

# The Deposition Reporter

DEPOSITION  
REPORTERS ASSOCIATION  
OF CALIFORNIA

JUNE 2021

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

MARY E. PIERCE, CSR NO. 6143 *CalDRA* PRESIDENT

It's difficult, at best, to write your first newsletter address as President of CalDRA on the heels of the unexpected loss of Monyeen Black. As the years went by and I had more and more contact with Mo, we became friends who could count on each other for a referral, a collaboration about how we each ran our little agency or just an insightful chat about things in general. But when it came to serving on the board and moving up the chain, Mo was not just a valued resource for me, but also a personal mentor. I wouldn't typically ask someone ten years younger than I to be my advisor, but with Monyeen at your disposal, it was a no-brainer. Her calm but resolute determination, her wealth of knowledge and energy, her confidence in her position, yet a willingness to listen to what others think are all indications of effective leadership.

I have come to know that the board members of CalDRA – both present and most certainly past – are a wealth of professional knowledge and generosity about not just how to excel in a difficult career, but how to serve that career and those who love it in a meaningful and distinguished manner. As I take the helm of this wonderful association, I know that I stand on the shoulders of giants that stood here before me.

So as we sail past the one-year mark of a dramatic change in how we do business – even how we live our lives -- I find myself embracing more tightly everything that CalDRA has meant to me over the years. The camaraderie and selfless assistance of not just board



THE NATION'S LARGEST TRADE  
ASSOCIATION DEDICATED TO  
THE FREELANCE  
DEPOSITION REPORTER

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# MEET CALDRA'S 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Each year, CalDRA's Nominating Committee performs the important work of selecting a group of qualified individuals to serve on its Board of Directors. These appointments are crucial to the continued success of the organization in carrying out CalDRA's mission: striving to preserve and enhance the freelance stenographic reporting profession, ensure its integrity, and maintain its standards and impartiality wherever stenographic services are required.

Without further ado, we are pleased to introduce the 2021 CalDRA board of directors. A big congratulations to all those selected! CalDRA's future looks very bright indeed.

## OFFICERS



### PRESIDENT

**MARY PIERCE** CSR No. 6143

I am truly honored to continue in the role of President of CalDRA. I have served on the DRA Board for the past 35 months, and in that time I have had an insider's view of the goings-on within the largest and, arguably, most effective state association for deposition reporters in the country. Sometimes I wish it were possible for members to see all that goes on behind the scenes, how many hours your board members – past and present – put in on your behalf and on behalf of the profession that we all love. The teamwork that goes into a single enote is remarkable to witness.

To be asked to be a part of that group is deeply humbling and flattering, as you are asked to bring your voice and your ideas to the table. It's especially humbling when you know who sat in those chairs before you, from Toni Pulone to Holly Moose to my dear friend, Monyeen Black, and so many more who have served their years on the Board, and it motivates me to rise high enough to perhaps clutch their ankles. In fact, I will dedicate this year as President to making Mo proud of me and my leadership. I will endeavor to serve with an unwavering commitment, enthusiasm and perseverance for those difficult-to-attain goals and a fierce tenacity when our livelihood is threatened.

Both membership and service in DRA has enriched my professional life through enhancements in my knowledge of court reporting laws and practices, technology, and techniques to become a better writer, which I've found incredibly valuable as an aging reporter. But the most valuable thing I have gained is a community of friends and trusted colleagues that I deeply cherish. I hope to honor you all with my service as your President. And maybe, just maybe, inspire a few of you to serve.



### PRESIDENT-ELECT

**JAMIE ASBURY** CSR No. 13308, CCRR, CLR

I would truly like to thank the membership and especially the nominating committee of CalDRA for extending to me the opportunity to continue serving with our Board of Directors as President Elect. Brainstorming and collaborating with this distinguished group of freelancers and/or agency owners is truly a rewarding experience.

I have served on the Board of Directors for the last three years, starting as District 5 Representative. Through my years of organizing events such as the Annual Student Picnic, district happy hours, and seminars, I've been rewarded with the chance to network with our members. I feel aligned with my constituents' concerns surrounding our industry and what the future holds. Continuing to advance our technological skill set is paramount as we look to another year of remote work largely being requested. Also, creating and presenting invaluable information, materials, and content for future seminars is a challenge I look forward to achieving.

During the 2021 term, I will strive to enhance my leadership skills through the art of delegation and focus my attention on upcoming important legislative efforts that will carry us into 2022.

I remain eager to represent you and my beloved court reporting profession!

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# MEET CALDRA'S 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## VICE PRESIDENT/TREASURER

**LORI STOKES** CSR No. 12732, RPR, CRI

This is my third year on the board, and I am honored to have stepped into the role of vice president. I am truly looking forward to it. We have a smart, dynamic group of reporters serving this term, and I am really excited to be supporting Mary Pierce in her role as president.

I'm eager for things to get back to normal and to be able to spend time with my colleagues again. We will continue to work hard to protect freelance reporters, a profession I have loved being a part of for the past 20 years.



