

April 25, 2005

Dear interpreters:

The purpose of this letter is to convey to you the RID National Office's, the RID Board of Directors' and my sincere apologies for sending a message of disenfranchisement to the Latino/a sign language interpreting community by approving a policy requiring a minimum of 25 conference registrants requesting Spanish language interpretation in order to provide services for the 2005 RID national conference. It is important to me and the other RID leaders and National Office staff that all members of RID feel valued and respected. I respectfully request that you consider accepting this apology.

Due to the diligent efforts, in the way of a letter-writing campaign, of a group of dedicated RID members representing Mano a Mano, RID Interpreters and Translitterators of Color (ITOC), Cultural Diversity in Leadership Committee (CDILC) and individual members on behalf of the Latino/a interpreting community this serious error was quickly brought to the RID Board's attention.

The RID Board responded quickly and in January, the Spanish Language Access Work Group was appointed comprised of an RID board representative, 2005 conference planning committee representative, and members of Mano a Mano, CDILC, and ITOC. The Work Group made excellent recommendations; not only to improve member services to Latino/a members/colleagues at the 2005 conference, but to also improve member services at all levels of the organization thus ensuring RID's commitment to the philosophy that RID is an essential arena for ALL members in their pursuit of excellence.

Based on recommendations from the work group, on April 1, 2005 the RID Board of Directors approved the following policy:

RID Conference Spanish Language Access Policy:

RID shall provide access at the 2005 conference and all future conferences by assigning teams of interpreters that are culturally sensitive and qualified in English, Spanish, and Sign Language to all plenary and business sessions. In addition, access to other conference events will be available to those who register at least 40 days prior to the conference and request such access.

Rationale

Since the 1997 Long Beach National RID convention, the need for Spanish language access has been before the Board and conference planners. RID recognizes the impact of changing demographics, particularly with Deaf and Hard of Hearing persons and service providers in Spanish language communities. Subsequently, RID accepted Puerto Rico's application to be an RID affiliate chapter [Originally called ISPRID; now known as PR-RID] and intends to continue to support those members as well as other Latino interpreters.

In keeping with the spirit of being an essential arena for members in their pursuit of excellence, I would like to extend to you a personal invitation to the 2005 RID National

Conference in San Antonio, TX, July 10 – 15, 2005. This year the conference theme is “Bridging Cultures”. What better way to bridge cultures than to bring together the diverse group of interpreting professionals who participated in this work group? They have lead the way for RID to better understand what bridging cultures truly means. We are grateful to have these people in the profession and even more grateful they willing to be a part of improving RID.

Immediately before the 2005 RID National Conference begins on July 10, 2005, Mano a Mano and the CDILC will kick off the exciting week with pre-conference events and leadership training opportunities.

Despite the problems that we have experienced, members of the Latino community recognize the importance of going on and are bringing their knowledge and expertise to the conference so that there is growth on everyone's part. This year, the 2005 RID national conference includes a variety of presentations and workshops that I hope you will find intriguing. How fortunate we all are to have these topics on this year's schedule. We look forward to more at future events.

Professional discussion

- “The Texas Trilingual Initiative, Development of Trilingual Interpreter Certification” by David Myers

Workshops

- “Insights for Successful Trilingual Interpreting Within Latino Communities by Alyson Sanchez,
- “Did You Leave Your Socks In Mexico or Are You Talking About Your Brother? Differences and Similarities Between American Sign Language and Mexican Sign Language Vocabularies” by David Quinto Pozos and Mary Mooney
- “Interpret-3: Trilingual Interpreting, It's More Than Just the Language” by Myrelis Aponte-Samalot and Maria Laguna-Diaz.

In addition to the abundance of conference workshops and presentations listed at: http://www.rid.org/Program_listing.pdf, the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services – Division of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services in collaboration with the University of Arizona National Center for Interpretation is developing a trilingual interpreter certification and interpreters are invited to pilot a test of Spanish proficiency at Mano a Mano and the RID National Conference.

Thank you for your dedication and input to ensuring RID continues to be an organization that encourages “bridging cultures”; armed with strategies that seek to include, rather than exclude members.

I sincerely hope to see you at the RID national conference in San Antonio, TX, this summer where personally I will make time to continue this dialog. Despite painful encounters, misunderstandings, feelings of biases, that have occurred in the past we can all work through them. If you see me in the halls or sitting in the lobby, please take the time to say hello and visit with me. I want to work together!

Many thanks go to the countless members of the Latino community who spent their time and efforts while working with the work group to address the issues. A final thank you to the members of the Spanish Language Access Work Group whose valuable contributions have made all the difference: Tony Barraza, Suzanne Garcia-Lightbourn, Ben Hall, Lucy James, Geri Mu and Angela Roth.

Sincerely,



Angela Jones, CI and CT

President

4201 Mt. Voss Dr.

San Diego, CA 92117

858/504-2777 V

AJones619@aol.com

And Signed in Support by:

Jimmy Beldon, CDI

Vice President

2809 S. George St.

St. Sioux Falls, SD 57110

(605) 367-5761 / Jbeldon@c-s-d.org

Cheryl Moose, CI and CT

Secretary/Treasurer

656 Michigan Ave

S Elgin, IL 60177

847/888-0787 B / moose0787@aol.com

Glendia Boon, CI and CT, NAD V

Member at Large

333 Commerce Street

Alexandria, VA 22314 / aslb4me2@aol.com

Rachel B. Coppelli, CI and CT

Region I Representative

12888 Burchard Road

Guys Mills, PA 16327

814-789-4173 / rbcoppelli@earthlink.net

Suzanne K. Piper, CI and CT

Region II Representative

10111 Renfrew Road

Silver Spring, MD 20901-2015

(h) 301.593.1258 voice / pipmor@erols.com

Bruce King, CI and CT, NAD V

Region III Representative

305 Indian Rd.

Wauseon, OH 43567

(419) 446-4264 v

(419) 446-4305 tty / BKing@Sauder.com

Glenace L. Humphrey, CI and CT

Region IV Representative

1221 Orchard Lakes Dr

St Louis, MO 63146-5132

(W) 314/993-1062 B

(H) 314/993-1062 B

Fax: 314/567-5568 / silverarch@aol.com

Robert C. Balaam, CI and CT

Region V Representative

4101 24th St #610

San Francisco, CA 94114

rbalaam@sbcglobal.net

Clay Nettles, MA, MS

RID Executive Director

333 Commerce Street

Alexandria, VA 22314

703-838-0030 v 703-838-0459 tty

admin@rid.org