



INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL INTERPRETERS ASSOCIATION

Leading the advancement of professional interpreters

September 2007 IMIA eNews

Calendar of Events

Many new events have been added since our last eNews! Please remember to check the most current list of events at <http://www.mmia.org/events/default.asp>

2007 Conference Updates – October 5 is fast approaching... There is still time to register!

The conference is just a few weeks away. If you haven't registered, there is still time! Most participants decide during the last weeks prior to the event, so you are not alone if you are just now making a decision to attend. If you are not from Boston, this is the best time of the year to visit, and if you are from Boston, why not stay at the Sheraton Prudential Center and simply enjoy this time in the heart of downtown Boston? We have made arrangements to make this a most memorable conference! Go ahead and register today at <http://www.mmia.org/conferences/confreg2007.asp>

Keynote Speaker; Dr. Howard Koh

Dr. Howard Koh is the Harvey V. Fineberg Professor of the Practice of Public Health, Associate Dean for Public Health Practice, and Director of the Division of Public Health Practice at the Harvard School of Public Health. In addition, he serves as Director of the Harvard School of Public Health Center for Public Health Preparedness, which promotes education about bioterrorism, pandemic influenza, and other emerging health threats. He is also Principal Investigator of the National Cancer Institute (NCI)-funded initiative MASSCONNECT (Massachusetts Community Networks to Eliminate Cancer Disparities through Education, Research and Training), a project to eliminate cancer disparities in underserved communities. He has also been active in the DAN bills before the Massachusetts State House which call for a state-based reimbursement system of medical interpreters. We are extremely pleased to have Dr. Koh speak to us at the conference.

Marc Rossi Entertainment 7:30pm-9:00pm

"Rossi has been building a reputation playing in truly diverse musical environs, from NuClassix and the Jimmy Guiffre 4 to Stan Strickland and Ascension and George Russell's Living Time Orchestra. His music is full of surprises."—Bob Young, Boston Herald. Marc Rossi was highly recommended, and this will definitely be a fun-filled and relaxed evening for interpreters to enjoy! For more information please go to www.marcrossi.com/

IMIA Interpreter of the Year Award

Each year an interpreter is selected for the IMIA Interpreter of the Year Award, the most prestigious award of the field. More information will be posted soon on our website, as well as an email blast soliciting nominations! Stay posted and start thinking of who to nominate!

Interpreter Department Tours

Certain hospital interpreting service departments are going to open their doors to medical interpreters, hospital administrators and healthcare providers registered to participate at the conference, on the morning of October 5th. Each hospital is going to offer one or two 1-hour sessions, limited to 10 participants per session. The participating hospitals are: Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston Medical Center, Cambridge Health Alliance and the Massachusetts General Hospital. For more information please go to <http://www.mmia.org/conferences/tours.asp> or contact Lulu Sanchez at lsanchez@partners.org

Hold Your Breath Film Presentation

In Hold your Breath, the tragic consequences of cultural miscommunication unfold in a dramatic race against death. Directed by award-winning filmmaker and physician Maren Grainger-Monsen, this haunting documentary exposes the poignant lash between ancient Islamic traditions and contemporary medical technology through intimate moments of anguish, frustration and hope. We will have the film presented, followed by a short Q&A session with Julia Haslett, co-producer. This will be an experience that will change you! For more information on this film, please go to: <http://medethicsfilms.stanford.edu/holdyourbreath/about.html>

Job Fair

This is an exciting opportunity for all conference attendees. You can participate as an employer or as a candidate. Employers sign up by filling an application form at <http://www.mmia.org/conferences/jobfair.asp> and any medical interpreter registered for the conference will be able to participate on-site by simply signing up at the conference Job Fair desk for an interview at the time slot allotted on a Sunday workshop session time as per our program schedule. There will certainly be a matching of needs and languages taking place, so employers will state which target languages they are in most need of and what they are looking for. Please do not forget to bring several copies of your resume if you are planning on participating! If you have any questions about the job fair, please email Rachel Herring at reherring@gmail.com

42 workshops to choose from!