## SECRETARY

**MOLLY COOPER** CSR No. 14313, RPR

I am grateful and thrilled to have been elected to serve as secretary for CalDRA. This organization and its members have been a source of guidance and inspiration for me since my first student picnic. I've gained friends and mentors and am excited to be able to collaborate with colleagues whom I admire and appreciate. My background is in linguistics and education, and I've been reporting depositions and arbitrations for nearly two years in the LA and OC areas.

Since becoming a professional, I've volunteered and co-chaired on different court reporting committees, and I've learned a lot through being actively involved. As secretary, I will serve to the best of my abilities, and I will be able to build a strong foundation of knowledge that can be utilized and strengthened for years to come. I'm excited for all there is to learn.



## DISTRICT 1

**SARAH MACDEVITT** CSR No. 14175, RPR

**Counties Representing:** Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Mendocino, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano and Sonoma

I am extremely honored and excited to serve as CalDRA District 1 Director this year. I have served as the Secretary for the board the last two years. During that time, I have also been the chair of the mentorship committee and been involved in several other committees, including legislation and convention.

For those of you who don't know me, I am a freelance realtime reporter covering the Bay Area. I have been reporting since 2017. I am constantly improving my skills on the machine and learning new tips and tricks to take advantage of the technology available to us as stenographers. One of my favorite things about this career is that the learning and improving never stops; there is always something to work towards. I take great pride in my professionalism and my ability to turn in a beautiful, readable transcript. I was mentored by one of the greats, Mrs. Monyeen Black, and will continue to use the wisdom she instilled in me to represent our district and do everything I can to help protect our wonderful profession.

On a personal level, I am newly married to an amazing, supportive man. We are currently expecting our first human child, a daughter. I am already planning her journey into this profession! We have our dog child, Bella, who is seriously a saint. I don't know how we got so lucky with her. Our cat, Walter, is a character and more vocal and demanding than Bella. When I am not reporting, I love to spend time with my family, just enjoying their company, maybe going on an adventure to a new trail or watching a good movie. I love sushi and love trying new sushi restaurants. My favorite hobby, though, is reading. Give me a pile of books and I will keep busy for days.

This year will be very different for many reasons, most of all the loss of our beloved Monyeen Black. I just want to give thanks for everything she did for this association, the profession, and for her mentees. We love you and miss you, Mo, and we will make you proud. I look forward to seeing what we can get done this year.

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# MEET CALDRA'S 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## DISTRICT 2

**VERONICA GUERRERO** CSR No. 14129

**Counties Representing:** Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Inyo, Kern, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne, Tulare, Yolo and Yuba

Although I've only been reporting for under five years, serving on CalDRA's Board of Directors has been a highlight of my reporting career. Interacting with members always brightens my day. And I'm so grateful to have this large network of kind professionals imparting their wisdom.

Court reporting, although immensely challenging, has been a dream career. From crazy, intense full days to short hearings, I always love interacting with new people and getting that short glimpse into their lives. More now than ever, being a deposition reporter provides reliable, honest work for an independent person such as myself, enabling me the opportunities to travel freely, purchase a home, and provide my dogs the lives they deserve.



## DISTRICT 3

**LINDSAY PINKHAM** CSR No. 3716, CCRR

**Counties Representing:** Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Ventura

I am pleased and honored to be a part of DRA. I joined this organization in 1995, the year it was founded. I have been reporting depositions full time in Los Angeles since 1977. My experience with the court reporting industry goes back to eighth grade, when my mother, a transcriber, taught me how to transcribe, proofread my work and turned it in as her own. I graduated from UC Berkeley with a degree in German, then got a teaching credential, then decided to attend court reporting school. In the 1980s I was on the board of the Los Angeles General Shorthand Reporting Association, which regrettably is no more. I have passed NCRA's CRR and DRA's CCRR exams. I love to do realtime and try to keep up with the latest in my software and also changes in our industry and rules and regs. I'm also a punctuation nerd.

I have two grown children - my daughter is a film editor, and my son, who has Asperger's, works in a veterinary clinic. My husband is a regional sales manager for a German company that manufactures precision machine components. He used to travel a lot, but not in the last nine months. Neither have I - my depositions are exclusively via Zoom now. The only place I go is on a walk around the neighborhood or every ten days to the grocery store. I love my husband, but we're starting to get on each others' nerves a bit! We spend our time cooking delicious meals and getting fat, and fighting over the TV trying to find a show we both like besides Your Honor on HBO! What am I grateful for? Not having to keep my eyes glued to the news on my phone every day for a change. Optimistic about 2021!

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# MEET CALDRA'S 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## DISTRICT 4

**STEPHANIE LESLIE** CSR No. 12893, CCRR, RPR

**Counties Representing:** Orange, plus all Professional Members residing in counties or states other than California or the USA

I have been reporting for over 16 years and own Regal Court Reporting with my husband, Isaiah. I have been providing realtime to clients for most of my career and love big cases and arbitrations. I've been blessed to experience some adventurous opportunities afforded by our field, including traveling internationally and reporting some high-profile celebrity cases, and I have enjoyed every aspect of this career along the way. I am passionate about protecting it so that reporters for future generations can experience the same blessings I have.

