gain right now is vital for me. (I am still in the testing process and being able to practice in real situations is invaluable so I can have the confidence to go in and pass those tests!)" - Marie Blessing, NMCLA Student



"I have been volunteering to interpret for the UNM law clinic for a few months. In my experience, the people in need of these services are going through very difficult struggles such as custody battles, divorce, abuse. I have felt humbled to help them during a time of crisis. It certainly has felt that way. I feel that providing our service helps ease the stress a little bit. We are giving a voice to someone who otherwise cannot communicate. It has been a privilege to provide a service that may feel small but makes a big impact in someone's life." - Marissa Valenzuela, NMCLA Student



This year, the NM Center for Language Access (NMCLA) began a new collaboration with the University of New Mexico School of Law in Albuquerque. The partnership brings together law students working in the School's Community Lawyering Clinic with NMCLA's interpreters-in-training. In turn, both sets of participants (all of whom are volunteers) are brought together with low-income community members who need free legal and language assistance.

UNM Law School was among the first in the country to create a mandatory clinical component for its students, and the program has received national acclaim. The types of cases for which free assistance is offered include: Kinship Guardianship, Adult Guardianship, Immigration, Family Law, Housing, Domestic Violence and Juvenile Delinquency. Law students interview and counsel clients, conduct case research, complete paperwork and negotiate on the client's behalf.

For those clinic clients who do not understand English well, NMCLA's students are now available to facilitate communication between the clients and law students.

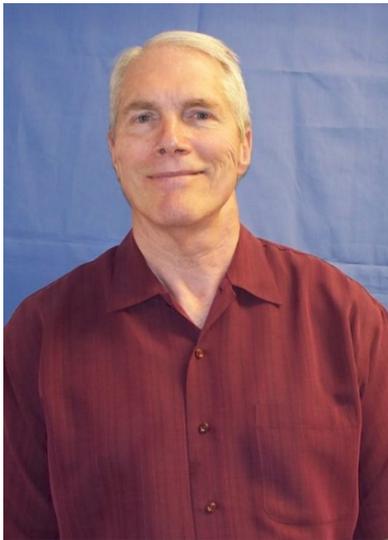
NMCLA's Justice System Interpreter (JSI) Certificate Program is for candidates who have little or no experience as court interpreters and will benefit from guided study and practical experience as they prepare

for their examinations. The new partnership with UNM Law School affords just such an opportunity for JSIs to gain practical experience, in a meaningful yet low-pressure setting. JSIs residing outside of Albuquerque can participate by phone or video, and are given an orientation session dedicated to remote interpreting.

Law students learn about the role of the interpreter and best practices for working with one: invaluable preparation for any attorney who will be practicing in the courtroom. Each semester, AOC Senior Statewide Program Manager Paula Couse-lo is invited to the law school to present on the legal bases for language access, how to work with interpreters and the role of the interpreter in the courtroom.



"I have been tremendously blessed to have been chosen to assist in volunteering with The UNM School of Law. I have been humbled and honored in meeting both the soon to be lawyers and the beautiful people they represent, support and help. I can say that I love interpreting." - Tatiana Trujillo, NMCLA Student



“We at JID are excited to be involved in such a worthwhile project. The coordination between Language Services, their contractors, and our Intranet provider, Real Time Interactive, seems to be going smoothly. We look forward to a productive year in completing this project. It is a great idea and very effectively placed on our Courts website.” - Pat Mente, Systems Manager, Judicial Information Division

Help us find a name for her!



What services are you looking for?

- [I need information about jury duty.](#)
- [I want to file a lawsuit.](#)
- [I need a form.](#)

[Back](#)

AVATAR PROJECT

COMING SOON!



AOC Language Access Services will be broadening the accessibility of our website at <https://languageaccess.nmcourts.gov> with the addition of an avatar!

Site users will be able to ask the avatar questions in writing and even verbally, and will receive a written or spoken response accordingly. The conversation can be conducted in English or Spanish. There will be a mobile as well as a desktop application.

The purpose of the avatar is to assist Self Represented Litigants to easily navigate the site in order to find the information they need. A typical question might be: “Where can I find the form for a domestic violence protective order?”