The excellent cadre of workshops this year is due to an ever stricter selection process. The conference committee ensured

that the workshops provided the highest quality presentations in the field. We also promoted international speaker participation and as a result have speakers from Italy, Switzerland, Japan, Australia, Canada, and Ethiopia. In addition this year we also made a concerted effort to have fewer workshops to choose from per session (seven instead of ten) and more workshop sessions (six instead of four). We also requested that a few presenters present twice to enable more participants to participate in those sessions. We also made a concerted effort to distribute within each time slot presentations that represented all three tracks: professional development, language access/management issues, and health care topics. For a list of the workshops, see <http://www.mmia.org/conferences/Programschedule2007.asp>

Trainers Meeting

Are you a trainer, instructor of interpreters or a language coach? If so, please come to our Trainers Meeting at the conference. This will be a great opportunity for trainers to meet each other and network for further collaboration within the interpreter educator community. This meeting is open to all conference participants who are interpreter trainers or instructors. No need to RSVP; simply come to the meeting. Exact location of meeting will be posted on the final program booklet.

Corporate Member Meeting

Are you a corporate member? This is the opportunity for you to meet the other corporate members. This meeting will enable corporate members to network and to discuss what their specific needs are within the organization. Our hope is that corporate members can unite and collaborate to advance medical interpreting! No need to RSVP, simply come to the meeting. Exact location of meeting will be posted on the final program booklet.

Interpreter Associations Leaders Meeting

Interpreter Associations are meeting for the second time at the IMIA Conference. This meeting is important as it is the only venue in the country for different interpreters across the associations to meet and network for increased collaboration amongst themselves. Our hope is that increased contact will strengthen our field by creating a true national organized network of practitioners across the country. How can we work together? What can we learn from each other? In what areas can we avoid duplication of work? These are some of the interesting questions that leaders from interpreter associations will be able to discuss. For more information or if you know of an interpreter association that has not received an invitation, please contact Izabel Arocha at iarocha@challiance.org

Certification Forum to be held at IMIA Conference

The IMIA is proud to provide a forum to present what has been happening recently in regards to certification for medical interpreters. On Saturday, October 6, from 9:00am – 10:30am, conference attendees will have the chance to hear from key leaders in the field from various organizations speak about certification. Representatives from ATA, CHIA, IMIA, NCIHC, and RID will share their thoughts on moving forward with certification. Interpreters and other stakeholders from all around the country will be invited to submit their questions and comments on certification in advance of the session, to ensure inclusiveness and participation from all. **Are you interested in advancing certification efforts? If so, don't miss out on this important event!**

The IMA has its own telephone number now!

We are happy to announce that New England Medical Center has kindly donated to the IMIA a new number that members can call to leave messages. A sincere thank you to Yoshie Ngo, IMIA Director, for all the work she did to make this happen, and also to Nelson Wang, who approved this. Now members can reach Marzena Laslie by email at mmiaml@aol.com or by phone at 617-636-1798. Of course you can reach each board member individually by email, as email addresses are listed at <http://www.mmia.org/about/board.asp>

IMIA Executive Board Meetings

The IMIA Board would like to remind members that this administration was the first to post minutes online of all our past meetings at <http://www.mmia.org/about/minutes.asp> and that our future meetings are posted in advance at the end of the Executive Board webpage at <http://www.mmia.org/about/board.asp> and all members are welcome to attend.

IMIA Newsletter

Have you missed previous issues? Did you join our organization recently and wish to read about what has happened in the last year? The IMIA eNews has been published since August 2006. Past issues can be found at <http://www.mmia.org/about/minutes.asp>

International Translators Day is September 30th

St Jerome, a bible translator, has always been considered to be the patron saint of translators and interpreters throughout the world. For a long time, the days and weeks around September 30th have been used by translators and interpreters (and their hospitals, employers, or associations) to celebrate the occasion. Ever since FIT (International Federation of Translators) was established in 1953, St. Jerome's Day celebrations have been encouraged and promoted. It is exciting to see that International Translation Day has developed into a publicized event in our profession.

