



April 2011 e-NEWS RID REGION V REPORT: Sacramento Valley RID, San Diego County RID & Nevada RID

Submitted by: Dawn Bolduc
Region V Representative

Greetings Region V Members, Colleagues and Friends,

This month we have the pleasure of reading information from Sacramento Valley RID, San Diego County RID and Nevada RID. As a council, the Region V Presidents decided that they would like to tell you how their affiliate chapter strives to create a feeling of community within their respective chapter. We are also going through elections for several of the affiliate chapters in Region V. Within the RID eNEWS, you can look forward to “meeting” new board members.

Happy reading!

Best,
Dawn J. Bolduc

Sacramento Valley RID (SaVRID)

There are many reasons why Sacramento is a wonderful place to grow as an interpreter! SaVRID is a very community based affiliate chapter that strives to make its community members and stakeholders feel like assets within the organization. We create a feeling of community within the organization by recognizing that diversity brings strength and experience to the membership. SaVRID provides professional development for students by pairing them with experienced interpreters and creates bonds with many deaf organizations/companies around the Sacramento area, including California Association of the Deaf (CAD) and Northern California Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing. SaVRID is an active and engaged group where experienced interpreters are readily available and eager to mentor the new ones. Our members are supportive and inclusive. We encourage one another and celebrate each other’s achievements as a group. We co-sponsor fundraising and community events to further solidify our partnership and promote unity with stakeholders in our region. SaVRID brings diverse, yet powerful presenters to the Sacramento area for our members so stay tuned for upcoming events, both professional and just plain fun!

Meet the SaVRID Board...

Erica West Oyedele – President

Erica is a certified interpreter in the beautiful Sacramento area where she was raised. She graduated from the interpreter preparation program at American River College in 2004, and since that time, she has volunteered her time within amazing organizations, such as the National Alliance of Black Interpreters and SaVRID. She works as an interpreter and interpreter coordinator, as well as a mentor. She has worked as an interpreter in both staff and freelance settings and loves the freelance world because of

the opportunity it gives her to constantly meet new people and stay on the go. In addition, she has gone back to school at Sacramento State University to pursue her bachelor's degree in Deaf Studies. Although she keeps busy with work and school, she is sure to make time for her loving husband, Dare, and their two, four-legged kids, Charlie and Hailey.

Hugh Lafler – Vice President

Hugh Lafler is Vice President of SaVRID, and he currently works as a Coordinator for the BEST program (vocational training) at Northern California Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NorCal). For the past 12 years, he has worked with deaf/hard of hearing adults with the goal of working with them for job-ready skills. His interests include numerology, politics, sports, books, movies and hanging out with friends.

Caleb Lopez – Treasurer

Caleb has been involved with the Deaf community since 1995 when he started working in his native country, Colombia, as an interpreter. His interest in sign language began when deaf members in attendance at his church did not have interpreting services. He received a bachelor's degree in Finance in Colombia in 1996 and an associate degree in Deaf Studies and Interpreting from American River College in 2008. He has been a member of SaVRID since 2004 and RID since 2006. He has also been involved with Mano a Mano, a national organization that focuses on trilingual interpreters (English, ASL and Spanish). Caleb co-chaired the 2009 Mano a Mano National Conference in Philadelphia and is working with RID and Mano a Mano for the trilingual track that will be offered in this year's conference in Atlanta, GA.

Nancy Kozicki – Secretary

Nancy's interest in interpreting started in 2000 when she became a relay operator/auxiliary trainer for MassRelay in Holyoke, MA. After three, short and enlightening weeks of learning about Deaf culture, Deaf history and the basics of sign language, she decided to pursue the language in-depth. Her ASL instructors were Lee and Diane Nettles, and in 2005, she earned her bachelor's degree from Elms College in Chicopee, MA. Wanting to learn more, Nancy pursued an associate's degree from American River College in Sacramento and graduated in 2008 from the interpreter preparation program. During these 11 years, she volunteered at many events and has passed the NIC Knowledge exam. She has met many influential people and is very thankful for their support over the years. She ran for secretary of SaVRID to give back to the community. Nancy loves to travel, and her favorite places to visit are America's National Parks. Nancy's goal one day is to use her skills to interpret for those traveling to enjoy nature's beauty as well.

Sarah Blanchard – Member at Large (Fund Development Chair)

Sarah is a recent graduate of the interpreter preparation program at American River College in Sacramento, CA, and has been working as an interpreter for almost a year. She is finishing up some required classes this spring while getting ready to transfer to University of California in the fall. (Not sure which one yet, as she is still waiting for those acceptance e-mails!) Once she transfers, she will be working toward her bachelor's degree in Art. Sarah is also getting ready to take the NIC Performance exam before the end of this year.

