



# Annual Report to the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts

Annual Planning Meeting Committee

April 2012

Prepared by Mara Simmons, Chair

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## **Voting Members:**

Alejandra Donath (CT)

Gaye Gentes (MA)

Andrea Krlickova (NV)

Lynette Ricks (MO)

Mara Simmons (AR-Chair)

## **Consortium Staff:**

Carola Green

## **Charge of the Annual Meeting Committee**

Under 3.6 of the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts' Agreement for Organization and Operation, the Annual Meeting Committee is charged with addressing matters related to the selection of the annual meeting site, establishment of the annual meeting agenda, arrangements for speakers, panel members, and other participants at the annual meeting. In addition, this committee may make arrangements, with approval from the Executive Committee, for keynote speakers and assist NCSC staff with preparation of reports and documentation for the meeting.

## **Challenges**

Not only had the economy not yet recovered, but additionally, many states were still facing travel restriction, and the proposed changes to the Consortium were causing a state of uncertainty to the membership. The issue became one of, *why go?* The Consortium will no longer exist, so there will be no need to travel and spend the money.

The Executive Committee has felt very strongly that this meeting will assist in bringing forward the work that had already started with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) and the Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) in ensuring sustainability to the Consortium.

The challenge for the Annual Planning Committee was to motivate the membership and to deliver the message of how important it was for every state to have a representative attend. Their voice would assist in the transition that seemed to be inevitable.

## Objectives

### Marketing Packet

The Marketing Packet that had been sent the previous year seemed to help in delivering both, the message and the tools needed to request travel authorization from supervisors. It was decided that the committee would use the same type of packet for this year's meeting. The following items were included in the 2012 Marketing Packet:

- A letter from the Executive Committee with highlights of the program
- A rough draft of the Agenda
- A registration form for the Annual Business meeting
- A memo from the Annual Planning Committee listing some of the optional highlights that were being planned as extracurricular activities.

### Professional Development Sessions:

A survey with four options was sent out to the entire membership asking for their input on the priority they would give each subject. The four options were: Video Remote Interpreting, Program for Interpreter Management, Immigration in State Courts and How to access and use data from the Census Bureau- Data Collection. Once the membership responded, the committee was able to select from the answers and it was decided that one session be dedicated to Video Remote Interpreting and the other to Census Data Collection.

In order to have more comprehensive and hands-on demonstrations, the states that already use video remote interpreting technology were invited to participate and, if possible, give a live demonstration. This required that their provider attend also. The Executive Committee made it very clear that this should not be a vendor-fest and that the provider of this technology to each state should present only as a provider alongside the state and not as a vendor. The only vendor that agreed to assist the state that they provide the technology to was Agustin de la Mora. Due to the fact that he is also a member of the Technical Committee, he was given a choice to either present as a vendor or with the Technical Committee. He agreed that he would present with Rosa Oaks (UT) since his participation in the Technical Committee report would not be imperative this year.

Ms. Chhandasi Pandya from the Migration Policy Institute was invited to present the first session on the institute's findings on "Limited English Proficient Individuals in the United States: Number, Concentration, Growth, and Linguistic Diversity."

### The State Reports

The committee was concerned that the format for the State Reports was too cumbersome on the members and took too long to answer the same questions, year after year. Andrea Krlickova (NV) suggested a survey format that would possibly be more user-friendly. A sub-committee was formed to work on it, which included Andrea Krlickova (NV), Lynnette Ricks (MO), and Alejandra Donath (CT).

The Chair of the Professional Issues Committee, Carmel Capati (WI), was contacted in order to inquire whether the Professional Issues Committee plans to send a survey this year, too. The reason was to prevent the membership from being overwhelmed by surveys and to avoid a repetition of the same questions. A close collaboration with the above mentioned committee was established, the questions were reviewed by the committees and consequently, the only survey launched was the Annual Business Meeting's survey.

Carola Green designed an online user-friendly format of the survey; the questions were carefully tailored and edited for content. A few days before launching it, Pam Sanchez (NM) contacted the Annual Business Meeting Committee Chair to find out if some questions that the PIC sub-committee needed to send out from the membership could be included to the existing survey. The committee decided that the additional questions could be included. The survey was then sent out electronically to the membership.

### COSCA and CCJ

Once COSCA, CCJ and NCSC approved the transition of the Consortium from being a Program of the National Center for State Courts to becoming an independent Division within their Language Access Department, it quickly became apparent that this meeting had to be very informative and available for discussion in order to assure smooth and effective transition. Through the active participation of the committee we continued to pursue our objective that the meeting becomes a facility for dialogue.

COSCA sent out a memo to Court Administrators encouraging each state to have a representative at this meeting, which increased the registrations substantially.

Mary McQueen, NCSC President and Rosalyn Frierson, COSCA President, as well as other dignitaries from both of these groups confirmed their attendance at the Annual Business Meeting.

### Contributions

The State of Arkansas committed, early in the year, to purchase 40 flash drives for the meeting. The Arkansas Bar Association was contacted to co-sponsor the Sunday night Meet-and-Greet Reception with Arkansas Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). The ABA agreed to contribute \$500.00 towards this event. As the host state, Arkansas' AOC donated \$3000.00 to apply to costs related to guest speakers such as airfare, hotel and per diem. The remainder would be used for Sunday evening's reception and to offset the cost of a group dinner. Additional expenses related to the meeting may be covered with this money, too.

### Accomplishments

- Worked closely with the hotel to assure that meeting rooms, menus and hotel rooms were appropriate for the meeting and attendees.
- The professional development sessions were organized and the format was set.

- State Reports were collected, analyzed and results uploaded to the web site. Meeting's Agenda was finalized.
- 62 registrants submitted their Meeting's registration at the time of this report.
- 65 flash drives would be loaded with the Meeting's material.
- Arrangements were made for a dinner at the Arkansas Governor's Mansion for Monday night, following a visit to the Historic Central High School Museum. Transportation to and from the hotel with the stop at the museum for the entire group was pre-arranged.

### **Teleconferences**

The Annual Planning Committee met via teleconference 10 times from March 2011 through April 2012. Additional communication and work was carried out through email correspondence.

The Annual Business Meeting Committee would like to extend their most sincere appreciation to the Executive Committee for their guidance and to Carola Green for her knowledge, support, patience and contribution that she kindly extended to this committee.