My greatest passion is in encouraging and mentoring court reporting students and new licensees, and I am thrilled to be able to continue that effort through CalDRA. I am incredibly proud of our DRA for all the positive progress it has made legislatively in our industry and look forward to contributing to the furtherance of its mission for years to come.



## DISTRICT 5

**CYNTHIA VEGA** CSR No. 6640, CCRR, RPR, RMR, RDR

**Counties Representing:** Imperial, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego

I am pleased to serve as the CalDRA representative for District 5.

I have been a freelance court reporter since February 1985, passing the CSR and RPR one week apart in November of 1984. I have been a member of NCRA since then, and subsequently have been a member of CCRA, CalDRA, NVCRA, and TexDRA. I believe association membership is important on all levels. I have attended numerous seminars and conventions over the past 35 years and will continue to do so.

Prepandemic, I took work in San Diego, Orange, Riverside, and Los Angeles Counties. I have reported everything from personal injury and medical malpractice to high-end complex patent infringement, some trials, and many court hearings. I have reported realtime for attorneys since 1997. I am currently doing remote depositions and loving it.

I plan on recruiting more court reporters to become members of CalDRA and also helping reporters attain their goal of writing realtime for attorneys. When we are able, I also plan to have local networking events to get to know more of you in District 5.

I currently live in Carlsbad with my two children: Catherine, 21, and Adam, 17.

I look forward to working with all of you and hope to see you at a future seminar, networking event, or convention.

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

members, but also seeing so many of our individual members help each other navigate this new horizon successfully, from hosting Zoom training sessions to Facebook posts about how to improve your remote audio, has been one of the brightest lights in an overcast year.

Looking ahead, every indicator I have seen points to the likelihood that remote depositions are here to stay. Although some attorneys were reticent to give them a chance in the beginning, as more Zoom depositions are conducted, more attorneys are learning to love the convenience of attending remotely. Time will tell what percentage of deposition work will remain remote and what will return to in-person, but I am hoping for a nice balance. I certainly don't miss spending ten hours a week driving the freeways of LA. In fact, I am using some of that newfound free time to work on your behalf. And as I do so, I am keeping Monyeen in my head and in my heart and hoping that I can make her proud.

MARY E. PIERCE  
CalDRA PRESIDENT

*Deposition*

by:



# Dear Colleagues,

As an organization, it has taken us some time to search for the right words, and, in truth, we are not sure that we will ever find them. But with very heavy hearts, CalDRA would like to pay tribute to our dear departed friend and colleague, Monyeen Black, whom we affectionately refer to as “Mo,” who passed away this January during a prolonged battle with dermatomyositis.



Monyeen Black, CSR, CCRR, RPR, CRR, a court reporter since 1994 and owner of MB Court Reporting, first joined CalDRA’s Board of Directors in 2011, first as Secretary, then later transitioning to District Director, Vice President, and ultimately, President of the organization from 2016 to 2018. In that time, she fiercely advocated for, and often achieved, a great many of the legislative protections now in place for California court reporters today. Whether it was creating programs for transitioning students into their professional careers, rewriting the CalDRA bylaws (a thankless enterprise!), perfecting the association website, or presenting educational seminars about realtime, organization (her specialty), or firm ownership, Mo proved to be one of the most industrious Board members that CalDRA has ever had the fortune to appoint.

Monyeen’s volunteerism and service to the profession of court reporting extended well beyond her tenure on the Board. Over the course of her career, she spent much of her free time (who knows where she found it) serving as a dedicated mentor and advisor to reporting students, not only in California but across the country, using her tough love and speedbuilding tactics to guide countless hopefuls through their state certification tests. And while, in life, she would be loath to admit it, her generosity extended far beyond the gift of her time. Her financial contributions to students in need

were yet another example of her unerring altruism and her heart of gold. A devout Christian, not only in principle but in practice, Monyeen gave back to her community freely and without expectation of reward or acknowledgment. Only after her passing has the breadth of her generosity become clear, as many step forward to tell their stories of how Mo has indelibly touched and changed their lives for the better.

Mo’s quest for continuing excellence was another notable part of her personality. A lifelong achiever, she had not only recently obtained her Registered Professional Reporter (RPR) and Certified Realtime Reporter (CRR) designations from the National Court Reporters Association, but she also held CSR licenses both in Utah and in Idaho, as well as a California Certificate in Realtime Reporting (CCRR). It would not be a stretch to surmise that, had she been with us a little longer, Monyeen would have found time to add the prestigious initials of RMR and RDR to her name at some point. She was just that good.

On a personal level, Monyeen held another impressive designation – CBAC – a certified badass chick. An avid motorcyclist, she, along with her husband, Keith Black, often embarked on “Iron Butt” rides, which require the rider in question to cover over 1000 miles of road within a 24-hour span of time -- not a quest for the faint of heart, to say the least. In the months



before the onset of her illness, she and Keith had embarked on an amazing journey across the United States on their motorcycles, often through extreme temperatures and difficult conditions. But Mo tackled the challenges of their cross-country ride like she did everything else – with aplomb.

