



Special Issue

Interpreter Educators Symposium Featuring NCIEC Highlights



**Dr. Carolyn Ball, VRSII
executive director**

From March 4 through 6, the VRS Interpreting Institute (VRSII) held its sixth Interpreter Educators Symposium, in Salt Lake City. The three-day symposium, called "Creating Connections – Expanding Possibilities:

Infusing NCIEC Resources into Interpreter Education," was a study of the array of educational resources, developed with federal grant funds by the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers (NCIEC.) During the symposium, educators determined how they can best use those resources in their existing curriculum.



The NCIEC, which is comprised of six federally-funded Interpreter Education

Centers, was established in 2006. The organization is now at the conclusion of its most recent five-year grant period and is waiting to see if its grant will be renewed.

Over the years, the NCIEC has created resources in areas that range from training for aspiring

interpreters, interpreter education, legal and medical interpreting, to deaf self-advocacy.

Cathy Cogen, director of the National Interpreter Education Center at Northeastern University, spoke of current and emerging trends that will place increasingly complex demands on interpreters. These trends include increases in minority and immigrant populations, increasing numbers of individuals who have cochlear implants, increases in



Cathy Cogen, NCIEC

the number of deaf individuals who have co-occurring disabilities, and increased demand for interpreting in high level, professional training and career settings. Interpreters will need specialized training and

strategies to face these new challenges. Cogen said, "Interpreting education is not currently ready to provide the needed training. We have yet to identify effective practices in these areas. Our future must be about conducting the research and investigations that will produce evidence-based curricula to meet these needs."

Also presenting at the symposium for the NCIEC were Anna Witter-Merithew, University of Northern Colorado; Beverly Hollrah, Gallaudet University; Pauline Annarino, El Camino College; and Trudy Schafer, National Center. Two other NCIEC centers

are located at St. Catherine University in Minnesota and Western Oregon University in Oregon.



L to R: Beverly Hollrah, Trudy Shafer, Pauline Annarino, Cathy Cogen, Anna Witter-Merithew

At the symposium, participants were asked to choose an area of study from the following six topics, for which NCIEC has created learning materials. Then, on the final day of the symposium,



participants created a presentation about how this topic could be used in their program's curriculum.

The topics included:

1. Classroom media
2. Classroom modules
 - Deaf-blind interpreting
 - Deaf interpreter – hearing
 - Interpreter teams
 - Healthcare interpreting
 - Social justice
 - Video Relay Consumers
 - RV System
3. Deaf self-Advocacy

Deaf and Deaf/Blind

4. Research
5. Specialized curriculum
 - Healthcare
 - Legal
 - Vocational rehabilitation
 - Deaf and trilingual interpreters
6. Student readers

For the past three years, students have submitted articles to the *Journal of Undergraduate Interpreting Studies*. These articles are accessible to undergraduate students and are to be used to publish literature reviews, class papers, etc. Students don't need permission to use the ideas contained in *Journal* articles.



The areas participants chose to study were personalized based on their programs. Each group chose one resource and defined three different ways of using that one resource in their programs.



Symposium participants

Lucy James, from Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, Texas, says she is amazed at the number of people in attendance and the range of their expertise and experience. She says being able to attend the symposium and dedicate a large block of uninterrupted time to the needs of her program has been incredibly helpful. James chose classroom media as the topic on which she would focus. She says she is looking forward to the brainstorming session with peers and the different perspectives they will bring to the subject.



Symposium participants

Jennifer Flagg, from the Community College of Allegheny County, Monroeville, Pa., said she is already familiar with NCIEC resources, but is hoping to find other ways to use the information. Flagg says she often works alone, which is difficult. "At this symposium, I feel like I'm able to take advantage of the knowledge of everyone around me." Flagg's group chose research as their topic of study.



The VRSII hosts the Interpreter Educator Symposium as part of its ongoing mission to provide innovative educational experiences that empower interpreter educators and interpreters to achieve professional excellence.



VRSII Faculty L to R: Clint Behunin, Samond Bishara, Holly Nelson, Joseph Featherstone, Teresa Edwards (part-time staff mentor,) Annette Miner, Teddi Von Pingel



VRSII and NCIEC