

Tina Peña Elected 2012-2014 Chair of National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters.

The National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters enters a new phase in its evolution, with three main goals: 1) to raise awareness of the need for certified medical interpreters in hospitals and medical facilities as a patient safety issue; 2) expand access by offering more languages and testing sites; and 3) to greatly increase the number of certified medical interpreters in the US in the next three years.

Assisting the National Board to achieve the goals for its new phase are the newly elected Chair, Tina Pena, and Vice Chair, Ivaro Vergara-Mery. Elections were held during the National Board's annual May 1 meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Tina Pena is originally from Lima, Peru. She is an Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Spanish and Medical Interpreting programs at Tulsa Community College (TCC). Pena is a host of *Temas en Tulsa*, a television program produced in Spanish that covers current events and topics of importance to Spanish speaking viewers.

A TCC faculty member since 1992, Pena has pioneered the use of interactive television and distance learning to teach Spanish at TCC and has taught on the international campus, study abroad trips to Latin America and Spain. Pena is the Oklahoma State Chapter Chair of the International Medical Interpreter Association, a member of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese, United Nations of Eastern Oklahoma, Governor's Task Force for the Advancement of Hispanic Students in Higher Education, Oklahoma Latinos Presentes en el Centenario, ACLU, and is the 2007 Pinnacle Award Winner. She was recently named "Volunteer of the Year" for 2012 from the Tulsa Partners Language and Culture Bank.

"I believe that my local, statewide and national experiences have equipped me with a unique perspective that will enable me to lead the National Board. I also believe there is great potential for dramatically increasing the number of CMI's, both locally and nationally," said Tina Pena.

"Tina has shown remarkable dedication and commitment to supporting the work of the National Board and has demonstrated through her passion and many achievements that advancing the field through quality initiatives such as the development and implementation of a national standard for medical interpreters and other advancements in process are similarly aligned with that of the work of the National Board and other stakeholders," said Louis F. Provenzano, Jr. President and Chief Executive Officer of Language Line Services, one of the Co-Founders of Certification for Medical Interpreters and the National Board. "Tina is well qualified and deserving and I look forward to seeing where her leadership takes Certification for Medical Interpreters next."

The newly elected Vice Chair, Ivaro Vergara-Mery, Ph.D., CMI-Spanish, is a medical interpreter at University Medical Center, in Las Vegas, Nevada and originally from Chile. Vergara-Mery is a frequent presenter on certification at conferences nationally and internationally. His background in education, Spanish and his extensive experience as a medical interpreter have allowed him to design, develop, train and teach several classes focusing on medical interpreting and translation. He is the International Medical Interpreter Association Senior Medical Interpreter Trainer and the Nevada Chapter Chair and Vice-President of NITA (Nevada interpreters and Translators Association).

"Certification is being embraced by interpreters all across the country and they are very proud of achieving the status of Certified Medical Interpreter. My goal is to further the reach of certification and look internationally," stated Ivaro.

The National Board is very grateful to its former Chair Rita Weil, who acted as the Interim Chair since September 2011, and Giovanna Lester, who acted as Interim Vice Chair and Karina Craig, interim Treasurer, for the same period. These officers played important roles for the National Board at a very difficult time of growth and limited resources, which led to the merger with the International Medical Interpreters Association (IMIA). Dr. Weil will

remain as the National Board's new Secretary, Mrs. Lester and Ms. Craig remain as Directors and chair committees.

Astrid M. Hajjar, CMI-Spanish and Medical/Legal Interpreter and Translator, Boston, MA and Ken Anders, Chief Operating Officer, TransPerfect Tempe, AZ, are newly elected to the Board; they are already active on committees and making important contributions to the ongoing work. Samuel Pino, Language Access Supervisor, Salem Health, Salem, OR, is a new National Board adviser, along with former Board Member Inna Persits-Gimelberg, interpreter and interpreter educator, Boston, MA, both of whom serve on Board committees.

Bruce Merley and former Interim Secretary Rose Long have stepped down from the National Board and we very much appreciate their valuable service.

The National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters, June, 2012:

- Tina Pena, Associate Professor of Spanish and Coordinator of Spanish Program, Tulsa Community College, OK CHAIR
- Ivaro Vergara-Mery, Ph.D, CMI, Trainer and Interpreter, Univ. Medical Center of Southern NV, Las Vegas, NV VICE CHAIR
- Rita Weil, Ph.D, Freelance Medical Interpreter and Educator, PA SECRETARY
- Ken Anders, Chief Operating Officer, TransPerfect Remote Interpreting, Tempe, AZ
- Karina Craig, Freelance Medical & Community Interpreter, CO
- Ricardo Diaz-Canedo, MD, CMI, Physician and Certified Medical Interpreter, CA
- Janet Erickson-Johnson, MA, CMI, Director, Interpreter Certification, Language Line University, Monterey, CA
- Eric Hardt, MD, Physician, Boston Medical Center, MA
- Astrid Hajjar, CMI, Medical/Legal Interpreter and Translator, Boston, MA
- Giovanna Lester, C.T., Freelance Medical and Conference Interpreter, FL
- Rep. Seneca Scott, (D), Oklahoma Legislator, Tulsa, OK
- Inna Persits-Gimelberg, Interpreter and interpreter educator, Boston, MA ADVISOR
- Samuel Pino, CMI Language Access Supervisor, Salem Health, Salem, OR ADVISOR
- Linda Joyce, MS, CMI, Interpreter, Walton, WV EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The National Board needs assistance to further its objectives, and is looking for volunteers. If you are passionate about language access in healthcare and are interested in working as a volunteer for the organization, please email info@certifiedmedicalinterpreters.org. The National Board has proven ideas on how to move the process forward to enable all providers and patients to work safely with certified medical interpreters.

About the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters

The National Board is a special division of the IMIA and has independent authority over all essential certification decisions. It is the first national certification body developed by interpreters that has as its home the only national medical interpreter association. This means the National Board has 501c3 public charity status, the non-profit status that ensures activities are for the public good. The National Board developed the first comprehensive national medical interpreting certification program in 2009. The purpose of certification is to ensure limited English proficiency patient safety by rigorous evaluation and assurance of the competency of medical interpreters, through written and oral exams. Those who pass the written and oral exams are bestowed the CMI credential which stands for Certified Medical Interpreter. For more information, visit www.certifiedmedicalinterpreters.org

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Description

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Summary

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