Monyeen was a devoted wife to Keith, daughter, sister, aunt, dog mom of Enzo, and friend to almost everyone she met. She loved tattoos and black nail polish and changing her hair color and style whenever it struck her fancy. During her illness, while she was still able, she tackled jigsaw puzzles with the energy and ferocity that she could no longer expend on her work. In the best of times, Mo lived well, laughed often, and loved wholeheartedly. And in the hardest times, amid suffering that most of us could not even begin to manage, she still smiled. She remained positive, faithful, and fought to remain with us for as long

as her body would allow. She was a lesson in grace and dignity in the face of adversity. We could all be a little bit more like Monyeen Black.

One of CalDRA's brightest lights has been dimmed – dimmed, but never extinguished, for Monyeen's spirit will always burn brightly amongst those who knew and loved her best. She taught us so much in the short time that we had her – about hard work, perseverance, strength, and generosity. As an organization, and as professionals who make up that organization, we owe a great debt to Mo's legacy. To honor her life and her indomitable spirit, we hope that you will do these things: Keep giving, keep volunteering, keep smiling, keep helping. Keep being the best you can be. This is what our dear friend would have wanted. Keep making Monyeen proud.

Godspeed, Ms. Black.



## We'll Start with the Post That Begat the Ultimate Sadness:

**Keith Black on 1/11/21 9:28 pm**

A love letter to Mo. This will be my last update. Thank you all!!! Love you all!!

Hey Mo?? Did I tell you??? (Tell me what?) How much I Love You, miss you, need you, want you, & gotta have you!! I sit here and wait for you to be with all of our loved ones in heaven. I don't even know what to say. I am going to miss you SO MUCH. There will never be anyone that got me like you did. All my quirks, good and bad, yet your love never wavered. You were always the best part of my day and night. Then, since the first time we met at 10 years old, you have loved me. I know it took a long time for me to realize that, but I finally did, and from that moment forward you have been my world. That world is now shattered. I know you want me to be strong and to know the decisions are the right ones. Either way this is the absolute worst and hardest thing I have ever done. I pray you go peacefully and comfortably. I sit and look at you and so many memories rush through my mind. I cannot even pick a favorite memory. They are all the best times of my life, and every new memory we created together was better than the last. Thank you for being the most loving, faithful, and outgoing wife I could ever hope for. You are my Ride or Die!!!! I will always be with you until we see each other again. I LOVE YOU TILYMTY (Today I Love You More Than Yesterday) — GODSPEED.

**From Celeste Poppe on 1/15/21**

Dear Mo, my big sister...

I have tried for days to write something to you, but the words haven't come together. I haven't felt ready. Normally I would call you to help me figure out how to word something...

I still remember the first moment we met at the DRA convention in Newport Beach. It was already arranged I was going to be working for you. When we met, you scared me. That was the first time I experienced your "Mo-titude." You had a binder for me on how to run what you needed me to. I felt overwhelmed but also happy I found someone like-minded in being overly organized because I would have done the same thing. (In fact, I did when I left the office.) I know you're trying to take over heaven right now and do things the Mo way.

It's hard to pinpoint exactly when we became more than boss lady/employee. We just understood each other. We just had this bond. I don't know how to explain it, but I just feel it so deeply. I just looked up to you so much. And you looked after me so much... I remember saying

to you, "You're much more than my best friend. You're like my long lost sister, the sister I never had." You said, "And you're my little sister."

You're the perfect balance of tough and kind. You pushed me and challenged me, even when I REALLY didn't want to hear it. As I've said many times, you're the reason I passed the CSR and am the reporter that I am today. When I wanted to give up, you wouldn't let me. "Mentor" is an understatement for how much you helped me and guided me and taught me. You helped shaped me into the woman that I am today, like big sisters do. Helping me through the hard times in my life and celebrating the fun times. I know you know how grateful I am for you. I know you know how much I love you, look up to you, appreciate you...

We made so many wonderful memories together, and we always looked forward to making many more. So many more times of us laughing so hard we nearly peed our pants. So many more times of drinking, eating, and laughing. We missed each other all the time, always wishing we lived closer. We didn't need to go out and do anything. We just needed to be together.

I feel shattered and broken, and you're not here to help me pick up the pieces like you always do. What do I do now? I feel so lost. I feel so empty. I feel like a piece of my heart is gone that will never be filled. I feel like I'm living in a fog. Life doesn't feel real right now because I never imagined a life without you in it.

Everyone texting me has told me that they knew how much I meant to you and you to me, whether they saw it or you had told them. The rest of the world could see the love we have for each other. We were attached at the hip at conventions because it was time we finally got to spend together in person.

In your final days, I know you heard Keith Black and I around you. I'm confident that you heard Keith giving me a hard time and keeping me on my toes like you both always do. I hope that makes you smile up there and comforted in knowing that Keith and I took care of each other while we took care of you. I know that's what you would have wanted. I wouldn't trade the last few days for anything in the world, getting to talk to you and comfort you in the hardest time of all our lives. Our special moments those days I'll treasure and cherish forever, knowing you knew I was there.

