

Student Newsletter - June 2010

April Heveroh, Editor

DRA is committed to ensuring that the shorthand reporting profession remains a viable and integral part of the legal system. To this end, we have designed a Mentor Program that will meld the enthusiasm of new reporters and students with the maturity of the more seasoned reporter. New reporters and students going into the freelance field will be matched up with experienced reporters in the state of California in order to provide them with relevant guidance, support and encouragement during the beginning stages of their new careers.

Do you need some extra help, personal attention, or have questions regarding reporting? If so, then sign up for our mentoring program and receive guidance or help from a professional working court reporter. Working reporters understand what difficulties you face as students and new reporters.

*If you are a current student at the 200-level speed and above or any reporter that wishes to be mentored, or you would like more information regarding this program, please go to the DRA website (www.caldra.org), download the *Mentee Application form*, fill out the form and fax it to 925.905.2611 or email it to the Mentor Program coordinator at: jcain@meritreporting.com. Once we receive your application, we will endeavor to make the best match possible for both mentor and mentee. Thank you!*

A Journey Worth Taking

By Dawn Howard, CSR - Castro Valley, CA

As anyone who has decided to go that extra step forward knows, while the setbacks outnumber those fleeting successes, the reward of grasping that golden-ticket-outcome is something much too precious to turn back after having come so far. That is what the final speed classes were to me in court reporting school. The distance traveled was slow and steady. It was a recurring climb to the top of the mountain, only to then be back at the bottom, climbing up to yet again attain that next test pass or, as the teachers called it, an opportunity we were being given. When you finally get out of your own way and truly believe that you can do this very unique skill set, the goal of passing that final four-voice mock is achieved, you graduate from your school program and then springboard forward into that immensely anticipated CSR exam.

The excitement of passing the CSR exam can only be fully understood by those of us who have had the experience of also walking a similar path of stenographic training. You feel as though your entire life can finally begin to take shape. One of the greatest benefits of obtaining that CSR license is finally being able to tell your loved ones that, "Yes, I have finished, and I can now begin working," never again having to hear, "Are you done yet?" I got to experience that excitement when I passed the CSR in 2007.

Entering the professional world can be a wonderful experience if you are fortunate enough to have other reporters and/or reporting firm owners take an interest in your new adventure, sharing their experiences and suggestions with you along the way. I had the very fortunate experience of working very closely with a seasoned reporter and a firm owner, both of whom I will be eternally grateful to for their mentorship and time that they so graciously extended to me. They taught me the importance of detail, organization, professionalism, being flexible and going that extra mile so those whom you work for can appreciate your dedication and reliability.

Both of these DRA members were wonderful mentors to me, and if it were not for their mentoring, I would not have the confidence they instilled in me, and would have

missed out on being introduced to some wonderful employers. Networking and staying involved in the court reporting industry is of the essence, especially in these current economic conditions and being a new reporter. Joining DRA was one of the easiest decisions I made, not only because those whom I grew to respect were members, but also because the organization makes every effort to protect and improve the reporting profession. I've enjoyed the DRA annual conventions very much, and will continue to be thankful to the board for what they are doing for our line of work and by keeping us informed.

New Reporter/Advanced Student Tips:

- **Invest** in a cell phone with e-mail access. Many reporting firms now cover their jobs via e-mail, and oftentimes, the first to respond gets the job.
- **Never** stop finding new briefs. The more briefs you find, the less work for your hands/body, the faster you write, the cleaner your transcript!!!
- **Join** your local association and attend reporting seminars and conventions in your area. Many reporting firms would rather give work to those who support keeping our profession alive, and who take an active interest in honing their skill.
- **Purchase** the software that your best friend/mentor uses. This advice came from a tenured reporting instructor, and it has proven to be true as you will learn your systems together, exchange files, troubleshoot your software and even loan your laptop in case of an emergency. Of course, this person should love their software and be current with technology.
- **From** day one, work with the goal of realtime in mind. Even if you think you will never achieve it, your transcripts will be cleaner, meaning less work at home and more time to yourself.

DRA's Legislative Corner

- AB 2842 in 2002 clarified that the deposition officer may not go off the record without the stipulation of all parties present unless any party attending the deposition, including the deponent, wishes to seek a protective order due to the manner in which the examination is being conducted.
- AB 2842 exempted a reporter's audio files from the legal requirements imposed upon other audio or video records made at a deposition by differentiating that the reporter's audio file is a record made by the deposition officer to assist in transcribing the testimony, as opposed to a record made by or at the direction of a party. In conjunction with this effort, DRA defeated a bill that would have required reporters to retain their audio files consistent with the legal requirements of retaining stenographic notes, thereby subjecting those files to the possibility of being subpoenaed.

