



DEPOSITION  
REPORTERS ASSOCIATION  
OF CALIFORNIA, INC.

## Student Newsletter – April 2012

Lorrie L. Marchant, Editor – [studentnewslettereditor@caldra.org](mailto:studentnewslettereditor@caldra.org)

### **Reporter and Student Events**

#### **DRA Board of Directors Meeting**

The next Board of Directors meeting will be in Los Angeles on April 14, 2012. Do you have anything you'd like us to discuss? Your district rep is your voice. Send them an e-mail with your questions or concerns. All DRA members are welcome and encouraged to attend the Board meetings.

#### **DRA SoCal Spring Seminar**

**Date:** Saturday, May 19, 2012 Sunday, May 20, 2012

**Start Time:** 9:00 a.m. **End Time:** 4:00 p.m.

**Date:** Sunday, May 20, 2012

**Start Time:** 8:00 a.m. **End Time:** 4:00 p.m.

**Location:** Renaissance Hotel

111 East Ocean Boulevard, Long Beach, California

**Description:**

May 19th - Mark Kislingbury write short-write fast training!

May 20th - LiveNote CLR training

**Contact:** Vicki Squires

**Email:** [dra@caldra.org](mailto:dra@caldra.org)

**Phone:** 888-867-2074

#### **CSR Dictation Exam**

**Date:** Friday, June 22, 2012

**Location Details:** Los Angeles, CA

#### **DRA SoCal Student BBQ**

**Date:** Saturday, September 29, 2012

**Time:** TBA

**Location Details:** Cerritos Regional Park, 19800 Bloomfield Avenue, Cerritos

#### **NorCal Fall Seminar**

**Date:** Saturday, September 29, 2012 and Sunday, September 30, 2012

**Start Time:** 9:00 am **End Time:** 5:00 pm

**Location:** TBA (Burlingame or San Jose)

**Description:**

September 29th - Mark Kislingbury write short-write fast training!

September 30th - LiveNote CLR training

**Contact:** Vicki Squires

**Email:** [dra@caldra.org](mailto:dra@caldra.org)

**Phone:** 888-867-2074

## **SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!**

Again this year, DRA offered \$1000 scholarships to all California court reporting students. We are very proud to announce our 2012 DRA Scholarship winners. These top students wrote inspiring essays, submitted outstanding school scores, and knocked it out of the park during their personal interviews.



**Helen Peabody** ~ Downey School of Court Reporting:

Before Helen Peabody began her court reporting adventure, she obtained her BA degree from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Since starting school, she has been on the Dean's list, the President's Honor list, volunteered as Vice President of the Court Reporting Club and worked as a student aide for a blind court reporting student, all while working two part-time jobs. Helen's straight A's and positive attitude made her stand out among the crowd.



**Michael McMorran** ~ Sage College San Diego:

Michael McMorran has been an outstanding and inspirational student since he stepped through the doors of Sage College in 2010. He has attended numerous NCRA and DRA events, including our student barbeques. After being presented DRA's Zandonella Scholarship at our Monterey convention, Mike delivered an inspirational and powerful message to the students and reporters in attendance. As a founding member, John Zandonella inspired all of with his courage and perseverance. DRA sees these same qualities in Mike, and we know his future holds nationwide recognition and success.



**Kimberly Kadolph** ~ Sage College Moreno Valley:

Kimberly is unstoppable and is on her way to being an extraordinary CSR. She expresses extreme pride in her decision to become a court reporter and strives for excellence by attending extra classes (12-13 hour school days), by grading other student's tests, and by serving on the NCRA Student Community of Interest. Her grades are outstanding, her work ethic is phenomenal, and her positive outlook towards her future career made Kimberly Kadolph an easy choice for this award.

Congratulations to our 2012 winners! DRA looks forward to offering scholarships in 2013, and we can't wait to receive more outstanding applications from all California court reporting school students.

**Check out DRA's Student Resources Web Page**

at: [http://www.caldra.org/student\\_resources.asp](http://www.caldra.org/student_resources.asp)



## **A note of encouragement/motivation to students:**

**By: Cheryl Haab, DRA Secretary**

I remember it like it was yesterday – the moment I realized that I wanted nothing more than to become a California CSR. I was in my 160s and feeling decidedly stuck after having lingered in that speed group for more than six months. On a last minute whim, I accepted the invitation of my then-speed teacher to attend my very first Deposition Reporters Association student barbecue.