Thanks to its Spanish language command capabilities and its speech recog-

ognition technology, the avatar will improve accessibility for Self Represented Litigants who are:

- Limited English Proficient
- Low literacy
- Blind or low-vision

Los Angeles county traffic court uses an avatar, Gina, to assist website visitors. Inspired by Los Angeles’ example, New Mexico will now have its own avatar. **Help us find a name for her!** Send name suggestions to: aocpvc@nmcourts.gov

Check back in on <https://languageaccess.nmcourts.gov> throughout the coming months to witness this innovative work-in-progress becoming a reality!

“We are all excited about the avatar! I believe it will also bridge a generational gap between court users who did not grow up using a computer and those who are comfortable with the high tech world in which we live today.”

-Paula Couselo-Findikoglu, AOC Senior Statewide Program Manager

VIDEO REMOTE INTERPRETING (VRI)



Leo Gonzales of the Judicial Information Division (JID) is pictured here conducting a Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) equipment test. Language Access Services would like to extend its appreciation to Mr. Gonzales, Steven Sedillo, Nelson Morfin and Shawna Hochanadel at JID for their commitment to making this important project a reality.

“As a court in a less populated area, we have found the Video Remote Interpreting format to be of significant value. In our geographic location, it can be difficult to arrange for interpreters to be physically present. Janie Hernández, the Language Access Coordinator for this area, does a superb job in securing the interpreters in multiple languages needed. Her services and the VRI are invaluable.” - Karen Hill, Trial Court Administrative Assistant, Ninth Judicial District Court



I am very excited to say that remote interpreting has been a lifesaver.”

- Janie Hernández, AOC Language Access Coordinator, SE Region

The technology requirements for VRI are straightforward and not too demanding. At its most basic, all that is required is a Polycom video conferencing camera connected to a large-screen monitor at each location. With this configuration, the interpreter can see and hear the proceedings and interpret accordingly. The addition of a telephone will allow simultaneous or concurrent interpretation between the interpreter and the client, and therefore result in hearings conducted in a regular, conversational manner with few interruptions.

“VRI (as well as telephonic interpreting) has been a major game changer for the Southeast Region. It has made it possible for hearings that require languages other than Spanish to be covered. It has worked effectively and efficiently. VRI has helped the State of New Mexico save a lot of money, effort and time that would have otherwise been spent trying to get these jobs covered.

We have no interpreters in languages other than Spanish living in my rural region, and very few who are willing to travel here. I have utilized remote interpreters for American Sign Language, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Russian, Amharic, Thai, Arabic, French, Tagalog, Navajo and CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation).

American Sign Language interpreters have appeared from stations in Albuquerque or Santa Fe. Other remote interpreters have appeared from Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Las Cruces, and from coast to coast: from Washington State to Kansas; Oregon to New York. One of the languages covered has been Arabic, where we had a party appearing from Egypt while the interpreter was in New York and the judge and other parties were in Clovis.

We’ve been successful in making VRI work in the District and Magistrate courts in Carlsbad, Hobbs, Lovington, Portales and Clovis. We trained to have the capability of having interpreters interpret for two people (paired headsets) at the same time. Thank you to the Judicial Information Division in Santa Fe and to Bob Harrell (Ninth Judicial District Court I.T. Specialist) for helping ensure all these jobs were successful.



“The VRI technology is flexible and can accommodate multiple Polycom cameras, as well as several laptops equipped with webcams and microphones, all at the same time. Every participating location is automatically connected to the Judicial Information Division bridge. Using the free Polycam RealPresence PC software with the Internet Explorer browser, an interpreter equipped with a laptop need not be present at a camera-equipped court location. For example, a courtroom camera in Clovis, an interpreter at home in Seattle, and an attorney in her Las Cruces office can be joined into a single VRI session. In fact, a VRI session can be conducted without any Polycom cameras, even inside the courtroom.” - Bob Harrell, I.T. Specialist, Ninth Judicial District Court

ON-DEMAND VRI

On demand video remote interpreting (VRI) services for Sign and Spoken languages come in handy for walk-in customers and to assist the public outside the courtroom.

How does the system work?



