

Reporter Spotlight: Sarah Maksim



SARAH K. MAKSIM
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How long have you been reporting?

I have been working for nine years.

Where did you grow up?

I lived most of my life in Santa Clara, but I've moved to Concord, and now I'm about to buy a house in Oakley!

Tell us about your family.

My fiancé, Alex and I have two dogs, Mazzy and Pepper, three fish, about 200 plants, mostly orchids.

How did you first get involved with DRA?

I was a brand new reporter, and I wanted to know as much as I could about how to be a proper professional. I heard about DRA from Monyeen Black and Toni Pulone and their energy hooked me instantly.

What do you like to do when you're not reporting?

I like to garden, kayak, play videogames, and enjoy time outside with my fur family.

What is the most exotic place you have ever taken a deposition?

If you exclude maximum security prisons, I had a deposition in a Buddhist convent in San Francisco. That was super interesting.

If you could do it all over again, would you choose court reporting as a career?

Without a doubt! Being a freelance reporter has given me so many opportunities to be successful. I truly love what I do, and I look forward to helping new reporters be as successful and happy as I am.

What is one professional accomplishment you'd still like to achieve?

I want to provide realtime to my clients. I'm still not ready, but I'm working towards it.

What's your cocktail order?

I don't drink often, but when I do, I enjoy Cabernet Sauvignon.

Do you still practice on your machine?

I don't practice speed building anymore, but I do edit my dictionary and improve my accuracy some days after work.

What advice would you give to a struggling court reporting student?

There are a few things I would do. I would look for a mentor or ask a firm to coach you for the first couple years of reporting. Schools only teach you how to pass the CSR, but there are many other nuances of the profession that are very important. If you are nervous about jumping into the depo world, many of us are eager to help put you in touch with the right people who care about your progress. Don't be afraid to ask us for help!

Most importantly, constantly remind yourself that even though we are alone most of the time we work, that doesn't mean that you don't have support. There are a plethora of resources available at your fingertips. You are NEVER alone.

If you couldn't be a court reporter anymore, what career would you choose?

Japanese interpreter, gardener, or professional dog whisperer.

If you could only eat one food for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Italian or Japanese.

What is your favorite guilty pleasure?

Online shopping....oh, who are we kidding.....shopping in general. I'm a sucker for a good deal!

Why is DRA membership important to you?

There's no doubt in my mind that the connections I make through DRA are the most important. I have made life-long friends through this organization, and although I've only been reporting for a little under a decade, I have seen so much growth in my abilities. I owe it to DRA and all the members for being there and listening and encouraging me towards excellence. I can only strive to pay it forward.