I miss you so much. I know it's only going to get harder from here. I will continue to talk to you and say hello to you in my dreams and always, always, always tell you I love you. I will continue



to do things that would make you proud of me. I will continue to text Keith pictures of Dallas, and I know he'll text me pictures of Enzo.

This letter doesn't feel perfect, and it never will because I'm always going to want to tell you more, tell you a memory I have, tell you that I saw something that reminded me of you, tell you something that's happening in my life, tell you again and again how much I love you, tell you how grateful I am to have you in my life. I find peace knowing that you're always with me, though, watching over me as you always have. I know we'll meet again one day. I cannot wait to hug you. Forever missing you, my sweet, sweet angel...

---

**From Sarah MacDevitt (Seitz) on 1/13/21**

Without this woman, I would not be where I am in life today or who I am proud to be. She taught me how to be a respectable, professional, talented woman and to have integrity and self-respect. I will honor her memory and pass on what she taught me. And now I will stop crying, and I will go into that virtual depo room, and I will own it just like she taught me, and I will find peace knowing that she is free and not suffering in heaven. Monyeen Black, I love you and will miss you more than words can say. I will continue to make you proud. Thank you for sharing your life with me.

**And one more from Sarah on 3/1/21  
(because it's integral)**

Wow. Four years ago yesterday was my first depo. I have been a reporter for four whole years!! It's bittersweet because, while I am so happy and proud of myself for how my career has gone so far, the person who I want to celebrate most with is no longer here. She took that picture and waited for me while I took my first depo. I'm so grateful to always have that memory. Miss you, Monyeen Black.



**From Aimee Edwards-Altadonna on 2/25/21**

Cheers to Monyeen Black. You are so missed and loved, my friend. A beautiful group gathered tonight in your honor and we heard your voice on Marc Greenberg's interview and wrote your words from your For The Record movie interview and watched the video. Allie recorded when you were awarded the 2020 Guts Award. Rich and Michael spoke, and Douglas organized the whole thing. Thank you so much for having me despite not currently being a 100-day challenge member. Nothing but love. Miss you so much #mostrong

THANK YOU TO EVERY PERSON WHO CONTRIBUTED, I think of it as you each are feathers who built Monyeen's Angel wings, so she could soar!

**From Christine Phipps, NCRA President, on 1/18/21**

THIS ANGEL I AM SHARING TO MY PAGE! I have tried to read this post since yesterday. Every time, my eyes just welled thinking about Monyeen Black and that she is really not here anymore, but also Rich Germosen and Douglas J. Zweizig, who started this and all the other amazing colleagues of ours that contributed to make her an honorary NCRA Angel. I know she would be overwhelmed to be honored in this way!

**Heatherlynn Nickles Gonzalez on 1/12/21**

They say meeting your idol is the worst thing you can do. That wasn't the case with Monyeen. The first DRA convention I went to, I saw her and thought to myself, that's the kind of reporter I want to be. Then we got to be friends. Whether we were talking about industry ethics, motorcycles, business ownership, student development, dogs, relationships, or annoying things about people around us, she was forthright, spirited, intelligent, warm, funny, and a joy to be around. She had a passion for life, a passion for her career, and a passion for those she cared about - and she cared about every single person she met.

I began this career for the love of steno and that little machine and with being a freelance reporter, but I am more deeply in love today because of the people in it, NCRA and NCRF and all the members. I consider it nothing short of an incredible blessing I never knew I was going to find when I found this career. With ugly tears now, thank you for letting me be part of your lives as I know I am a better human for it.

I will miss our discussions at DRA conventions, both sitting at the registration table as well as over wine in Vicki Squires's room. I'll miss the texts that always came at the perfect time and always made me laugh. I'll miss watching her interact with students at the State exams. I will miss Mo. She made me want to be a better person by being a better person herself.

I have read every person I know who was close to her echo my thoughts that we didn't want to do our jobs today. We wanted to cry, rail against the unfairness, and weep over the loss. And each person has been inspired by Mo to knock it off and go do our jobs. It's what Mo would have done. It's the best way we can honor her.

## Monyeen Black Memorial Scholarship

As many of you know, Monyeen had a very strong motivation to help CR students, particularly those that are facing more than the typical challenges. A scholarship fund has been established in her name after an incredibly generous opening contribution from an anonymous donor. You may make donations through DRA [Deposition Reporters Association of California \(memberclicks.net\)](http://memberclicks.net). Keith Black is personally involved with the scholarship and will make sure that the guidelines for who will get scholarship funds are in line with Monyeen's priorities. Contact Sally Poppe directly if you need any further help making a contribution ([support@caldra.org](mailto:support@caldra.org)).



# NEW COURT REPORTING PROGRAM IN SAN DIEGO OPENS!

BY JUDY MORENO

San Diego is extremely excited to have opened a new court reporting program at the Poway Adult School located in Poway, California, offering Mark Kislingbury's Magnum Steno Theory. The first module of classes started in September 2020. Due to Covid, classes are being held live online at this point.

