

2021 Spring



THE MEDIATOR

A publication of the New Jersey Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.



It was one of those March days when the sun
shines hot and the wind blows cold, when it is
summer in the light and winter in the shade.

— *Charles Dickens*



Free Workshops NJ Courts!

Save these dates April 24th and May 8th

See page 8 for registration information.

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A Message from NJRID President . . .

Greetings Members!

I hope you are all doing well and making the most of the warmer weather while still staying safe. I am looking forward to getting back to some sort of normalcy which includes seeing all of you in person! In the meantime, the NJRID Board has been working diligently on several projects such as bylaws and website improvement that we hope to roll out in the near future, but as always we would love to hear more about your expectations and desires. Please email us with ideas you would like to see implemented.

Have a happy springtime!

We hope you all enjoyed the Passover & Easter holiday.

Elizabeth Zanetakos, NIC
NJRID President



A Message from The Mediator Editor . . .

Greetings NJRID members and friends!

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Monthly Communicator. Yes, winter is officially over! On Saturday, March 20th the spring equinox occurred marking the astronomical first day of spring in our hemisphere! Although I knew it because I saw the crocus were blooming during my morning doggie walk.

In honor of the new season, I am revising some of my more recent vocabulary. For example, in this edition the term renewal will replace uncertain, the term hope will replace fear, and the term open will replace closed.

The word renewal is defined as: "An instance of resuming an activity or state after an interruption." For many of us the past year has been at the very least an interruption and at its very worst life-altering. Like you I have been inspired by those on the front lines who have stepped up and continue to go above and beyond in an effort to put an end to the COVID pandemic.

With the various vaccines now available we are all feeling a renewed sense of hope for a return to some kind of normalcy. Recently, I attended a vaccine mega site with a friend who was getting her first shot. There was a mood of celebration and hope among the folks there. We are also seeing some schools opening for more face to face in person learning while continuing a hybrid mix of a day or two with remote learning.

Spring 2021 brings a renewal of life, hope and open opportunities, wishing you all three this season!

Be well,
Kathy Earp-McDonald

P.S. Be sure to read the article, Teaching Future Interpreters by Sandra Piscitelli and the interview of Rachel Matthews, owner of Integrity Interpreting by Joan Cohen. Many thanks for your contributions to our NJRID newsletter!



The Mediator invites contributions of the articles and news items. **Submissions** may be edited for space if published.

Send articles, notices, announcements, news, required in word document and email to:
news.njrid@gmail.com

Deadline dates to submit by:

Spring Issue: March 20

Summer Issue: June 20

Autumn Issue: September 20

Winter Issue: December 20

The Mediator is published quarterly and is emailed/on-line to members of the NJ Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.



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In Fondest Memory

NJRID Board and membership honors the life of two recently fallen warriors.

Adele Wiggins who passed on January 16, 2021.

and

Rosemarie Perrone-Crisham who passed on February 5, 2021.

Each of these remarkable women leave behind a rich legacy of professional excellence, dedication, advocacy, and many years of loving service to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities. They are models that we all aspire to emulate. They were taken from us too soon.

We are thankful for their time with us and the seeds they planted in the lives and hearts of so many who had the honor to know them. Our heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of Adele and Rosemarie.



Adele Wiggins was born into a Deaf family of Harriet and Julius Wiggins. Her parents were the owners of the Silent News, the first National newspaper for the Deaf.

Adele began her professional career at the New Jersey Division of the Deaf's Northern Field Office in Elizabeth. She was the first individual to be employed in the State of New Jersey as a full-time interpreter.

She later accepted a position with the Camden County United Way, implementing and coordinating a variety of Human Service resources for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. While at the United Way, she instituted an Interpreter Referral Service for Southern New Jersey.

Adele was quite devoted to the Hebrew Association of the Deaf, in Philadelphia.

For over 15 years, she served as their interpreter for their monthly Shabbat services and High Holy days.

She often interpreted for HAD members at their family events.

She was fluent in Hebrew and lived in Israel for several years.

Over her career she mentored numerous Interpreter Education students, provided training on Jewish interpreting and growing up with Deaf parents.

As her parents aged, she was their caretaker. A devoted mother of 2 daughters and 3 grandchildren.

Submitted by Rita Jo Scarcella



A Memorial and GoFundMe page for Rosemarie 'Ro' Perrone-Crisham can be found on Facebook at:

https://www.gofundme.com/f/rosemarie-perronecrisham-memorial-fund?utm_source=facebook&fbclid=IwAR0L5qcBvHldsvHR7R7QliqzWuWO0xcA3jKt7-VmV19jcZMh1-ElhKtsA2Q

Teaching Future Interpreters During COVID-19

By Sandra Piscitelli

Recently, I have started meditating. I started to meditate in the late spring after life as we knew it changed because of COVID-19. On Thursday, March 13, 2020, I finished teaching my last class before spring break. I remember the date because I was excited that my son was coming home from Texas the next day. By the following Monday, non-essential businesses were being told they had to close. My son decided to change his flight to an earlier one for fear the airports would be shut down and he would have to rent a car and drive back to Texas. As we learned more about what was then being called, the novel coronavirus, I hoped that adding a week to spring break might be enough to sanitize the campus, and that anyone who had contracted the virus would have recovered and it would not continue to spread. I thought we would surely all be back on campus by April. Then April was changed to the summer, then the summer to the fall. Here we are now, just shy of a year later, and most 2021 spring semester courses will continue to be taught remotely. I find it easier to deal with some things that have changed because of COVID-19 now compared to how it was through late March and April, and I believe part of the reason for that is meditation. Still, I find myself thinking about life in the “before time,” as I’m sure many people do.