All over the world, translators and interpreters take the opportunity to think with pride of their work and their achievements. From year to year, more associations in a growing number of countries report on their activities. The IMIA will certainly celebrate it with many of you on October 5th at our Conference evening reception. What are you doing to celebrate? Hospitals and Interpreter Organizations around the country have planned multicultural dinners and parties, tabletop presentations, invited guest speakers, movies, awards, and more. If you'd like to share what you are planning to do, please send the information to Marzena Laslie, at mmiaml@aol.com and we will add these ideas to the International Translators Day webpage.

National Certification - Lessons Learned

Several important publications and presentations regarding certification that provide an excellent foundation for understanding the past efforts that have already taken place toward medical certification, as well as lessons learned from federal, state, and even international certifications and testing experts. Download them and read them today!

(1) **Final Report on the Pilot of a Certification Process for Spanish-English Medical Interpreters, Conducted in 2003**

This certification pilot used the Medical Interpreter Assessment for Certification (MIAC) prototype developed by the Massachusetts Medical Interpreter Association (MMIA, now the IMIA). In 2003, MMIA received some funding through the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC), from the Office of Minority Health (OMH). This funding supported a collaborative effort with the California Healthcare Interpreters Association (CHIA) to pilot a revised version of the prototype instrument that the MMIA, now the IMIA, had already developed. This pilot was the work of a group of dedicated volunteers. For the final report, please go to

<http://www.mmia.org/uploads/pages/118.pdf>

(2) **Certification of Health Care Interpreters in the United States: A Primer, a Status Report and Considerations for National Certification.** By Cynthia Roat, published by the California Endowment, September 2006. If you have not had a chance to read this report in the past few months, please do so in preparation for our conference. Do download the report, please go to <http://www.mmia.org/resources/NationalCertificatereport.asp> and click on *view article*. It is important that you know what we have learned from other certification efforts around the country.

(3) **Interpreter Certification Programs in the U.S.: Where Are We Headed?** By Nataly Kelly, published by the ATA Chronicle, journal of the American Translators Association, January 2007. Available for download at: <http://www.mmia.org/uploads/files/ATAChronicle-January2007.pdf>

(4) **Compilation of Presentations from Recent Certification Meetings** in May and June 2007 in Boston and Minnesota, respectfully, summarizing other lessons learned and important considerations as we move forward. Reports of the work done by participants will be forthcoming soon for each of these meetings. May 1st meeting presentations are posted on www.nmictf.org and we will be requesting speakers of the other presentations from Minnesota if they would be willing to let us post their presentations.

Where is the IMIA in its certification work?

Please read the **Final Report on the Pilot of a Certification Process for Spanish-English Medical Interpreters**, mentioned above, see

<http://www.mmia.org/uploads/pages/118.pdf>. We are interested in your observations and recommendations to the IMIA regarding our own efforts. This work continues to move forward. The IMIA Certification Committee/Executive Board retreat on July 13th 2007 established several action items. We plan to strengthen the structure of the organization to support certification efforts through organizational development work and the hiring staff for this project. We will develop an RFP to select an appropriate test developer to help create a "blueprint" based on what we learned from the Pilot. The "blueprint" will give us test-item specifications so that we can create a pool of equivalent test items for each section of the exam. Randomly selected items from the pool can be re-combined to produce several equivalent tests. The expectation is that same "blueprint" will be useful in developing test items in five other languages. To accomplish all this we will be fundraising aggressively. If you would like more information on IMIA Certification efforts, please contact Jane Kontrimas, Certification Committee Chair at jkontrim@bidmc.harvard.edu

Fundraising Committee News

The Fundraising Committee needs volunteers for the great work ahead for financial fundraising to strengthen the structure of the organization and for the development of blueprints of our medical interpreter certification tool for the next pilot, which will be administered in five more languages. The Fundraising Committee interviewed three companies, and on September 6th the Executive Board voted on selecting and commencing work with Pioneer

Fundraising (www.pioneerfundraising.com) to develop a comprehensive fundraising plan to meet all the needs of the organization, including the immediate needs of certification. The Fundraising Committee is open to any member who has experience or is interested in fundraising. We need all the help that we can get in developing a strong fundraising arm for our organization. If you are interested in joining the Fundraising committee, please email Cynthia Schenck at wandcschenck@juno.com.