Jennifer Thomas – Member at Large (Publishing Chair)

Jennifer has been interpreting professionally for four years since her graduation in 2007 from the interpreter preparation program at American River College in Sacramento, CA. Though she came to interpreting later in life, her exposure to ASL came in early childhood. Her uncle married a fabulous deaf woman who taught the ASL alphabet and

other signs to her, her sister and cousins. She is especially grateful to her aunt for planting the seed that has led her to this profession that she dearly loves! Jennifer lives in Sacramento with her wonderful husband, Dustin, and their "son," an adorable, loving, 14-month-old yellow Lab mix, Colby Jack.

Jobina Navratil – Member at Large (Professional Development Chair)

Jobina is from the sunny Sacramento area (although sunny has not been the name of the game lately!). She is a child of a deaf adult (coda) and has been interpreting professionally for about the last 10 years. She is also currently pursuing her master's degree in Instructional Communication. When asked the question, "what do you do for fun?," her response is usually something like, "Who has time for fun?! I am in school!" But truth be told, she loves school and higher education. Jobina thinks that any education you receive is valuable to you as an interpreter whether it be in the traditional classroom setting or hands-on, real world application.

Amie Cuevas – Member at Large (Membership Chair)

Amie recently graduated from the American River College interpreter preparation program in Sacramento, CA, in May 2010. She has an associate degree in Liberal Arts and an associate degree in Sign Language Interpreting. She initially became interested in American Sign Language as a Girl Scout. Upon taking her first ASL class in 2005, she fell in love with the language all over again. She found her passion and decided to become an interpreter and has been on that path ever since. Amie is currently working full-time in an accounting office, part-time as an interpreter at American River College, and continues to receive mentoring from community members while working on eventually transitioning completely into the interpreting field. She has taken and passed the NIC Written exam and is awaiting the results of the NIC Performance exam. Amie loves being part of SaVRID because she gets to give back to this amazing community and, for her, it feels like being part of a huge extended family.

San Diego County RID (SDCRID)

*Submitted by Mala S. Poe, Ed.S., CI and CT, NAD IV
President*

SDCRID is fortunate enough to be in a location where we do not have to travel across the state to attend meetings or social events. As president, I am very proud to say that our more than 200 member-run- organization is a big community. While we do not all work in the same settings or locations, we have many opportunities to grow intellectually and personally together. Cheryl Moose recently wrote an article for The European Federation of Sign Language Interpreters (EFSLI) newsletter titled, "The Strength of an Association is as Strong as its Members." This is very applicable to San Diego County and its members. In recent years, our organization has created a professional community that is ever-growing.

Allow me to brag a bit... Over the last few years, our Interpreter and Deaf Community Representatives established interpreter Think Tanks and Deaf Community Forums. These two forums attract professional interpreters, students, teachers and those who just want to see "what's happening." Through these activities, SDCRID's board learns about what the collective community wants, needs and desires. Through these forums, we now have ongoing trilingual, video interpreter and educational interpreter meetings. The student representatives also have been soliciting feedback from their colleagues, and together they have provided workshops, dinners and panel discussions. Our first government affairs program meeting is right around the corner!

These meetings are in addition to the 20 hours of professional development we provide, the successful Mentorship Program that we sponsor and the 'just because' social gatherings that are currently in the works.

As a participant at many of these meetings, I ask members if they feel our chapter creates a feeling of community, and here are some meaningful thoughts: "I seem to always see experienced members of the community approach newcomers to the general meetings to find out more about them. This also happened to me. It started with one, then a second member came up and then a third. They were very welcoming."

A student states, "Even with the disparity in language level and cultural knowledge between experienced members and some student members like myself, I have never seen anyone be cruel. That kindness alone can be such a supportive element for early members while we build our foundation."

I know that part of the job as president is to try and engage as many members as possible, welcome new people and 'work the room' when we have meetings. I think this job is easy in the sense that many of our board members and chairpersons are from diverse groups and are very approachable. We, as a community, are able to voice opinions and find support for each other easily.

I think one of our board members summed it up quite nicely, "While there may not be one community of SDCRID, we have created a special niche where everyone has the opportunity at some point to feel that they belong, their opinion counts and they are valued for who they are and what they can offer."

Nevada RID (NVRID)

*Submitted by Michael Bodak, CI and CT, Ed:K-12
President*

NVRID prides itself on catering to ALL aspects of our membership. We have board members present information to the College of Southern Nevada Interpreter Preparation Program students to tout the benefits of NVRID. Our workshops and social events are e-mailed to the school districts to invite our members that specialize in educational interpreting. In addition, we have a wonderful relationship with our organizational members who promote and sponsor our events. By offering workshops every other month, it allows us the flexibility to tailor our workshops to the needs of our specific membership categories and ensure that our members have a plethora of choices and opportunities. NVRID strives to include all of its members and knows that we can learn something from the student just starting their path to the interpreting profession, to the seasoned veteran with a wealth of knowledge, and all points in between!