Today’s meditation session was, “Why Comparison Doesn’t Work” (Harris 2021). I listened to the introduction and started meditating, thinking, I can definitely use this in my practice – I’m always making comparisons. I compare myself to others as well as compare my ‘now’ self to my ‘then’ self. I started to do some work for the spring semester and realized that I needed to apply what I had learned from the meditation session to my teaching practice as well. I’ve been comparing the virtual classroom with the face-to-face classroom of the past, focusing on the things that are lacking now. Some of these things seem insignificant, like the casual conversations between students before class starts. I was an outside observer of some of those conversations and invited into others. There are also pedagogically relevant events missing, such as observing all students as they work in groups. I also find myself comparing ‘me as a student’ to students I am currently teaching.

One thing that is very different is that when I was a student, I was required to have a certain number of contact hours in the Deaf Community. The thought of this had me feeling both excited and uncomfortable. I was excited because this was a big step in my journey to becoming an educational interpreter. I was uncomfortable because I would be going into a community that, until not long before my foray into, I didn’t know existed. I knew I had to dive in head-first. The first event that I attended was at a Deaf club. I remember parking my car and sitting for a few minutes before going in. My hands were shaking and my heart was beating fast, (Boy, would mediation have helped that night!) After a few minutes, I got out of my car, walked up the steps, opened the door, and saw so many people signing! It was overwhelming. Then it happened, someone asked my name and, after exchanging greetings, they began a conversation with me. After that night, I started to look forward to the hour after I had completed the required hours because that hour and the ones that followed were for me. I owe so much to the people I met that first night and to those I’ve met since. People who, without knowing it, became my teachers and mentors, and some of whom have become my dear friends.

I tell my students my story with the hopes that it will help them to find the courage to do the same: to step out of their comfort zone and to jump in to face the challenge. I tell them that they cannot learn this language by simply attending four semesters of ASL classes for fifteen weeks each regardless of who their teacher is. They need to get out into the community and have conversations with people who will be the future consumers of their services, and to really learn the language and culture. I love when my students come to my office to tell me about their experiences. I love when they can hardly hold back their excitement when telling me and the class that they got their name sign. But since last March, most Deaf clubs have canceled their monthly meetings and other events. In the warmer months, some events were held outside and socially distanced, but with the cooler weather, there are fewer of these face-to-face events. This past fall semester was the

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TEACHING FUTURE INTERPRETERS DURING COVID-19

was the first time I taught my ITP classes entirely remotely. It was also the first semester that students were not required to have contact hours. Sadly, it was the first time the majority of students didn't attend any deaf events - not one event. So, as I get ready to teach spring semester courses, I've added a requirement for students to attend voice-off events. I am doing this knowing the importance of being involved and hoping that once they start that they too, will look forward to the hour after they complete their required contact hours, because that hour is theirs.

Reference: Harris, D. (Host). (2021, January 6). Why comparison doesn't work [Ten Percent Happier podcast]. Retrieved from <https://www.tenpercent.com/challenge>



About Sandra Piscitelli

Sandra Piscitelli, M.ED., NIC is a full-time instructor in the Interpreter Training Program at Ocean County College and freelance interpreter. Sandra graduated from OCC's ITP in 2005 and began working as an educational interpreter. During the ten years in that profession, she completed a Bachelor of Applied Science in Sign Language Interpreting degree, followed a Master of Education in Educational Leadership. Sandra has served as the NJRID Nominating Committee chair and as the Professional Development co-chair for the 2017 NJAD-NJRID Biennial Conference. When she is not working, Sandra and her husband, Nick, like to spend time with their son, Pete and daughter-in-law, Lindsay, who live in Bloomfield, or travel to Austin, Texas to see their younger son, Tim.

... Special By-Laws Meeting ...

April 24, 2021 | 4:00pm - 6:00pm

SAVE
THE
DATE

NJRID Board and Bylaws Committee would like to bring our Bylaws up to date by hosting a series of special meetings with Chuck Clark as Parliamentarian.

The meetings will have a two hour time limit so please review the appropriate sections of the Bylaws in advance.

Our first meeting will focus on Articles 1, 2, and 3.

Be on the lookout for a registration link via email in the upcoming weeks!

thank
you!

Many thanks to all of those who have contributed to our NJRID newsletters. Keep sending articles, ideas and feedback!