As an online student, my interaction with others in the field had been scant at best, and I was incredibly intimidated at the thought of mingling with other students and reporters. I had already been toying with the notion that perhaps I was one of the unlucky ones whose fingers just weren't able to attain the requisite speeds to move into field. Having garnered the breadth of my knowledge from unconventional means, I felt like a fraud of sorts, and I was sure that the day's events would solidify the growing notion in my mind that I was lacking in the skills required of bona fide court reporter.

Registration went smoothly, and I found a seat without incident, just in time to catch the musings of the first speaker of the day. She was a new reporter with just a year under her belt, and about two sentences into her speech, I was hooked. She described to a T every frustration and roadblock I had experienced during my two-plus years as a student. I was floored, to say the least. Being the proverbial island that I was, I had never considered the possibility that thousands of reporters who had come before me had struggled with the same feelings of hopelessness and self-doubt before finally attaining that ever-elusive goal of CSR. It was a true epiphany in my student career.

I left the barbecue that day with a handful of new contacts and a renewed lease on life. I got home, practiced until my fingers were sore, and found myself walking into the CSR (and passing it!) less than a year later. I am forever grateful to Cynthia Dunbar for taking an hour out of her busy schedule that day to share her story with a handful of students who sorely needed the inspiration. She, and others like her, is the reason that I have chosen to devote my time and resources to volunteer work within associations such as DRA.

**Do you have a student article that you would like to submit? If so, please e-mail it to:**  
[studentnewslettereditor@caldra.org](mailto:studentnewslettereditor@caldra.org)

### **Current Legislative Update** **CR Board's Lawsuit against U.S. Legal**

Trial proceeded on March 5th in San Jose. Both sides gave opening statements. The plaintiff Court Reporters Board called two witnesses to testify: Yvonne Fenner, Executive Officer of the Court Reporters Board, and Peter Giammanco, U.S. Legal shareholder and western division manager. U.S. Legal called no witnesses.

Yvonne Fenner explained to the Court that the CRB wants to clarify/confirm its jurisdiction so it can enforce its regulations, how a reporter gets licensed, and why the neutrality of the reporter is key. Peter Giammanco from U.S. Legal explained how they are not "court reporters," but rather, a clearinghouse which just does "administrative" stuff for reporters. But when the questioning turned to specifics of their 95-page reporter manual which details how a transcript should look, that the reporter should deliver it to U.S. Legal and not to the client, and how, among other things, U.S. Legal performs the read & sign/errata process, the DRA Team saw U.S. Legal's defense crumble.

DRA's smart and to-the-point amicus brief <http://bit.ly/DRABriefUSLegal> was accepted by the court. Judge Persky (whom DRA was pleased to note was receiving a realtime feed from the reporter) granted DRA's counsel, Ed Howard -- author of the amicus brief -- the right to sit at counsel table, make opening statements and question the witnesses. On March 16th, Mr. Howard offered DRA's closing statement. DRA is the only California association who offered this litigation help to the Plaintiff. Attorney General Nick Tsukamaki and DRA's counsel Ed Howard did a fabulous job in trial (they ROCKED). Present at the March 5th session of the trial were DRA Past Presidents Lisa Michaels, Toni Pulone and Holly Moose, and Founding Member Stephanie Grossman.

Click these links to view all three closing briefs:

<http://bit.ly/DRAClosing>

<http://bit.ly/USLegalClosing>

<http://bit.ly/CRBClosing>

## **Legal System Still Values Court Reporters**

News from Ohio:

Apparently the official record in one Ohio courtroom will now be transcribed by someone other than the person monitoring the new digital equipment.

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In 2010, a court management consulting firm was hired by the Ohio Court Reporters Association for the purpose of providing a cost analysis of digital recording as compared to stenographic court reporting in Ohio courts. The result of the study indicated that the transcription error rate for a live stenographic court reporter is under one percent, whereas the error rate for a transcribed digital audio recording has been as high as nearly 25 percent.

