

**Date: Sept. 2, 2011**

**ASL Interpreter Training Institute School-to-Work Program Graduates 2011 Class  
Training Offered Only at the VRSII**

**SALT LAKE CITY – (Sept. 2, 2011)** The VRS Interpreting Institute (VRSII), a world-class training facility for American Sign Language interpreters and interpreter educators, today conducted graduation ceremonies for its 2011 School-to-Work Program (STW) class. The STW Program provides exclusive, advanced preparatory training for Interpreter Education Program (IEP) graduates ready to take the National Interpreter Certification (NIC) performance test and obtain employment in the interpreting field. Applicants are chosen after a four-phase application process. Those chosen receive the STW Program training at no cost.

The STW Program accomplishes its objectives through a 13-week interpreting immersion program that includes Advanced ASL Courses, Advanced Interpreting courses, Seminar Courses, one-on-one mentoring, working internships and unique experiences that help students gain confidence and professional acumen and bridge the gap from school to work.

Amber, a STW Program graduating class member from California, says that she is already recommending the training to her cohorts. "In the STW program you receive a lot of one-on-one attention from your own mentors who care about you on a professional and personal level. You learn from new people and are immersed in a new world. Everyone has a different signing style, depending on what region they come from and you learn how to read those styles. My expectations have been met and beyond."

Dr. Carolyn Ball, VRSII Executive Director, stresses the importance of mentoring in an interpreter's education. "Mentoring can help IEP graduates learn to function with confidence in their role as an interpreter. Mentoring is also a vital part of bridging the gap for novice interpreters to succeed in obtaining national certification," says Ball.

Kari, a STW Program graduate from Illinois who graduated from an IEP in May of 2011, says the STW Program has improved her confidence and given her more experience working on Video Relay Service calls, which she enjoyed doing briefly during her IEP, but for which she could not find additional training at home after graduation. "The STW Program offered me the kind of experience I was looking for. It's a great opportunity. I now feel I can portray myself as a professional ASL interpreter," she says.

Sara, a STW Program graduate from Kentucky, has always had a plan to pass the NIC a year from her IEP graduation date. Although she was working with a mentor in her hometown, she loved the idea of intense training that was available through the STW Program and felt that it would help her develop the skills she needed to have a career in community ASL interpreting. She says, "During the STW Program, I was able to do a lot more self development than I was able to do at home. We were given tools to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses to help develop self awareness. I've accomplished so many 'firsts' and had the opportunity to do things I've never done before."

Applications for the next STW Program, which begins Jan. 4, 2012, will be accepted through Sept. 23, 2011. For more information about the STW Program, visit [www.vrsii.com/training](http://www.vrsii.com/training) or contact Dr. Carolyn Ball at [cball@sorenson.com](mailto:cball@sorenson.com).

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**About the VRS Interpreting Institute**

The Video Relay Service Interpreting Institute (VRSII) is a world-class training facility dedicated to lifelong interpreter training and mentoring of all entry-level, qualified and professional interpreters. The leader in Video Relay Service (VRS) education, the VRSII offers curriculum designed especially for VRS interpreters utilizing the latest, highest-quality video relay and educational technologies. The VRSII was established by Sorenson Communications in April 2009 and is located in Salt Lake City.

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