Send to news.njrid@gmail.com

thank
you!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are searching for volunteers to assist with the **2021 Virtual Biennial Conference**. If you are willing to volunteer, please contact us at njrid.biennial@gmail.com.

Membership Spotlight Reminder

Is there an NJRID member who you'd like to recognize?

Have you achieved certification? Is there a student NJRID member who deserves the spotlight?

Please contact me at news.njrid@gmail.com

Interview with Rachel Matthews, owner of Integrity Interpreting, LLC.

by Joan Cohen, CI, CT, Ed: K-12

Rachel Matthews, NIC



Rachel has her Associates degree in Deaf Studies as well as in ASL Interpreting from Camden County College. She graduated with her Bachelor's degree in Communication Studies from Thomas Edison State College.

She is a Nationally Certified Sign Language Interpreter under RID and has been a working freelance interpreter for the past 11 years.

Currently, Rachel Matthews is an adjunct professor at Camden County College teaching courses in the ITP program as well as the owner of an ASL agency in South Jersey called, Integrity Interpreting, LLC.

I recently had the opportunity to chat with Rachel Matthews, NIC, AOPC, EIPA, owner of Integrity Interpreting, LLC. based in Glassboro, New Jersey. I wanted to find out Rachel's journey from her initial interest in learning ASL to operating an agency.

How did you first become interested in learning ASL and becoming involved with the Deaf community?

I started taking ASL courses when I was a sophomore at Vineland High School. I became friendly with two Deaf students, who encouraged me to learn to sign. It was then that I knew this is what I wanted to do for life.

What happened after high school and how did you become owner of Integrity?

I earned my interpreting degree from Camden County College and then a Bachelor's in Communication from Thomas Edison State University. I began free lancing, working with several different agencies, both spoken language and specifically ASL. Then in 2017, an opportunity was presented by the owner of Sign Language Services, a well-established referral agency in southern New Jersey. Was I interested in taking over the agency? After careful consideration, I said yes and Integrity Interpreting, LLC was launched. My intention was to hire like-minded, ethically focused interpreters, providing interpreters with another option of an agency to work for. Also, I wanted to advocate and educate the community at large on services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities.

Looking back now, what do you wish you knew when first taking over the operations of the agency.

There were two things that would have been helpful to have in the beginning.

1. Having a stronger foundation in the business aspect of running the agency, such as marketing and payroll.
2. Having the opportunity to meet other small business owners to receive support and encouragement from.

Fill us in on the Terp Talk sessions that Integrity sponsors!

In 2019, Integrity started to sponsor a bi-monthly opportunity for interpreters to gather. A Street Leverage article was the prompt for discussions on such topics as Feedback, Ethical issues, Giving Back to the community and working with CDIs. I wanted to provide the opportunity for novice and experienced, hearing and deaf interpreters, to learn from each other in a supportive environment.



Many thanks to Joan Cohen for sharing this interview with Rachel Matthews, owner of Integrity Interpreting, LLC. Joan is a longstanding friend and NJRID member. She served as Vice President from 1995-1997. Pete Filipowicz was president during that term.

Joan also served as Chair of Educational Interpreter Committee which established and published state guidelines for interpreters in K-12 settings. She held a position as Coordinator for Certification Maintenance Program (CMP) and presented on topics related to educational interpreting at NJRID conferences.

In another area not directly NJRID related, Joan worked as Project Director for the Educational Interpreter Professional Development Center – South, one of two grant funded programs designed to improve quality standards for Educational Interpreters in New Jersey.

It is good to look back on the history of NJRID and remember the contributions of those who have helped build the foundations of our organization. A word from Joan, "I am grateful to members of the Deaf community and interpreting colleagues who have supported me during my nearly forty-year career!"

Editor



Workshop for ASL and CDI Interpreters:

An Enhanced NJ Virtual Courtroom for Deaf Litigants

Zoom

Saturday, April 24, 2021

10:00 am to noon

.2 CEUs

Presenters:

Christopher Tester, CDI, SC:L

Linda Lamitola, CSC SC:L

Carla K. Mato CI, CT, SC:L

Cost: Free

Workshop presented ASL with no English interpretation.

Limited to 30 participants.

To register, please email the following information to

pdcc.njrid@gmail.com

or kraftkk@yahoo.com

by **Friday, April 23rd**

Name, Address, Phone, RID # and name of workshop

“Your Honor, the Interpretation is Complete”

New Jersey Superior Court Methods for Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)

Zoom

Saturday, May 8, 2021

10:00 am to 12 noon

.2 CEUs

Presenters:

Linda Lamitola, CSC SC:L,

Christopher Tester, CDI, SC:L

Carla K. Mato CI, CT, SC:L

Cost: Free

Workshop presented ASL with no English interpretation.

Limited to 30 participants.

To register, please email

the following information to

pdcc.njrid@gmail.com or kraftkk@yahoo.com

by **Friday, May 7th**

Name, Address, Phone, RID # and name of workshop

Zoom invitation and handouts to be emailed prior to the workshop.