The Ohio Court Reporters Association has been maintaining a database of reported failures of electronic/digital recordings in courts.

When one Lucas County Common Pleas courtroom switched to electronic recording, the judge said they were just trying to move from the dinosaur age to the digital age.

### **One reporter's perspective:**

Dinosaur? No way.

Court reporters moved from the dinosaur age more than 25 years ago with computerization of our stenograph machine and the use of laptop computers.

For many years, court reporters throughout the country have been able to provide voice-to-word transcription instantly. Judges and attorneys are able to read in real time the spoken word on their laptops.

A tape recorder records every bit of ambient noise in a courtroom — coughing, sneezing, sirens, doors slamming, paper rustling, people talking over one another. The recording creates the need for someone to type every word on a word processor to create a transcript for review by the appellate court.

In most instances, a court reporter must rewrite on the stenograph machine from a digitized audio disc to provide a transcript. Court jurisdictions end up paying twice for what a live court reporter in the courtroom does once.

Steno reporters keep up by spending thousands of dollars of their own money to provide the court with the latest real-time, state-of-the-art technology in the courtroom.

A digital tape recording? The court has begun to step back into the 1960s. Welcome to the dinosaur age.

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The president of the Ohio Court Reporters Association added that today's stenographic court reporters use state-of-the-art equipment and technology to provide an instantaneous, voice-to-text transcript of proceedings as they are occurring. The written text is then instantly transmitted to the judge and attorneys, providing them access to a written transcript that can be searched and annotated.

Today's stenographic machines are paperless, simultaneously creating three digital copies, which can easily be stored on a server or other medium.

Stenographic court reporters are trained to be the guardian of the record. A stenographic court reporter providing real-time translation of proceedings is the most efficient method of making the record.

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### **DRA's Mission Statement:**

DRA represents Certified Shorthand Reporters who report depositions and out-of-court proceedings in the State of California, as well as captioners and CART providers. DRA strives to preserve and enhance the stenographic reporting profession, ensure its integrity, and maintain its high standards and impartiality wherever stenographic services are required. DRA is committed to ensuring that the stenographic reporting profession remains a viable and integral part of the legal system.

### **Pengad Member Discount**

#### **Introducing: 10% off all Regularly Priced merchandise for DRA members!**

(See terms and conditions below.)

The DRA has joined Pengad's Member 10 Buying Program for 2012.

Pengad is proud to support both your profession and your association. We have joined with the DRA to make sure you, as a member, receive the best quality products and service at the best price.

Effective March 1, 2012, members of the DRA are eligible for a 10% off discount on all regularly priced merchandise purchased at Pengad. To take advantage of this offer, just mention your Coupon Code every time you order. If you are ordering at [www.pengad.com](http://www.pengad.com), enter your coupon code in the coupon section of the shopping cart.

Please join our mailing list so that we can continue providing you with email communications regarding special deals and exclusive coupons. As an added bonus, you will receive a coupon code worth \$5.00 off your next Pengad order.

The Member 10 Buying Program terms and conditions are as follows:

- 10% off merchandise only
- Minimum order is \$15.00
- Account must be in good credit standing
- Coupon may not be transferred
- Coupon may not be applied to orders already invoiced
- Coupon may not be combined with other discounts, sales, or special offers
- Coupon may be used for multiple purchases
- Coupon effective March 5, 2012 – December 31, 2012

### **Don't Forget about DRA's mentor program**

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 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. We are willing to volunteer our time to get to know you, praise you for your achievements and lend encouragement for those tough times when you take the CSR, attend your first deposition, or are making the switch from being an official to freelance reporter.

If you are a current student at the 140-level speed and above or any reporter that wishes to be mentored, and you are interested in participating, please go [read more](#), or fill out the [Mentee Application form](#). If you have further questions, we can be reached at 925.905.2611 or email the Mentor Program coordinator, Rich Alossi, [district4@caldra.org](mailto:district4@caldra.org). Once we receive your application, we will endeavor to make the best match possible for both mentor and mentee. Thank you!.

Is there an issue you would like to know about? Have a question or a story to share?  
Write to [studentnewslettereditor@caldra.org](mailto:studentnewslettereditor@caldra.org)