Current Legislative Update – May 2010

The Bad News:

Electronic Recording Returns In Governor's Revised Budget

The Good News:

It Isn't Staying Long

(Synposized and reprinted with the permission of the California Official Court Reporters Association)

When Governor Schwarzenegger released his revised state budget on May 14th, he continued his assault on the court reporting profession by continuing to promote a plan to replace court reporters with electronic recording in California's superior courts.

Fortunately, both the Senate and the Assembly decided NOT to place ER on their agenda. This means that ER will not be discussed or recognized and it's now a "dead" issue.

However, as Governor Schwarzenegger once promised when he was an actor many years ago, it does not mean that ER won't be back. In the meantime, COCRA will continue to monitor the situation and work with all parties involved in the fight to protect the court reporting profession, and more importantly, protect the public's access to justice. The Deposition Reporters Association will keep abreast of the situation as well and continue to provide our members with updates.

April's Briefs

Temporary	- TRAER	On the Record	- NAURD
Temporarily	- TRAERL	Off the Record	- AURD
Primary	- PRAER	Probable	- PROBL
Primarily	- PRAERL	Probably	- PROEBL
Transfer	- TR-FR	Is that correct	- STARKT
Manufacture	- M-FR	That is correct	- THARKT
Actually	- TWAEL	That's correct	- THARKTS
Practice	- PRA	Is that right	- STHART
Practical	- PRAL	That is right	- THART
Practically	- PRAEL	That's right	- THARTS
Argument	- GAOUMT	A. Yes	- YEFRPBLGTS
Argumentative	- GAOUV	A. No	- NOFRPBLGTS

How DRA Taught an Old Dog New Tricks

By Gina Carbone, CSR, RPR, CCRR – Concord, CA

I've been reporting for 20 years, and only now have I really begun to enjoy what I do for a living. I feel I owe this to attending one DRA convention that put the whole thing in motion. Though I began reporting in 1989 as a freelancer, I only worked for one firm. I have always appreciated the flexibility of my job, especially when I had my children. From 1995 until 2006 I only worked an average of two to three depositions per week in order to spend more time with my two young boys. The problem was, when I wanted to begin working more, I just felt that things were stagnant and I came to realize that I was getting burned out.

Then one day I ran into my cousin, also a reporter, who urged me to attend an upcoming DRA convention with her. I'm embarrassed to say that I'd never been to a convention before, and therefore wasn't aware of the benefits. Well, needless to say, after attending just one convention, I immediately found out what I had been missing. I was so impressed by the professionalism and skill level of many of the reporters. I looked at those realtime reporters and thought to myself that I'd never be able to be on that level. I became reacquainted with an old friend, April Heveroh, at that DRA convention. Through her and some of her friends, I realized I really needed to upgrade my CAT software, and April encouraged me to work towards becoming a realtime reporter. After switching software, working with April to hone my machine skills, as well as my technical skills through DRA seminars, that's just what I did. I'm proud to say that in addition to my CSR license, I now also hold my RPR from the NCRA, and also my CCRR, so I am now an officially-certified realtime reporter!

Joining the DRA and attending conventions and seminars has literally changed my career path. I have learned so much and met so many wonderful and talented reporters who encourage and inspire me to always be on top of my game. Now when I look back on my reporting career so far, my one regret is not having been a member of my state association sooner. I cannot emphasize enough just how important it is to support your local association, not only for the personal benefits you will gain, but because these organizations are bettering and protecting the reporting community as a whole. They work tirelessly to bring about legislation that will protect our jobs and level the playing field with non-CSR owned firms; they provide the means for valuable continuing education and networking opportunities at conventions and seminars; and they help students, whether through mentor programs or fighting to keep court reporting programs alive at certain schools. There is just so much they do for us, I feel the least I can do is be a dues-paying member, because it is absolutely worth every penny - and so much more.

Did You know??

- DRA has a Scholarship Program with three winners annually?
- Most Students attending DRA's Annual Conventions get sponsored by other working reporters and/or firm owners?
- DRA's Mentor Program is FREE to student members?
- DRA was instrumental in keeping West Valley College's Court Reporting Program from closing?
- A DRA Student Membership is **ONLY** \$25 annually?
- DRA has eight district reps to serve you, covering every county in California?



DRA_TWEETS