Mark Kislingbury's program is quite rigorous, requiring weekly class time of 10.5 hours and a minimum of an additional 2 hours of daily practice time for the students. Classes meet online Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings from 5:30 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. It is a fast-paced program. The goal is to get students through the program and out into the reporting world within 18-24 months! Once students have completed the program, they can sit for the RPR exam. After passing the RPR, they are qualified to sit for the California CSR examination.

At this time, Poway Adult School is an accredited school through Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), and the paperwork has been submitted to the CSR Board to start the approval process to become a recognized school by the CSR Board.

If there are any court reporters out there that would like to be a guest speaker, inspiring this new generation of reporters, please reach out to me at [jmoreno@powayusd.com](mailto:jmoreno@powayusd.com). I'd love to have you share your story of this amazing career.

## ONLY YOUR DRA TAKES THE FIGHT EVERYWHERE

THE COURT REPORTERS BOARD  
THE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION

THE PUBLIC  
LITIGATION  
THE STATE BAR  
THE PRESS



## WE NEED YOUR HELP NOW FOR DRA'S WAR CHEST

PROTECT OUR PROFESSION  
LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD  
EXPOSE BOGUS E.R. CLAIMS  
PROTECT OUR SCHOOLS



# New Members

Nadia Alam  
Andrea Aquino  
Sherrie Arvidson  
Andrea Baffert  
Cynthia Bentley  
Emily Cantrell  
Paulette Ferrante  
Ruben Garcia  
Rebecca Hook  
Marilynn Hoover  
Sally Hume  
Stephanie Jarvey

Sandy Lewis  
Juliann McCance  
Leila McKenna  
Vanessa Murphy  
Phi Nguyen  
Michelle Patty  
Virginia Perez  
Jasmine Richau  
Kyle Ridenour  
Haleema Saleh  
Marie Schuetze  
Chantra Siggard



Elaine Smith  
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# A SIMPLIFIED RETIREMENT SOLUTION (SEP-IRA)

With all of the challenges that 2020 brought upon us, you may be thinking more of your future. You had a good year financially, and realized your retirement planning has become more important than ever. You have contributed to your IRA for many years but now need something that will allow you to make larger contributions, but without the administrative requirements of some of the more complicated retirement plans.

Court reporters should consider establishing a SEP IRA (Simplified Employer Pension). A SEP IRA is a traditional IRA that follows the same investment, distribution and rollover rules. SEP IRAs are for business owners, allowing them to make tax-deductible contributions for their employees and themselves.

Most court reporters are independent contractors who usually do not have employees. These plans are simple to set up and administer. Here are some tips for establishing a SEP IRA.

Any employer, including self-employed individuals, can establish a SEP. According to the IRS, there are three required steps in setting up a SEP.

1. Adopt a formal agreement by signing one of these documents:
  - a. IRS model SEP using Form 5305-SEP PDF from the IRS website
  - b. IRS-approved prototype SEP, offered by banks, insurance companies and other qualified financial institutions;
  - c. Individual designed SEP plan document.
2. Provide each eligible employee with information about the SEP. If you established the SEP using the form 5305 – SEP, the information must include a copy of the form 5305 – SEP, its instructions and the other information listed in the form 5305 – SEP instructions. If you used a prototype SEP or individually designed SEP, you must provide similar information.
3. Set up a SEP-IRA for each eligible employee with a brokerage firm, bank, insurance company or other qualified financial institution.

You can open a SEP IRA and fund it for 2020. The deadline to establish a plan and open an account is as late as the due date (including extensions) of your businesses income tax return for that year.

If you have employees they must be included in the SEP plan if they have:

- attained the age of 21;
- worked for your business in at least three of the last five years;
- received at least \$650 in 2021; \$600 in compensation (in 2016 – 2020) from your business for the year.

You may make tax deductible contributions. The amount you are allowed to contribute will be determined by the participant's compensation. 2020 contribution limits are 25% of compensation or \$57,000 of earnings, whichever is less. Consult with your tax advisor to determine how much you may contribute.

Most SEP IRAs offer flexible investment options. This offers you the ability to tailor your portfolio to your long-term investment objectives and risk tolerance. As an added bonus, earnings in your SEP IRA will grow tax deferred. Whether you earn interest or capital gains, you will not pay taxes on those earnings until you take withdrawals from your SEP IRA. A 10% penalty tax may apply if funds are withdrawn before age 59 ½.

We hope you consider this useful retirement planning strategy.

Carlos Alcaine is a Senior Vice President, Financial Advisor, Portfolio Manager with D. A. Davidson & Co. in Roseville, California. You may reach him at 916.581.7550 or email him at [calcaine@dadco.com](mailto:calcaine@dadco.com)

**Source:** [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov)

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**THE DEPOSITION REPORTERS ASSOCIATION  
25TH ANNUAL CONVENTION  
SAN DIEGO • SEPTEMBER 24TH-26TH, 2021**



# Ask DRA

BY ANTONIA PULONE, DEPO DIPLOMAT

## DEAR DEPO DIPLOMAT:

I'm again in need of your great advice. I just learned my deponent is located in Florida for her Zoom depo tomorrow. Is a stip okay, or do I need to get a Florida notary? If I need a notary, do you know anyone?

