



WASLI is committed to the development of the profession of sign language interpreting worldwide

United States of America

Name of association: Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID)

Report submitted by: Brenda Walker Prudhom, RID President-elect

What are the major challenges for interpreters in the United States?

- American interpreters are still affected by the ripple effect of the advent of the video relay service (VRS) industry and the governmental regulations that have been established. Rates paid to VRS companies have been lowered, leading to concerns from interpreters about VRS working conditions and loss of some jobs. Additionally, there is concern that the work for VRS puts nationally certified interpreters in direct conflict with their professional code of conduct.
- The understanding that the utilisation of certified deaf interpreters (CDIs) in various settings is essential continues to be a challenge with hiring entities. CDIs should be included in the interpreting team when the communication mode of a deaf consumer is so unique that it cannot be adequately understood by interpreters who are hearing.
- Job opportunities for interpreters have changed. While still in demand, community interpreting and educational interpreting have had trouble keeping pace with interpreter pay in VRS settings.
- Interpreters are still trying to find a balance in the type of work they do - trying to maintain health and safety and their earning potentials.
- The economy has been challenging for most Americans; the interpreting profession and RID has not been immune to this impact.
- Beginning June 30, 2012, hearing candidates for national certification must have a minimum of bachelor's degree to



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take a performance exam. Deaf candidates must have a minimum of an associate's degree.

- Interpreters must meet the minimum requirements of qualifications as mandated by their respective states' legislations.
- Interpreters continually have to educate the public about the role of a sign language interpreter

What have been RID's important achievements?

- Established the Deaf Advisory Council to ensure the foundation for deaf involvement within all levels of RID.
- Started the RID Government Affairs Program (GAP) which monitors activities at the local, state and federal level (Federal Communications Commission, Department of Labor, Department of Education, Federal Emergency Management Agency, General Accountability Office, Department of Justice, members of congress) that impact the interpreting profession; advocates for the interpreter perspective related to regulations; and collaborates with stakeholder and consumer groups.
- Reviewed and restructured the RID committee leadership structure to include new committees such as the Diversity Committee and Audit Committee.
- Started the development of the Emergency Preparedness Best Practices paper as per the motion passed at the 2009 RID National Conference.
- Developed and the membership approved two new standard practice papers: Educational Interpreting K-12 and Video Remote Interpreting
- Created a translation workgroup which will be reviewing RID publications and materials, both conference and non-conference items, and working with the membership to determine priorities for Spanish translation as well as developing a process.
- Started RID Cares, a program to give back to the community, which 1) donated RID Press books to the Illinois Fingerspelling Bee contest; West Ottawa Public Schools; Books for America; The Cape Coast School for the Deaf in Ghana; The Indiana School for the Deaf and the Deaf



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Education and Families Project at CSUN; 2) held a clothes drive to donate clothes to residents of Haiti as well as other causes; and 3) coordinated a volunteer group for 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance

- Created the NIC Task Force to look at all aspects of the certification system and determine if there are psychometrically sound alternative approaches that are feasible, practical and supportable. This task force will analyse the various duties of interpreters in all practice settings and formulate a new, enhanced and refined content outline of the occupation that will be used as the blueprint for future NIC examinations.
- Created the CDI Task Force to review the current structure of the exam, concerns and plans for next steps to ensure the exam reflects the current standards in the field.
- Implemented new educational requirements for all hearing interpreters which include (as of June 30, 2009) the minimum requirement of an associate's degree.
- The 2011 RID National Conference was held in Atlanta, GA, July 17-22, 2011.
- Created a strong social media presence with Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Over 11,300 followers on the RID Facebook page.
- RID Press published a new publication: *Team Interpreting: As Collaboration and Interdependence* by Jack Hoza, Ph.D.
- RID VIEWS was the recipient of the 2010 APEX award for Publication Excellence.
- Collaboration and partnering between RID and NAD and other stakeholder organisations continues.
- Membership continues to grow.

How can WASLI assist?

WASLI can continue to advance the profession of sign language interpreting worldwide by encouraging and supporting the establishment of national associations of interpreters in countries where they do not currently exist, supporting established national associations, serving as an information clearinghouse and resource to interpreters from around the globe and providing a forum for communication and information sharing across country lines. This



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service is invaluable, especially as new organisations are being formed and new issues, challenges and opportunities arise for the profession.

How can RID assist WASLI?

RID has a wealth of information available on the Internet (<http://www.rid.org/>) and has a membership comprised of individuals who are highly skilled and educated in the field of interpreting. RID, as well as individual RID members, can serve as resources to others. We can also share information about the cooperation and collaboration that has occurred between the USA's national interpreter association and the National Association of the Deaf, National Deaf Black Advocates and other stakeholder organisations.