

A Business Plan for the Language Interpreter Center

The question put to the witness by counsel is:

Now, Mrs. Pena, you indicated that you live in East Orange, at 5681 Grand Street?

The question heard in Spanish by the witness, via the interpreter, is:

You say you were eating an orange?

*--Behind the Language Barrier, or "You Say You Were Eating an Orange?"
Bill E. Hewitt and Robert Joe Lee
National Center for State Courts Publication*

Submitted by the Alaska Court System and Partner Agencies

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Executive Summary.....	1
II.	The Organization and Its Environment	2
A.	A Description of the Organization	2
B.	The Community Need.....	2
III.	The Programs/Services and Social Return on Investment	7
A.	Center Program & Services (Year 1).....	7
B.	Future Program/Service of the Oral Language Interpreter Center (Years 2-5).....	8
C.	Benefit to the Community/Social Return on Investment.....	9
IV.	Market Analysis	10
A.	Stakeholder Analysis.....	10
B.	Market Trends: Nationally and in Alaska	10
C.	The Competition.....	11
D.	Competitive Advantage and Strategic Position: Value-Added Collaborations	11
E.	Community and Stakeholder Support	13
V.	Communications Plan.....	14
A.	Marketing Plan	14
B.	Donor Recognition Plan.....	14
VI.	Sustainable Human Resources Plan	14
A.	Projected Personnel Needs	14
VII.	Leadership and Key Decision Makers	15
A.	Language Center Steering Committee.....	15
VIII.	Facility Operations Plan.....	15
A.	Facility Operations Plan.....	15
IX.	Sustainable Income Plan	16
A.	The Current Revenue Picture.....	16
B.	The Proposed/Desired Revenue Streams in Subsequent Years.....	16
X.	The Financials	18
XI.	Critical Success Factors	21
XII.	Appendices.....	22
	APPENDIX A - Alaska Court System Executive Summary Project.....	23
	APPENDIX B - Language Interpreter Center Letters of Support.....	28

Language Interpreter Center

I. Executive Summary

- *A man, whose primary language was Russian, was charged with domestic assault against his 18 year old daughter. Alaska State Troopers advised the defendant to bring an interpreter to his arraignment. The defendant appeared in court with his wife, his 15 year old son, and two younger children. The 15 year old son was asked by his father to interpret his side of the story, but the son became so distraught over the family drama unfolding in the courtroom that he was unable to do so. The proceedings were stopped by the judicial officer.*
- *A Hmong-speaking patient with potentially life-threatening high blood pressure went to a community clinic for medical assistance. He brought with him his young teenage daughter who spoke some English but had difficulty explaining her father's medical condition. It took the attending physician an hour to understand that the father had cut his blood pressure medication in half to save money, resulting in his present medical condition.*

The Problem

“According to the 2000 Census, about 37% of Alaskans who speak foreign languages speak English less than ‘very well.’ The 2000 Census report does not include data for limited English proficient Alaska Natives. Historical trends suggest that Alaska’s population will continue to become increasingly linguistically diverse in the future.”¹

Language interpretation is fundamental in order for limited English proficiency (LEP) individuals to have equal access to businesses and services in Alaska. Two issues prevent LEP individuals from receiving interpretation services. First, there is no comprehensive system in Alaska for identifying language interpreters and providing referrals to match interpreters to the needs of organizations and businesses. Institutions which are committed to providing competent and efficient services cannot locate competent language interpreters for LEP clients.

Second, Alaska has a dearth of competent language interpreters available to assist LEP persons. There are no comprehensive interpreter training programs in Alaska to assist bilingual individuals to acquire the skills necessary to interpret and translate.

¹ Alaska Court System Project Report: Oral Language Interpretation Needs Assessment September 9,2005

A Solution to the Problem: Resources and Service Sharing

An inter-agency collaborative effort is establishing a Language Interpreter Center that will: (1) maintain a roster of language interpreters; (2) match and refer language interpreters to meet the needs of the Center's users; (3) provide and coordinate training to develop language interpretation skills; and (4) work towards testing and certification of language interpreters. The Center will initially focus on providing interpreters and training programs for the six primary languages spoken by LEP individuals in Alaska (Spanish, Yupik, Russian, Tagalog, Inupiat and Korean).