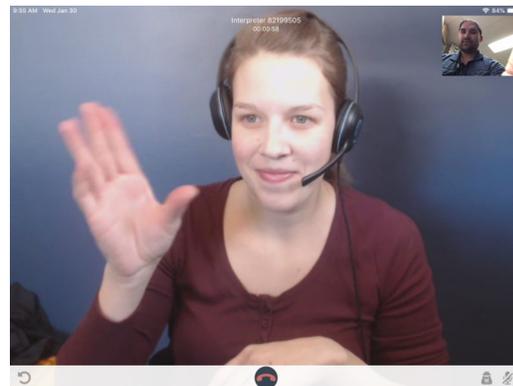
The service pretty much works like the current on-demand telephonic interpreting service or “1-800 number”: an interpreter becomes available almost immedi-



ately without the need to preschedule. The system is downloadable and court staff will create an account with their own credentials. When an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter is requested, the interpreter automatically appears via video. However, when a spoken language is requested, the caller has the option to select audio only or audio and video.

The service can be used on desktop computers, tablets and cell phones, as long as the internet connection is adequate. Courts using the service on a desktop must make sure that a camera, microphone and speakers are installed.

The cost for the service is covered by AOC Language Access Services; there is no cost to the court! If you'd like to have this service available at your court, please contact Josh Kahawai: aocjmk@nmcourts.gov



“Metro Court has been trying to use NIS [Network Interpreting Services] for matters that arise without prior notice or where we are in need of a language of lesser diffusion. On one occasion, we were able to connect directly to a Sango interpreter via an app on my iPad for an in progress hearing. This was an invaluable tool on that day, as our access to Sango interpreters is very limited. I appreciate that NIS is willing to provide services to our court in ways that are best suited for our needs, via video or through phone calls. They provide a long list of spoken languages, all of which are all accessible via the app or desktop login.”—Laura Chavez, Staff Interpreter, Bernalillo County Metropolitan Court

“In our geographic location, it can be difficult to arrange for interpreters to be physically present. [AOC's] services and the VRI are invaluable.”

- Karen Hill, TCAA, Ninth Judicial District Court



Council of Language Access Coordinators (CLAC) Conference

The national CLAC Conference was held in Austin, Texas on May 6-9, 2018. The theme of this year's conference was "Effective Communication is Key." New Mexico was represented at the event by Senior Statewide Program Manager Paula Couselo, NW Central Region Coordinator Peggy Cadwell, and NE Region Coordinator Eileen Spoonhoward.

Ms. Couselo participated in a session entitled "The Where, When and How of Using Bilingual Staff," which highlighted New Mexico's groundbreaking Language Access Specialist program. Additionally, she was part of the "Language Access Tools and Resources for Self-Represented Litigants" session, speaking about our state's bilingual Domestic Violence forms and the multilingual DV kiosks pilot project.

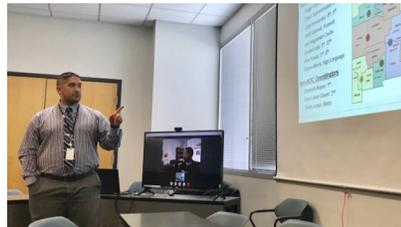
Ms. Cadwell delivered a presentation regarding New Mexico's experiences with establishing and developing centralized scheduling and invoicing systems.

Ms. Spoonhoward's presentation was titled "Effective Communication Strategies between Courts and the Language Access Program." She discussed New Mexico's language access plans; trainings offered throughout the year for both courts and attorneys; our annual report; the bilingual Judiciary website, and the Language Access webpage.

TRAINING

AOC Language Access Services staff continued to lead trainings and present at conferences throughout 2018.

Consecutive Interpreting Workshop



AOC Language Access Coordinators Peggy Cadwell and Eileen Spoonhoward led an all-day consecutive interpreting workshop on February 9, 2018. The session was targeted at current Justice System Interpreters with the hope of equipping these individuals to pass the test to become Certified Court Interpreters. The class included a practice test which the participants were able to record in order to self-assess on an ongoing basis.

The consecutive interpreting workshop



was followed by an overall beginning interpreter orientation on February 10, delivered by Ms. Cadwell, Ms. Spoonhoward, Senior Statewide Program Manager Paula Couselo and Management Analyst Joshua Kahawai. AOC was able to provide both trainings via video to an attendee participating from Florida.



