



February 2015 Issue



Director's Message

As you will see in the *Connector* newsletter this month, we are spotlighting a pioneer in the field of interpreting and interpreter education, David Myers. I was honored to meet Myers and interview him about his prodigious role in the history of interpreting. Myers

attributes his career focus as well as much of his success to Boyce Williams, the person he describes as his mentor and the inspiration for his career.

For those readers who are not familiar with Williams, he was the first deaf federal employee. He worked in Washington, D.C., where he saw the need for organizations to provide support to the Deaf community. He was instrumental in creating the National Theater of the Deaf (NTD), the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association (ADARA) and post-secondary programs for deaf people at the college level.

In 1957, Williams established and managed more than 100 short-term training projects and workshops to educate professionals who worked with deaf people. Prior to Williams' involvement, deaf people were never invited to attend these workshops. However, Williams made it a policy to include deaf participants, who provided input about services to hearing workshop participants. Including deaf people also provided them with

leadership development.

At the time Williams was working in Washington, D.C., the vast majority of people with interpreting skills were either teachers of deaf students or children of deaf adults (CODAs). Interpreting was not yet considered a profession, and these people were not paid; their work was considered a free public service. Interpreters usually had jobs in other professional areas, so few were available to interpret at events or trainings. People who happened to learn sign language at their churches were sometimes called to interpret at vocational rehabilitation meetings, and some of the counselors who attended meetings served as interpreters.



Boyce Williams and Lottie Riekehof, original member of RID

Williams recognized the increasing need for skilled, trained interpreters. In an attempt to quickly increase the supply of interpreters, Williams wrote a five-year training grant, which began a new decade of interpreter training and the basis of the birth of a new profession — interpreting for the deaf. Virginia Lee Hughes, a CODA and one of the original interpreter educators of that decade, noted that Williams was the catalyst in establishing interpreter

educator training.

Not only did Williams give rise to the field of interpreting and interpreter education, he also inspired another dynamic leader who continues to improve interpreter education today – David Myers. Williams' legend lives on in individuals like Myers. Their influence in the field of interpreting will benefit deaf people for generations to come.

Apply Now for the VRSII's 2015 Educator Empowerment Series Classes



The VRSII recently announced its Educator Empowerment Series (EES) class lineup for 2015. EES classes are tailored for interpreter educators and address contemporary issues in the field of professional ASL interpreting.

The second EES class of 2015, "Situating Learning in Interpreting Education," will be presented April 24 through 26.

The class will focus on methods for integrating situated learning as part of curriculum planning and will be taught by VRSII faculty members.

In this class, participants can expect to learn more about the theories of situational and experiential learning as they relate to ASL/English interpreting. Expenses for accepted participants will be compensated.

Learn more about this and other EES classes by visiting www.vrsii.com/programs.

VRSII Educator Symposium to Feature the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers



During March 2015, the VRSII will again host the VRSII Interpreter

Educators Symposium, in Salt Lake City. This year, featured speakers will be members of the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers

(NCIEC), including Pauline Annarino, Cathy Cogen, Beverly Hollrah, Trudy Schafer and Anna Witter-Merithew.

The three-day symposium, called "Creating Connections – Expanding Possibilities: Infusing NCIEC Resources into Interpreter Education," will treat participants to an array of educational resources, developed with federal grant funds by the NCIEC. At the close of the symposium, participants will be given full access to all NCIEC resources for use in their individual programs.

The NCIEC is comprised of six federally-funded Interpreter Education Centers that were established in 2006. The centers maximize expertise, leadership and fiscal resources toward the shared goal of enhancing sign language interpreting education. Since its inception, the NCIEC has collaborated with partnering organizations and individuals to build effective practice foundations. The NCIEC provides resources in areas that range from training for aspiring interpreters, interpreter education, legal and medical interpreting, to deaf self-advocacy.

