

December 20, 2024



For the first time since 2016, a Nebraska interpreter has qualified at the Certified level! Please join me in congratulating **Myhanh Che** as a Certified Vietnamese Interpreter! More info on her ceremony to come!



Monica Kellogg qualified as a Registered Spanish interpreter and lives in Omaha. You might have met her already as she took shadowing very seriously and got a good 30 hours under her belt before the exam!



Dulce Valdez Espinoza qualified as a Registered Spanish interpreter and lives in Kearney. Her hard work is helping the Language Access Program to achieve our goal of expanding interpreter resources into central Nebraska!



I will be out of the office 12/23/24 – 1/13/25 but am still planning on reviewing and approving your Interpreter Statements. So when you email me and get an out of office reply, don't worry, I've got you!

Upcoming State Holidays Attached to this email is a listing of the 2025 State Holidays. Please get them on your calendars. The Nebraska Judicial Branch will be closed for business in observance of the following holidays:

- January 1st New Year's Day
- January 20th Martin Luther King Day

Canon 2: Representation of qualifications

Canon 2 of our Code of Ethics states *Interpreters shall accurately and completely represent what their training and pertinent experience is and any certification they may have.* I am seeing an uptick in Registered and Non-certified interpreters being listed as Certified on Journal Entries & Orders. When that happens, it causes extra work as we then have to go back and ask the Judge or Clerk Magistrate to do a Nunc Pro Tunc order to protect the integrity of the record. I don't believe that interpreters are purposely misrepresenting their qualifications but may be too timid to interrupt to clarify. However, interrupt they must – this is a non-negotiable as the reputation of the entire profession is at stake! I and the Operations Team stand ready to guide interpreters on successfully and respectfully interrupting, so please reach out to us!

Douglas County Interpreter Family and Friends Dinner Celebration (courtesy of Adrian)

After much thought and planning, Douglas County Language Access hosted our first Interpreters' Family and Friends Dinner Celebration on November 9, 2024. The event turned out to be a wonderful gathering filled with warmth, great conversations, and joyful moments. We were honored to be joined by interpreters and their families, as well as members of the Public Defender's Office, including a former PD now serving as a Federal Public Defender. Juvenile court bailiffs and probation officers also attended, making the evening even more special. The diverse menu featured delicious dishes such as Chicken Pozole Verde, guacamole, veggie trays, baklava, pizza, biryani, carnitas, meatballs, fresh fruit, desserts, and much more. Everyone contributed something unique, creating a delightful culinary experience. Entertainment included music, karaoke (with talented performances by a few interpreters), and a dedicated game room for the children. They enjoyed dancing and playing, adding to the lively atmosphere. Overall, the evening provided a fantastic opportunity to connect beyond work, share stories, and celebrate our community. We're excited to continue this tradition next year and hope even more colleagues and friends will join us! Thank you all for making this event such a memorable success!

Professional Resources

Lots of Judicial Branch end of the year reports are available. These are good sources of information on what we do and who we serve as interpreters are an integral part of the Branch's service delivery.

- The [Judicial Branch Annual Report](#) for Fiscal Year July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, is now available. The report is presented annually to the Legislature during the Chief Justice's "State of the Judiciary" each January.
- The Office of Public Guardian has issued its [2024 Annual Report](#). The report strives to give voice to experiences of some of Nebraska's most vulnerable people.
- The Juvenile Probation Services Division has released its [Annual Report](#) for FY23. Highlights include juvenile justice data and progress, updates on the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement, success stories of probation youth, outstanding staff spotlights, and the annual artwork contest winners.

Recognitions

- ✚ **Perla Alarcon-Flory** was amazing, and I appreciate her! *Camryn Burgers, 3J Probation Officer*
- ✚ **Ben Hammar**, thank you SO much for helping me cover Spanish interpreter requests while I was out of the office! – *Amiel Armijo, Language Access Coordinator*
- ✚ I want to shout out **Kari Corkle** for her excellent advocacy of all the interpreters who work with her districts. Kari works hard to get us all the resources we need, and she is a fantastic conduit between the state and each contracted interpreter. Thank you, Kari! - *Ben Hammar, Registered Spanish Interpreter*
- ✚ It was quite an experience with 2 interpreters (**Perla Alarcon-Flory & Juana Diego**) but it went well!" - *Sherri Ullmann Clerk Magistrate Gage County*
- ✚ **Irma Watt**, thank you for traveling near and far for trials and other cases! We appreciate you. – *Amiel Armijo, Language Access Coordinator*

✚ And just a side note.....both **Ms. Hodges** and **Ms. Alarcon-Flory** did a remarkable job today with the Spanish interpreter cases. I appreciate their skill and professionalism. Kudos to them!! - *Jodie Roberts, Ex-officio of Polk County and District Courts*

✚ A heartfelt THANK YOU!! to **Adrian Hinojosa**, who very expeditiously found very last-minute coverage for my scheduled blocks after my medical emergency. He is the best coordinator, good colleague, and great friend! - *Constanza S. Meier, Certified Spanish Interpreter*

District 2 Probation moving to Bellevue

Probation and Language Access met to ensure there is no disruption of services for justice involved individuals when District 2 Probation transitions to its new Bellevue location on January 21st and 22nd.
Future locations:

- Primary location at 1410 Wall Street, Bellevue, NE 68005
- Secondary location at the Sullivan building for reporting after Court

Language Access will partner with Probation to:

- Translate documents including door flyers and instructions
- Explore expanding blocks or implementing new blocks
- Explore what services could be provisioned remotely

Tax Documents

State Accounting will mail out the 1099s by January 31st. The minimum amount an individual needs to earn to receive a 1099 is \$600. If you have questions or do not receive your 1099 by the beginning of February, you can reach State Accounting directly at (402)471-2581.

Did you know? Fun fact from Star Judson (Karen, Burmese): Minnesota has the largest Karen population in the country, and Nebraska has the 2nd largest. There are approximately 5,500 across the state.