The Center's principal "stakeholders" include the Alaska Court System, Anchorage Neighborhood Health, the Municipality of Anchorage, Anchorage Health and Human Services, Anchorage School District, Anchorage Police Department, AWAIC, Alaska Railroad, Alaska Bar Association, Federal Public Defender Agency, Municipality of Anchorage Prosecutor's Office, Alaska Legal Services, Office of Public Advocacy, BridgeBuilders of Anchorage, Alaska Department of Transportation, Alaska Division of Health and Social Services, Catholic Social Services, Alaska Immigration Justice Project, the Alaska Court System, and the Municipality of Anchorage Child and Adult Care Licensing. Several of these stakeholders have committed in-kind services and financial support to develop interpreter training and the Center's infrastructure.

What is Needed for the Center?

Start-up costs are needed to establish the Center. The Center is designed to be self-sustaining in 3-5 years, supported by user fees, subscription and training fees, and the combined resources of government agencies, for-profit, and non-profit entities, Alaska Native Corporations, granting agencies, and foundations. The Center's Business Plan addresses short and long-term strategies to ensure the Center's future sustainability.

Conclusion

The benefits of competent language assistance services are significant for the limited English proficiency (LEP) person, for local and state service agencies, and for Alaska's future. The Center will remove communication barriers and improve the quality of life for LEP persons; develop, train and certify interpreters; ensure LEP persons can effectively participate or benefit from federally assisted programs and activities described under *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*; and regulate interpreter costs hence enabling service providers to pay interpreters according to skill levels and qualifications.

II. The Organization and Its Environment

A. A Description of the Organization

The Language Interpreter Center (LIC) will be located at 431 West 7th Avenue, Suite 208, Anchorage, Alaska. The Alaska Immigration Justice Project (AIJP) is a partner organization of the Center.

The mission of AIJP is to protect the human rights of Alaska's immigrants and refugees. The Language Interpreter Center accomplishes the mission of the Alaska Immigration Justice Project by ensuring that individuals with limited English proficiency receive competent interpretation and translation when accessing services and businesses in Alaska.

The Language Interpreter Center will be a centralized statewide language interpretation facility comprised of two significant components: 1) an interpreter recruitment and referral system for government, for-profit, and nonprofit organizations; and 2) a comprehensive interpreter training program.

The Center will accomplish these goals by: (1) maintaining a roster of language interpreters; (2) matching and referring language interpreters/translators to meet the needs of its customers; (3) providing and coordinating training to improve interpreter/translator skills; and (4) implementing and developing an interpreter certification program.

B. The Community Need

"According to the 2000 Census, about 37% of Alaskans who speak foreign languages speak English less than 'very well.' Census 2000 does not include data for limited English proficient Alaska Natives. Historical trends suggest that Alaska's population will continue to become increasingly linguistically diverse in the future."²

Language interpretation is fundamental in order for limited English proficiency (LEP) individuals to have equal access to businesses and essential services in Alaska. Two issues prevent LEP individuals from receiving interpretation services. First, there is no comprehensive system in Alaska for identifying language interpreters and providing referrals to match interpreters to the needs of organizations and businesses. Institutions which are committed to providing competent and efficient services cannot locate competent language interpreters for LEP clients.

² Alaska Court System Project Report: Oral Language Interpretation Needs Assessment September 9,2005