The VRSII hosts its Interpreter Educator Symposia as part of its ongoing mission to provide innovative educational experiences that empower interpreter educators and interpreters to achieve professional excellence. Dr. Carolyn Ball, VRSII executive director, says she is looking forward to the collaboration in March between the two organizations. "The NCIEC has created a wealth of information that will benefit the interpreting community for years to come. We are pleased to have the opportunity to support them in sharing this information with the interpreting educator community."

There is Still Time

The School-to-Work (STW) Program deadline is quickly approaching for the summer 2015 program, but there is still time for qualified IEP graduates to apply. Encourage your students to submit their application for the STW program prior to Feb. 13, 2015, to be considered for this outstanding program.

The STW Program is a 12-week immersion program that offers one-on-one mentoring as well as additional course work and professional internships in the Deaf community to assist interpreters who have recently graduated from a qualified IEP. The program also helps bridge the gap from graduation to work readiness. Past STW graduates have called the program "life changing." Travel, lodging and food are compensated for those accepted into the program. To learn more, visit www.vrsii.com/schooltowork/stwlearnmore.



Summer 2014 School-to-Work Program Graduating Class

Interpreting Anticipated to be One of America's Fastest Growing Jobs

An Aug. 30, 2014, article printed in *USA Today*, and written by *24/7 Wall Street Journal* reporter Robert Serenbetz, states interpreting and translating are anticipated to be two of America's fastest growing jobs.

Serenbetz says, "The jobs with the largest expected growth are often those that benefit from America's changing demographics." An aging population requires more health-related support. Serenbetz reports that on average, all health-support occupations are expected to grow 28 percent by 2022. Six within the top 10 fastest-growing jobs are in the health care sector.

The fifth fastest-growing job in this sector is for interpreters and translators, with a percent change between 2012 and 2022 listed at 46.1 percent. The Bureau of Labor Statistics claims increased

globalization and greater diversity within the U.S. is the primary driver of growth for the profession. Serenbetz says that although technology has made interpreting more efficient, computers cannot provide the specific nuances of human translation. He anticipates that most growth in the interpreter/translator sector will likely be due to greater need for interpreters of ASL and translators of other global emerging market languages.

The original article was posted in *USA Today* at <http://www.usatoday.com/story/money/business/2014/08/30/24-7-wall-st-fastest-growing-jobs/14816553/>.

VRSII Salutes David Myers

Prior to his retirement in 2011, David Myers enjoyed a notable, 46-year career providing vocational and social rehabilitation services to hard-of-hearing and deaf people. Through his work with the University of Arizona, Myers changed testing standards for ASL interpreters.

From 1993 through 2011, Myers worked with the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), the Office for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) and as executive director for the Texas Commission for the Deaf. His efforts with the DHHS led to an increase in DHHS staff by more than sevenfold and increased the office's budget by more than 400 percent.

In partnership with the University of Arizona, Myers helped create an effective ASL interpreter testing system called the Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI). These tests are now considered some of the most effective to test the skills of ASL interpreters and are used across the country. Myers also developed the Hispanic Trilingual Interpreter Certification tests for trilingual interpreters.

Myers created a task force that focused on the needs of English-speaking, hard-of-hearing and late-deafened people in Texas. Based on the task force's findings, Myers created a program, including establishing a hearing loss specialist position, to meet their needs.

He also created a trilingual task force focused on assessing the trilingual communication needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing Hispanics in the state of Texas.

Myers is currently working with a committee that includes Jack Gannon and Mary Switzer, to highlight and celebrate the accomplishments of Boyce Williams, one of the original founders of the RID and the man Myers describes as his “mentor.”



Carolyn Ball and David Myers

At the beginning of Myer’s career, Boyce steered Myers in the direction of rehabilitation counseling – a field that was in its fledgling stages at that time.

In addition to his work in Texas, Myers also worked to provide rehabilitative services to deaf and hard-of-hearing people in Indiana, Ohio, Louisiana, Michigan and at the Rehabilitation Services Administration, in Washington, D.C.

The VRSII salutes David Myers advocacy for deaf and hard-of-hearing people and for the impact he is making in the field of ASL interpreting.