Website Enhancements - Sample CV

Need help creating or updating your resume? Check out a new page in our website Member Section called “Sample CV”, which includes a template and resume tips. Your CV or resume is the first impression many employers will have before even seeing you in person. It is important to make that first impression. Therefore, we decided to put on the website a sample CV as a template for you to use if you are in the process of updating your resume. As you know, you can now upload your updated resume to the IMIA Interpreter Directory, so take this opportunity to do just that. Please go to <http://www.mmia.org/members/samplecv.asp>

Region I California Court Interpreters on Strike!

As of 8 a.m. Wednesday, September 5, 2007 hundreds of interpreters working in the Los Angeles and Santa Barbara Superior Courts are out on strike. After years of trying to deal with Region 1 and the Los Angeles Superior Court Administration and after battling at the bargaining table, interpreters exercised their ultimate right as workers, the right to strike. They report fears that the courts will try to bring in uncertified student interpreters to replace those on strike, and claim this strike was well planned and will be well executed. For more information, please contact: cfi@mediaworkers.org. Another contact is Silvia Barden, President of the California Federation of Interpreters.

Trainers Circle Call of August

On the last Friday of each month, trainers from around the country join to discuss language proficiency for medical interpreters. Christian Degueldre, ex-professor at Monterey Institute of International Studies, and currently professor at San Diego State University, was the guest speaker at last month's call. It was a great success. The next Trainers Circle Call will be on September 28, from 4-5pm EST. For more information, please contact Vonessa Costa at vonessa.costa@gmail.com

The ILR Language Proficiency Level Scale

In 1976, NATO adopted a language proficiency scale. By 1985, the U.S. document had been revised under the auspices of the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) to include full descriptions of the “plus” levels that had gradually been incorporated into the scoring system. (Since then, the official Government Language Skill Level

Descriptions have been known as the “ILR Scale” or the “ILR Definitions.”) Although specific testing tasks and procedures now differ somewhat from one agency to another for operational reasons, all U.S. Government agencies adhere to the ILR Definitions as the standard measuring stick of language proficiency.

The following proficiency level descriptions characterize spoken language use (speaking).

<http://www.govtilr.org/ILRscale2.htm>

The following proficiency level descriptions characterize comprehension of the spoken language (listening).

<http://www.govtilr.org/ILRscale3.htm>

The following proficiency level descriptions characterize comprehension of the written language (reading).

<http://www.govtilr.org/ILRscale4.htm>

The following proficiency level descriptions characterize written language use (writing).

<http://www.govtilr.org/ILRscale5.htm>

Skill Level Descriptions for Translation Performance

These Skill Level Descriptions are primarily intended to serve as guidelines for use in government settings. They are separate and distinct from the ILR Language Skill Level Descriptions for Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing. Translation is the process of transferring text from one language into another in writing. It is a complex skill requiring several abilities. Consequently, extreme care must be exercised in hiring translators or assigning translation tasks to interpreters who might not be qualified to translate. To do otherwise entails the risk that imprecise or even erroneous health information will be conveyed to patients.

<http://www.govtilr.org/AdoptedILRTranslationGuidelines.htm>

Another reliable source of information on guidelines for translation quality in healthcare can be found in the Hablamos Juntos website at

http://www.hablamosjuntos.org/sm/default.translation_basics.asp They just had an expert roundtable on September 13, 2007, in Washington DC in which the IMIA participated.