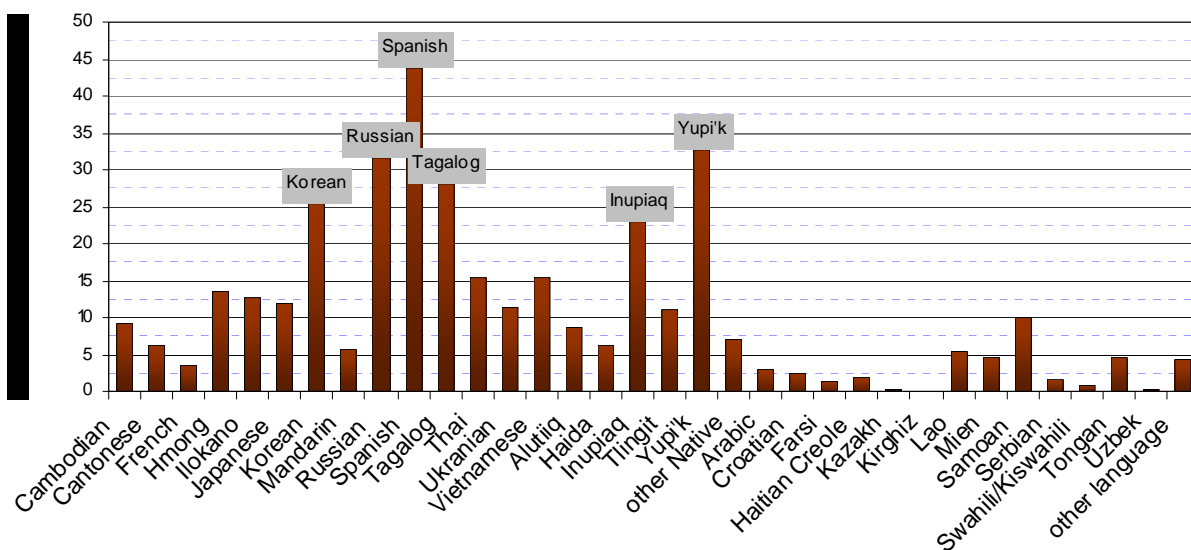
Second, Alaska has a dearth of competent language interpreters available to assist LEP persons. There are no comprehensive interpreter training programs in Alaska to assist bilingual individuals to acquire the skills necessary to interpret and translate. Currently no state certification program exists in any discipline to assess an interpreter's qualifications.

In January 2004, the State Judicial Institute (SJI) awarded the Alaska Court System a technical assistance grant to assess the need for and feasibility of creating and sustaining a centralized, statewide language interpretation recruitment and referral center. Two Internet-based surveys (user/cost) were created and distributed to state and local government entities, non-profit and for-profit organizations, Alaska Native corporations, and businesses. The "user" survey targeted 913 organizations and obtained information about statewide client interpretation needs. The "cost" survey was distributed to 182 organizational directors including chief executive officers, Alaska Native corporations, school district superintendents, and health care administrators and assessed the amount of dollars spent per year on interpretation services. While more organizations were sampled in major population areas (i.e. Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau), the surveys were distributed statewide.³

³ Alaska Court System: Oral Language Needs Assessment Project Survey Findings, October 2005

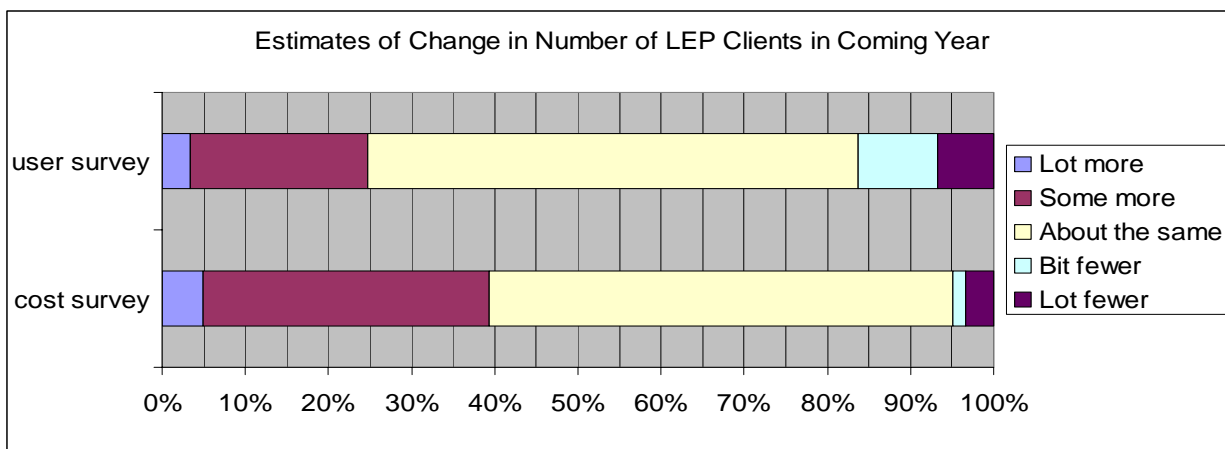
The study presents six significant findings:

- 1) The need for qualified language interpreters exists and is increasing. About 40% of respondents said that more than 10% of their clients speak a primary language other than English. The most common languages encountered are Spanish, Yupi'k, Russian, Tagalog, Korean, Ukrainian, and Inupiaq.