Court Interpreter Orientation

Ms. Couselo and Ms. Spoonward also delivered a court interpreter orientation workshop on December 1, at the Santa Fe Magistrate Court. The workshop included intensive practice in the three modes of interpreting, tips for remote interpreting and instruction in interpreting for jurors. Attendees were afforded hands-on training when a mock jury trial was conducted. The mock trial granted interpreters the ability to practice their skills and work with their colleagues in an informative setting.

Coming Soon!



New judges training:

In New Mexico, over 50% of District Court judges have been on the bench for 5 years or fewer. Supreme Court Justice Gary Clingman has long championed training for new judges. New Mexico's annual new judges sessions have a practical orientation and are intended to impart best practices. Paula Couselo, AOC Senior Statewide Program Manager for Language Access Services, speaks every year and will do so again at the upcoming session scheduled for March 2019. The goal of Ms. Couselo's training is to familiarize judges with interpreter needs and with what services are available and how to utilize them in court.

As customary, AOC Language Access Services and our training branch, the NM Center for Language Access, will hold multiple language-neutral trainings suitable for both spoken and signed language interpreters in 2019. We will also continue to host our Language Access Specialist Symposium and to offer webinars for LAS continuing education credit.

NMCLA

The **New Mexico Center for Language Access (NMCLA)** is a program of the Administrative Office of the Courts, created with funding support from the State Justice Institute to ensure language access across the New Mexico justice system. The Center offers a variety of online training options for court interpreter certification candidates, bilingual employees of the courts and other justice system agencies and for already certified or working interpreters. Additionally, NMCLA offers consulting and custom training services for state courts and other agencies that need to provide language access under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

NMCLA is proud to be a source of employment for New Mexico: since 2009, the Center has been receiving students through Workforce Connections. Under the Workforce Investment Act, Workforce Connections funds qualifying candidates to undertake NMCLA's professional development and certification programs. NMCLA continues to strengthen its relationship with Workforce Connections to be able to reach more potential students and increase the pool of qualified interpreters available to the New Mexico courts. The combination of online and face-to-face instruction in NMCLA's programs enables us to reach a wide audience and offer flexible study while ensuring quality. In 2018, four NMCLA students were funded through the Workforce Connections partnership.



“As the Management Analyst and the Roswell District and Magistrate Courts interpreter coordinator, I am continuing to provide new and innovative approaches to improving language access in the courts. I am committed to ensuring the accuracy of our interpreting services by upholding the continuing education policy, professional conduct of our service providers, and mitigating any potential problems that would affect our mission.”

In order to meet our ongoing objectives, it is my responsibility to recruit, train, and certify potential interpreter candidates and increase our available resources statewide. This is done by successfully enrolling candidates in one of the training programs offered by NMCLA, which provide a realistic and strong sense of court interpreting. These candidates train hard to pursue their goals and it is my responsibility to assist in this process to the best of my ability.

Conducting the written and oral exams is another responsibility I take seriously. This is the final leg of the journey for our candidates and it will determine if certification is earned. In 2018, NMCLA administered 31 written exams, 33 simultaneous interpreting exams, and 32 sight and consecutive exams. Additionally, 14 candidates were recruited into the Justice System Interpreter program with successful completion.

NMCLA's Language Access Specialist (LAS) Certificate Program is designed to train and certify judiciary employees who are bilingual so they can provide language access within their courthouses in a limited capacity (non-courtroom settings). In 2018, the program trained and certified 17 employees across district, magistrate, and municipal courts, bringing the total to 121 LASs working statewide.

Language Access Specialists are required to acquire continuing education units (CEUs) in order to maintain their quality of language access and bilingual pay increase. CEU opportunities are prepared and administered by AOC Language Access Services. The LASs have also provided their services outside of the courthouse by helping with legal fairs that allow the public to receive free legal advice from attorneys and other specialized services.

As we continue to improve and grow our program with new and exciting innovations, it is my responsibility to ensure that such advances contribute to the quality of language access in the public communities and within our courts.” -Joshua Kahawai, NMCLA & AOC Language Access Services

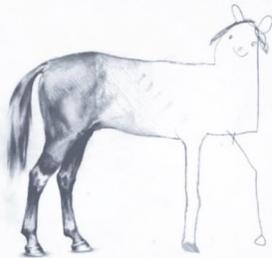
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<https://nmcenterforlanguageaccess.org>

TRANSLATOR SPOTLIGHT

We keep it accurate thanks to Texan Translation!

when your client asks



if you can do it cheaper...