Article to Share

The New England Journal of Medicine recently published: Immigrants and Health Care — At the Intersection of Two Broken Systems (<http://ga3.org/ct/Z7AYWZ51bzKL/>). This personal account, by Dr. Susan Okey, describes her work with uninsured immigrants in Montgomery County, Maryland and discusses the inadequate state of health care and lack of access that affect this population.

Think Cultural Health

The Office of Minority Health at <http://ga3.org/ct/9dAYWZ51kXJ1/>, has launched a new Web page, Think Cultural Health <http://ga3.org/ct/9pAYWZ51kXJa/> that provides a wealth of

resources and information on the issues of cultural competence in health care and health care disparities. Check it out today!

Interpreter Inpatient Rounds

Do you know what an interpreter inpatient round is all about? Does your employer or training program prepare you for this patient advocacy service? Inpatient rounds are becoming more and more popular as a way for the organization to ensure an inpatient's language access. This guidance is based on the recommendations listed in "Best Practice Recommendations for Hospital-Based Interpreter Services" developed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health in 2003 (see www.mass.gov/dph/omh/interp/best_practices.doc). Since then, interpreters in many hospitals in several states have acted as patient advocates by providing patient education regarding patient language access and also providing patient and providers on the floor an opportunity to communicate at set times during the day. Some healthcare organizations have instituted this service once a day during weekdays, while others have been able to expand it to all shifts, 7 days a week. There will be a workshop on interpreter inpatient rounds (not to be confused with grand rounds, which are case presentations) at the conference.

Who's in Charge?

At a small community hospital, you're likely to interpret for doctors or surgeons, but at larger teaching hospitals, several doctors may be involved in your patients' care. Here's how to know who's who:

Department Chair - Oversees the unit and may handle high-risk cases.

Attending Physician - Board-certified doctors who oversees residents and is ultimately responsible for a patient's care.

House Physician - Fellows, residents and interns who have finished medical school and are in training. They are directly involved in a patient's care.

Fellow - A Board-certified physician in one specialty, this doctor is doing additional training in a subspecialty.

Resident - A doctor undergoing three to seven years of training to be board-certified in a specialty, such as pediatrics or cardiology.

Intern - A new MD in the first year of residency.

MITIO Obtains Accreditation from the National Accreditation Agency

Atlanta, GA (PRWEB) August 3, 2007 – The Medical Interpreting and Translating Institute Online (MITIO), an industry leader in online delivery of medical interpreting and translating education, announced that it has obtained accreditation from the National Accreditation Agency. The program uses Blackboard, a recognized leader in online course delivery as its platform. This platform allows for discussion of interpreting and translating related topics from

enrolled students across the nation and with professors online. To learn more, visit: <http://www.mitio.org>

Book of the Month

In light of this year's conference theme, *Pioneering Healthy Alliances*, this book is recommended to inspire you to understand the power of collaboration.

The Collaborative Leadership Fieldbook

By David D. Chrislip

When the landmark book *Collaborative Leadership* was first published in 1994, it described the premise, principles, and leadership characteristics of successful collaboration. The book outlined an innovative way of building partnerships to solve the civic problems too big for anyone to solve alone as well as a new type of leadership that brings together diverse stakeholders to solve a community's problems. While that book provides a much-needed framework for working together, *The Collaborative Leadership Fieldbook* offers nonprofit practitioners, community leaders, and public officials a practical, hands-on resource. It presents the tools needed for applying the lessons learned, powerful approaches that get results, and guidance for solving complex community problems. In clear and concise terms, the *Fieldbook*

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- Presents a wide range of tools and concepts that can be readily applied.

- Provides a comprehensive guide to collaboration from conception to implementation.

- Describes how to establish effective civic leadership development programs to support collaborative efforts.

- Contains stories and examples that clearly illustrate the book's concepts and tools.

- Helps readers find-quickly and easily-what they need for their specific situations.

David D. Chrislip is principal of Skillful Means. His work focuses on three areas: civic leadership development, collaboratively addressing complex community issues, and organizational strategy and development. He is the coauthor of *Collaborative Leadership: How Citizens and Civic Leaders Can Make a Difference* (Jossey-Bass).