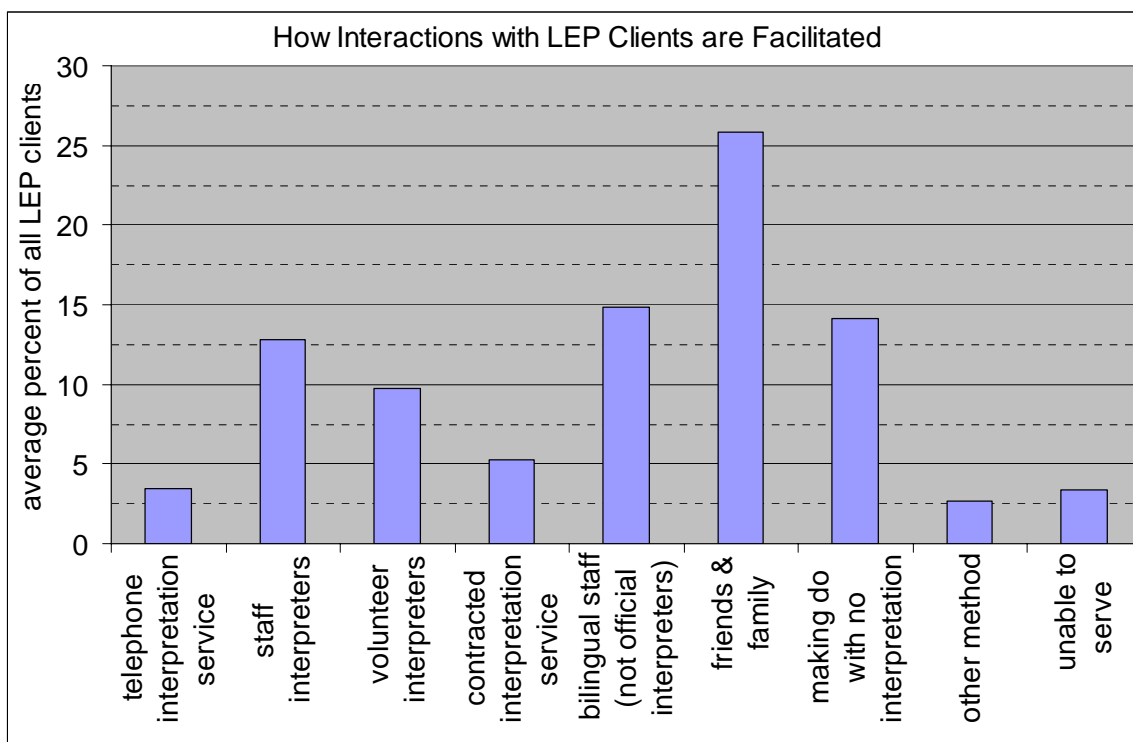
Source: Oral Language Needs Assessment Project Survey Findings, October 2005

- 2) The number of LEP clients will either remain the same or substantially increase in the coming year.



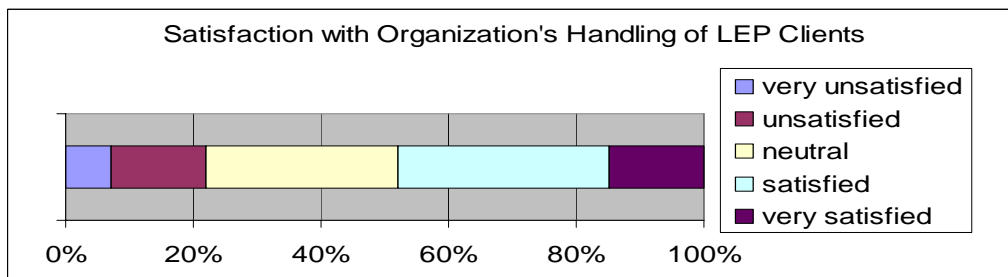
Source: Oral Language Needs Assessment Project Survey Findings, October 2005

- 3) Organizations primarily use family and friends of clients to communicate with limited English proficient persons, 15% use bilingual staff, and approximately 14% cope with no interpretive services at all.