## DEAR DRA MEMBER:

The first thing to determine here is whether the case involved is a California-venued or a Federal case. If a CA case, you already have the authority to administer the oath and report the depo remotely, even though taking place in Florida, by CCP 2093 (b)(1) and (2), which say:

### 2093.

(b) (1) A shorthand reporter certified pursuant to Article 3 (commencing with Section 8020) of Chapter 13 of Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code has the power to administer oaths and affirmations and may perform the duties of the deposition officer pursuant to Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 2025.010) of Title 4. The certified shorthand reporter is entitled to receive fees for services rendered during a deposition, including fees for deposition services, as specified in subdivision (c) of Section 8211 of the Government Code.

(2) This subdivision also applies to depositions taken by telephone or other remote electronic means as specified in Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 2017.010) and Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 2025.010) of Title 4.

So if this is a CA case, the above CCP section would apply and provide you this authority, though you may wish to ask the attorneys to stipulate to your serving as the depo officer, just to be on the safe side.

However, if it is a Federal case, then you will need their stipulation, since the Federal Rules require that a depo be taken before an officer authorized to administer oaths either by the law in the place of the testimony, which will be Florida, or by someone appointed by the court where the depo is taking place, which would rarely be the case.

If you do ask for a stipulation to be entered, I'm sure your client will agree since he/she will want you to do the reporting, but you could add that there is no required certification in Florida, and there's a good deal of digital, nonstenographic reporting done there, so your client might be concerned about the quality of the transcript being prepared and whether it would be admissible here in a CA court. That might be additionally persuasive to any other attorneys attending the depo remotely. You should ask then that you be notified if other counsel attending the depo agree to this stipulation being put on the record, and advise them to state their stipulation at the outset of the depo once you're on the record and before you swear in the deponent. Then you should be fine.

If you have any other questions about this or if any of the above is unclear, don't hesitate to get back to me with any other questions you may have about this.

Take care and stay well,

TONI

Antonia Pulone, CSR 3926  
DRA Depo Diplomat



# PROOFREADING

ALTHEA L. MILLER, CSR NO. 3353,  
RPR, CCRR NO. 149

As I celebrate 45 years of reporting, I continue to be surprised to learn that many reporters think that because of spellcheck, they can just write down the testimony, do a spellcheck, and send off the job.

All I can say is How Can You Think That? Why Do You Think That?

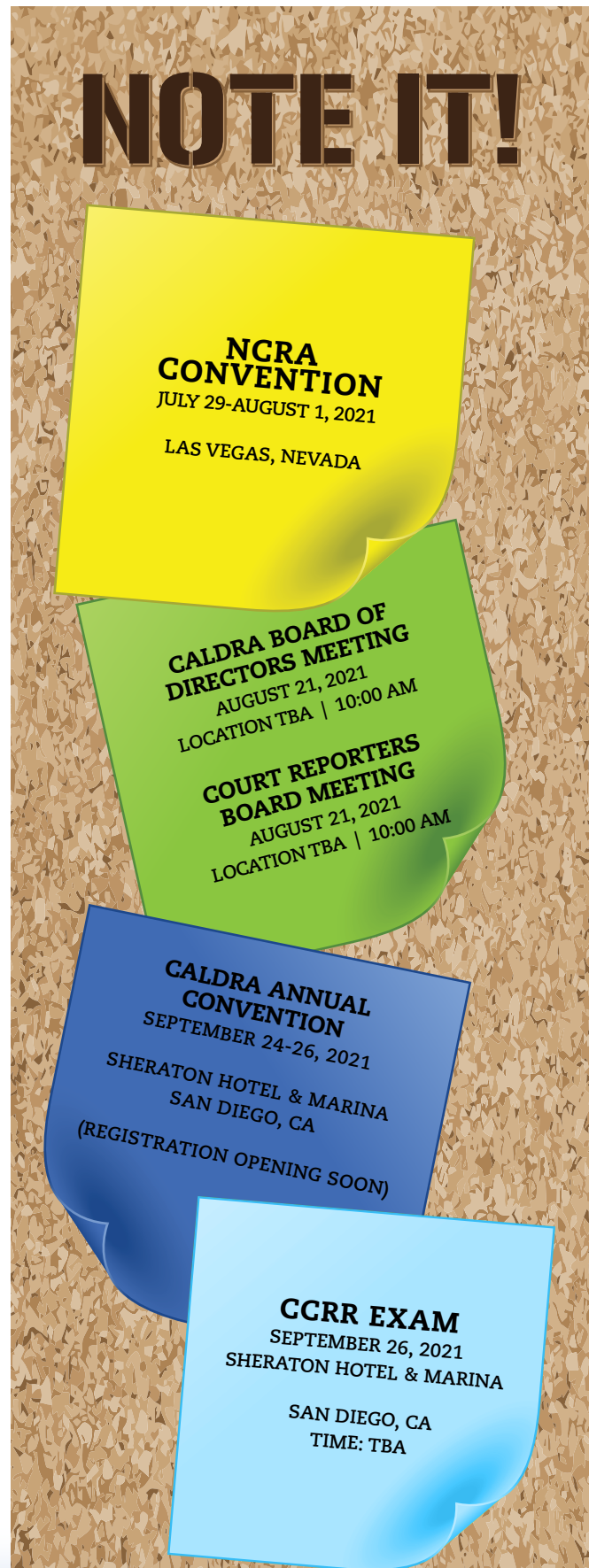
It is critical to proofread your own transcripts and to have a second pair of eyes on your transcript – a qualified proofreader.