"The implementation of the bilingual domestic violence and domestic relations forms and the fact that the courts now accept non-English pleadings in domestic violence cases increased the need for translation services. To meet this need, the AOC issued a request for proposals for translation services in the summer of 2018. Texan Translation was awarded the contract in the fall and since then, has been providing translation services of high quality with excellent turnaround times. These two factors are critical when handling court documents and pleadings.

"Texan Translation is a small, family-owned agency in. The contract manager is Marco Hanson, a New Mexico Certified Court Interpreter and American Translators Association Certified Translator. Marco used to be the Texas Language Access Coordinator and has delivered training presentations at the New Mexico interpreters' conference on multiple occasions.

A typical translation job might be a handwritten domestic violence protective order application in Spanish that is submitted by a court and emailed directly to the contractor. Within an hour (often much less) for Spanish or a day (for the occasional other language), the court gets back a certified translation in English for the judge's use.

When they're not handling these rush jobs, the team at Texan Translation works through a series of English into Spanish translations of webpages, forms, manuals and other materials intended for the public. Outsourcing both the translation and the project management frees up resources for AOC Language Access Services; using a single outsourcer helps maintain consistent quality, terminology and formatting across the AOC's multilingual content..." —Marco Hanson, Business Development Manager, Texan Translation.

"I've been reading the 2017 [LAS annual] report and it's inspiring! It's just a clearly well-planned, comprehensive effort." - Marco Hanson, Business Development Manager, Texan Translation

INTERPRETER SPOTLIGHT

Once again this year, AOC Language Access Services is dedicating a page to celebrating people without whom our work would be impossible: our interpreters! The skill, experience and dedication levels of these professionals are unrivaled and we are proud of and thankful for them all.

Our featured interpreter this year is **Freda Valdez**, who is based in Albuquerque and, in addition to working in her local district and metropolitan courts, interprets in the Northwestern, Northeastern and Southeastern regions of the state.



"Freda Valdez enrolled in the Justice System Interpreting Certificate Program in the Spring of 2015. She successfully completed the 26 week course and was eager to tackle the written and oral exams. Freda successfully passed the written exam on her first attempt in October of 2015. After continued study and hard work, Freda earned her certification as a Justice System Interpreter in September 2016. Since then, she has been providing excellent, professional interpreting services all over the State of New Mexico. She is also skilled in delivering

Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) services to those in remote locations. With her continued hard work, dedication to duty, and sense of urgency, Freda progressed to earn her certification as a Certified Court Interpreter in June of 2018. She has been and continues to be a remarkable interpreter by serving the public's needs with her exceptional skills and talent. New Mexico Language Access Services is proud to have Freda Valdez in our ranks." - Joshua Kahawai, AOC Management Analyst

"Freda is a true example of what it means to work hard and accomplish things. Freda started as a Justice System Interpreter and worked hard to progress to becoming a Certified Court Interpreter. Judges and staff admire her professional demeanor and respect for all participants. Always a professional and willing to help, Freda is a true pleasure to work with." - Peggy Cadwell, AOC Language Access Coordinator, NW Central Region

"It is a pleasure to work with Freda Valdez! She is dependable, professional and performs her job to the best of her ability. She is well-organized and very reliable. Freda has a good work ethic and friendly personality. She is always willing to be flexible and stay later than scheduled to cover her assigned cases. She is a valuable member of our court interpreter team!" - Rosa López-Gastón, Supervising Court Interpreter, Second Judicial District Court

"Freda Valdez is a great interpreter and person overall. Her perseverance in obtaining her certification is especially admirable. She not only worked hard and studied, she proactively sought information and assistance from available resources such as practice courses and peers. Freda continues to be as friendly, reliable, flexible and willing to work throughout the state as she was as a Justice System Interpreter. Her skills are improving more and more each day as she continues to build vocabulary and confidence while tackling those lengthier, more complicated trials. I as a coordinator know I can count on Freda to get the job done." - Eileen Spoonhoward, AOC Language Access Coordinator, NE Region

¡Hasta pronto!





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