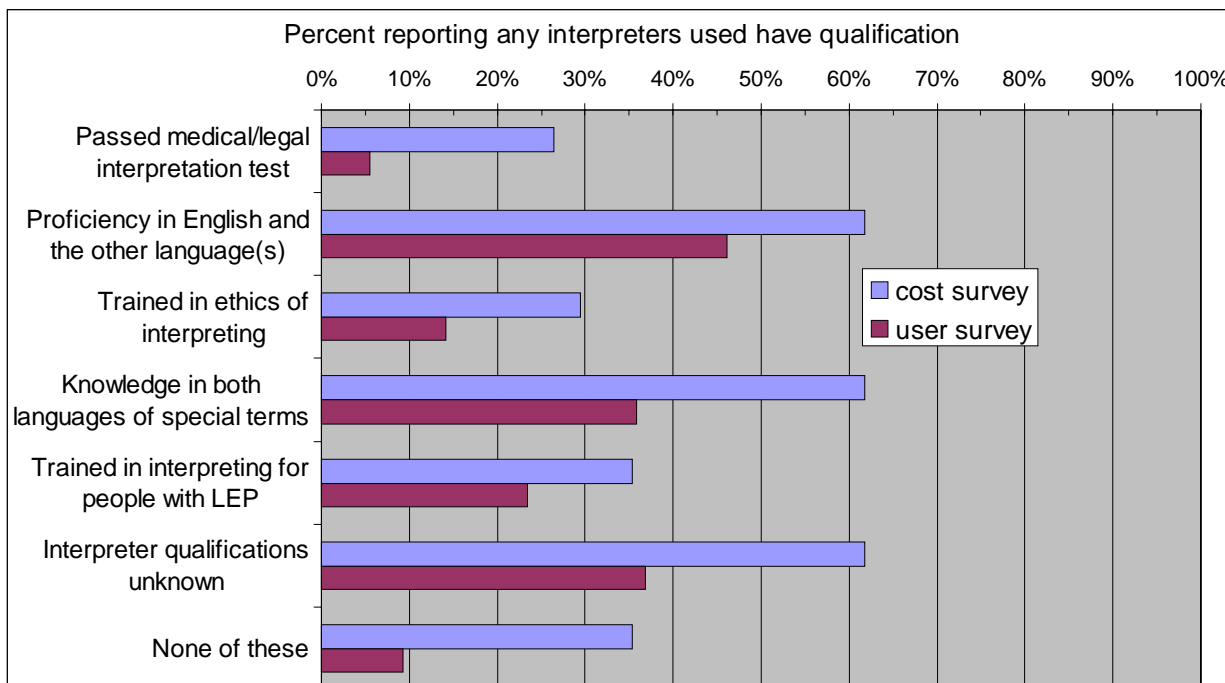
Source: Oral Language Interpreter Needs Assessment Project Survey Findings, October 2005

- 4) Over 63% of the respondents are 'very unsatisfied', 'unsatisfied', or 'neutral' with the way their organization handles LEP clients.



Source: Oral Language Interpreter Needs Assessment Project Survey Findings, October 2005

- 5) Professionals providing direct service to an LEP client perceive interpreter proficiency differently than those disbursing funds for interpreter service. Both survey groups report that fewer than 30% of interpreters used are trained in the ethics of interpreting.



Source: Oral Language Interpreter Needs Assessment Project Survey Findings, October 2005

- 6) Over 74% of “cost” survey respondents are ‘somewhat likely’ or ‘very likely’ to use the services of a statewide language interpreter center that provides qualified interpreters at reasonable rates.