I am very fortunate that my proofreader is a retired court reporter. She catches wrong words or senseless phrases that, if I sent out the job, I would be very embarrassed, in addition to being mortified.

It is so easy for your eyes to skip over “here” when it should be “hear.” Spellcheck will not help you. Both words are spelled correctly.

“They’re going to the bank.” Their going to the bank. There going to the bank.” Spellcheck will not help you because they are all correctly spelled, but only one is correct in that sentence.

You show PRIDE in your PROFESSION when you PROOFREAD.



# “BRIEF” LEGISLATIVE REPORT

BY ANTONIA PULONE,  
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR

This “brief” report will truly be as described and will also take on a much different format than you are all used to seeing in our DRA newsletters. I expect that you may find it easier to read and, therefore, may prefer this format, and if so, please don’t hesitate to email me and share any comments you have in that regard.

The Senate and Assembly in Sacramento have had to significantly modify their operating procedures in 2020 and 2021 to accommodate the physical limitations required by the pandemic, and the legislators have been discouraged from introducing anything other than the most necessary bills. Committee hearings have been conducted virtually, members of the public only attending online, versus being able to attend in person and speak to support or oppose bills being considered.

COVID-19 has in this way led to fewer bills to follow, and only two at this time have any impact on us as freelance reporters, those two being SB 76, introduced by Senator Nielsen, and SB 241, introduced by Senator Umberg.

The impact of SB 76 may not prove to be significant, but it would enact the Excluded Employee Arbitration Act, which would allow an employee who has filed grievances with the Department of Human Resources to request binding arbitration under certain conditions, and it specifically allows for the employee to have a Certified Shorthand Reporter – not a digital recorder or videographer – to report and transcribe the arbitration and will deem that CSR transcript to be the official record. So SB 76 should generate some additional work opportunities for deposition reporters, and I’ve included it here for that reason.

SB 76 is supported by The Association of CA State Supervisors, the CA Correctional Supervisors Organization, and the Professional Engineers in CA Government. There has been no opposition filed.

The other bill, SB 241, introduced by Senator Umberg, will have a far greater impact on our freelance community. It will, for the first time, ensure a fair and level playing field for all CSR-owned and non-CSR-owned firms. While it’s quite true that a company or corporation not owned or controlled by professionals – in our case CSR licensees – is not allowed by law to operate in California, whether located in California or elsewhere, the Court Reporters Board (“CRB”) simply does not have the resources to enforce this law or engage in repeated litigation to prevent these firms from working here, and that unfortunate fact will always be true.

For that reason, our best chance of finally bringing these unlawfully operating companies under the disciplinary authority of the CRB is by requiring them, as SB 241 will do, to register with the CRB. To meet the registration requirements, these firms would have to show that they have not been disciplined in another state, settled a lawsuit or had a civil judgment over \$50,000 related to their reporting services. They would also have to designate a California CSR with a current license in good standing to serve as a full-time employee and reporter-in-charge.

If their registration application is approved, they will be registered for one year and must maintain all the above conditions for registration renewal each year. Since no California CSR would be allowed to provide reporting services for either an unlicensed or unregistered firm, unless these non-CSR firms maintain their registration status from year to year, they would be prevented from offering reporting services here in CA.

This registration requirement would bring these firms under the authority of the CRB at last and provide consumer protection, which until now could not be overseen in relation to non-licensed firms. You may not be aware of this, but for many years official complaints have been filed with the CRB regarding violations of codes and professional practices by non-licensed firms. While the evidence of these violations was documented, the CRB could do nothing in response, since their authority only extends to license holders. With the passage of SB 241, that would never again be the frustrating outcome, as all firms, both licensed and registered, would have to comply with all California laws applying to CSRs in order to continue operating here.

Also included in this bill is the permission for a witness to appear remotely in a proceeding, trial or hearing, if the parties agree or if required. SB 241 would also allow for telephonic appearances, and both of these allowances, which represent both convenience and cost savings for attorneys, as well as offering some continued relief for our tight pool of available reporters in California, will remain in effect after the pandemic, a benefit to reporters and attorneys alike.

SB 241 has cleared all the Senate committees, generally passing unanimously, and is now being considered by the Assembly. It is supported by the California CRB, CalDRA, the CA Defense Counsel, the Consumer Attorneys of CA, and Encore Capital Group. It is opposed by SEIU, AFSCME, CCRA, Orange County Employee Association and United Public Employees.