Use of Statewide Center

Very unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Somewhat likely	Very likely
10.9%	15.2%	41.3%	32.6%

The Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) summary: *Anchorage At 90: Changing Fast, With More to Come* reports that:

- Anchorage residents born outside the 50 states grew 60% in the 1990s;
- Anchorage foreign-born share of the population increased from 7% to 10% with many being U.S. citizens; and
- Three percent of Anchorage school students speak languages other than English as a primary or secondary language.⁴

These trends coupled with the lack of qualified interpreters indicate that service agencies will continue to experience mounting difficulties providing timely and competent service to a linguistically diverse Alaska population.

III. The Programs/Services and Social Return on Investment

A. Center Program & Services (Year 1)

The Language Interpreter Center will develop and implement two components: 1) an interpreter training program; and 2) a service delivery model linking the Center's stakeholders with qualified interpreters.

The Center will:

1. hire professional and qualified staff to develop the Center's infrastructure;
2. analyze existing data on current language needs by geographic areas and respond to the Alaska communities with the greatest and most critical needs;
3. create interpretation service delivery models to address the specific needs of organizations and businesses throughout Alaska;
4. research and develop an interpreter training curriculum and implement a statewide training plan;
5. conduct in-service training for Center stakeholders to address interpreter ethics, standards, and responsibilities;

⁴ Anchorage at 90: Changing Fast, With More to Come, Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of Alaska Anchorage, UA Research Summary No. 4, June 2005, p. 9.

6. identify community resources, establish fee schedules, and secure funding to guarantee Center sustainability;
7. create and maintain a central registry (database) of interpreters and their qualifications;
8. develop a financial management system to pay interpreters and bill the Center's clients; and
9. develop a Center marketing plan.

B. Future Program/Service of the Oral Language Interpreter Center (Years 2-5)

The Language Interpreter Center will develop and implement two components: 1) an interpreter training program; and 2) a service delivery model that will link the Center's customers with qualified interpreters.

To accomplish these two components the Center will:

Goal 1: Identify and recruit interpreter candidates.

The Center will develop an outreach plan to linguistic communities, Alaska Native corporations, and academic institutions.

The Center will focus first on the six principal languages spoken in Alaska (Spanish, Yupik, Russian, Tagalog, Inupiat, and Korean).

Goal 2: Implement interpreter training programs.

The Center will provide:

- orientation workshops that educate bilingual individuals about interpreter qualifications. Workshop topics include the role of the interpreter, professional ethics and confidentiality, and simultaneous and consecutive interpreting practice. These workshops identify and prepare candidates for advanced training.
- academic interpreter training programs that include the principles of simultaneous, consecutive interpretation, and "sight" translation, specialized terminology for medical, legal and community interpreting, language labs, interpreter ethics, and participation in professional networking.

- a testing and certification program that evaluates the interpreter's simultaneous, consecutive, and sight interpretation skills in English and another language. (Proficiency exams are available for interpreting in various environments including legal and medical.)

Goal 3: Identify funding sources.

The Center will work with service providers and academic institutions to establish a committee to guide the process of conducting an internal and external resource assessment; develop a plan for diversification of funding; recommend what resources are needed for pursuing identified funding opportunities; and oversee implementation of the development plan.

To implement a service delivery model linking the Center's customers with qualified interpreters, the Center will focus on the Alaska communities where the need for interpretation is the greatest.

C. Benefit to the Community/Social Return on Investment

The benefits of competent interpreter services are significant for the LEP person, local, and state service agencies, and for Alaska's future. An investment in the Language Interpreter Center:

1. removes communication barriers and improves the quality of life for LEP adults and children ensuring that they have access to government, social and health care services;
2. generates new and useful data that can be aggregated and analyzed at state and local levels to improve the efficiency of provider services;
3. provides competent interpreter services in emergencies and during natural disasters which contributes to the safety of all Alaskans;
4. enables a single comprehensive interpreter roster that increases the efficiency of locating and scheduling interpreters;
5. improves accurate interpretation for LEP persons accessing government and social services thus creating well-versed citizens;

6. provides regulation of charges enabling providers to budget for service provision and pay interpreters according to acquired skill levels and qualifications;
7. ensures LEP persons can effectively participate in or benefit from federally assisted programs and activities described under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
8. ensures that state and federal agencies that receive federal funding are in compliance with *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*; and
9. assists Alaska businesses to increase their customer base within ethnically diverse groups.

IV. Market Analysis

A. Stakeholder Analysis

The Language Interpreter Center's primary customers include government, businesses, social services and health care providers needing competent interpreting services, and bilingual persons seeking interpreting skills and credentials.

The Center's secondary market consists of limited English proficiency (LEP) persons living in Alaska and accessing essential services.

B. Market Trends: Nationally and in Alaska

As the United States becomes more and more diverse, there is an increasing market for the services of competent language services. Recent documents also indicate a growing Alaska market for competent language interpreters to assist LEP persons and enable competent service delivery.

- The 2000 U.S. Census reports that 37% of Alaskans speak foreign languages and speak English less than "very well." This 37% translates into about 24,700 adults in Alaska who speak English less than "very well."
- The Anchorage School District reports that 93 different languages are spoken by Anchorage school children and roughly 42 percent of district students are from ethnic communities.⁵

⁵ ASD Online <http://asdk12.org/aboutasd>

- ISER's *Anchorage at 90: Changing Fast, With More to Come* states that Anchorage offers opportunities for immigrants, especially from the Pacific Islands, the Philippines, and Mexico.⁶
- The Alaska Court System's *Oral Language Needs Assessment Survey* reports that service providers will continue to experience an increase in LEP clients and customers.⁷
- The Alaska Court System documented its concerns about the availability and competency of language interpreters in a 1997 Alaska Supreme Court Fairness and Access Committee report, which found that the lack of language interpreters constituted a barrier to accessing court services, and that sometimes due process and equal treatment were negatively impacted.⁸

The market for qualified interpreters, capable of accurately interpreting complicated and complex situations, will no doubt continue to increase.

C. The Competition

No collaborative, coordinated and comprehensive system of interpreter services or statewide pooling of financial resources presently exists. Currently agencies use the AT&T Language Line, untrained bilingual staff, and families and friends of clients for interpreting short, uncomplicated communications. The availability of trained and qualified on-site interpreters capable of accurately interpreting complex information is extremely limited. The Language Interpreter Center will provide statewide oversight of language certification, test administration, and the maintenance of a central registry of interpreters and their qualifications.

D. Competitive Advantage and Strategic Position: Value-Added Collaborations

The Language Interpreter Center is an inter-agency collaborative effort whose "stakeholders" include the following:

- Alaska Court System;
- Anchorage Neighborhood Health;

⁶ Anchorage at 90: Changing Fast, With More to Come, Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of Alaska Anchorage, UA Research Summary No. 4, June 2005, p. 1.

⁷ Alaska Court System: Oral Language Needs Assessment Project Survey Findings, October 2005

⁸ Alaska Supreme Court's Advisory Committee on Fairness and Access, 1997.

- Municipality of Anchorage;
- Anchorage Health and Human Services;
- Anchorage School District;
- Anchorage Police Department;
- AWAIC;
- Alaska Railroad;
- Alaska Public Defender Agency;
- Alaska Bar Association;
- Federal Public Defender Agency;
- Municipality of Anchorage Prosecutor's Office;
- Alaska Legal Service;
- Office of Public Advocacy;
- BridgeBuilders of Anchorage;
- Catholic Social Services;
- United Way
- Alaska Department of Health and Social Services
- Alaska Department of Transportation; and
- Municipality of Anchorage

These organizations and their representatives bring expertise in grant writing, curriculum development, financial planning, human resources development, professional ethics training, legal issues and connections with national and Alaska experts.

As a member of the National Center for State Courts Language Interpreters' Consortium, the Alaska Court System can request the Consortium's assistance in developing interpreter certification testing programs, development of curriculum design, access to national interpreter organizations, and consultation in the Center's development.

Additionally, Center stakeholders will pool resources to provide affordable programs and services. These organizations also enhance the Center's credibility by offering a high level of professionalism, connections with potential funding sources, established collaborative relationships, and statewide access to LEP persons.

The Center will share facilities, accounting and marketing services, and an administrative assistant with the Alaska Immigration Justice Project. The Alaska Immigration Justice Project maintains a statewide presence.

The Center will sustain collaborative relationships with Alaska's academic institutions in preparing individuals for interpreter testing and certification.

E. Community and Stakeholder Support

The Language Interpreter Center enjoys a tremendous level of support from within the Anchorage community, across the state, and from its many stakeholders. (Letter of Support – Appendix B)

Stakeholders will provide space for interpreter training programs in key geographic locations; access to state publications and list-serves for Center advertising; contacts with granting organizations and foundations; and grant writers to secure future funding.

Key stakeholders offer these comments in support of the Center's establishment.

"The Anchorage School District would strongly support a Language Interpreter Center. We have over 7,000 students receiving bilingual services with 93 different languages spoken by our students. It is essential that we communicate with our parents and families regarding their legal rights to a free public education."

--Carol Comeau, Anchorage Superintendent of Schools

"It is vital that there be qualified oral language interpreters in Anchorage and statewide. Alaska is changing demographically and the number of minorities who are non-English speaking is growing rapidly. In addition, because of Alaska's significant Alaska Native population, there has always been an unmet need for interpreters for indigenous community groups as well. I am extremely hopeful that the plan for a Language Interpreter Center will begin to correct this statewide deficit."

--Karen A. Ferguson, Ph.D, Catholic Social Services

"The Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center [ANHC] is a community health center that receives federal grants to allow us to discount fees for people who are low income. The center has seen a huge rise in new immigrants and has documented demographics that Anchorage has new citizens from different countries. The largest area of growth for our services has been in the Hmong, Samoan, Korean, and Filipino populations. ANHC would like to see Anchorage join together and support a language center that would attract bilingual speakers who would be trained in interpretation/translation techniques and used widely by many within the community. ANHC is committed to monetarily supporting the Center to meet our needs."

--Joan Fisher, Executive Director, Anchorage Neighborhood Health

V. Communications Plan

A. Marketing Plan

Within the first year of operation, the Language Interpreter Center will develop a comprehensive plan to build community awareness of its programs and services using:

- printed publications including the Alaska Bar Rag, community newspapers, and publications distributed by stakeholders;
- communication avenues already established in ethnic groups churches, faith-based communities, tribal entities and other service providers;
- list-serves and email;
- public service announcements, television, and radio interviews;
- public training programs;
- participation in conferences, meetings, and public forums; and
- the Center's Web page.

B. Donor Recognition Plan

Within the first year of operation, the Language Interpreter Center will develop a donor recognition plan. This plan will include ways to motivate donors to give in subsequent years and at higher levels.

VI. Sustainable Human Resources Plan

A. Projected Personnel Needs

1. Staffing Needs

Development Director: This position works with the AIJP Executive Director to develop and implement policies, procedures, and guidelines for interpreter best practices. This position will oversee and develop a statewide roster of interpreters and their qualifications, research service delivery models best suited for Alaska's communities, manage special projects related to interpreters, administer the budget, build and foster relationships with local and

statewide leaders, linguistic communities, Native corporations, and key stakeholders.

Program/Training Manager: This position will develop, recommend, and administer the interpreter training program. The Program/Training Manager will possess strong project management and communication skills, professional experience with curriculum development and training methods, and a high level of experience working with limited English proficiency (LEP) persons.

2. Personnel Sharing/Shared Services Plan

The Alaska Immigration Justice Project and the Language Interpreter Center will share one full-time Administrative Assistant responsible for clerical duties related to Center programs and services, including data input, program inquiries, scheduling, and general receptionist duties.

3. Volunteers, Utilization, and Management

Center “stakeholders” involved in the Center’s formation have a high level of educational training and keep current on new developments, future trends, and statewide issues. They have access to national and international resources and will utilize these resources for the Center’s success.

VII. Leadership and Key Decision Makers

A. Language Center Steering Committee

The Language Center Steering Committee is comprised of the Center’s key stakeholders who ensure that the Center’s work aligns with the needs of clients; provides expertise to projects and programs; addresses issues having major implications for the Center; and is directly involved in its overall sustainability.

VIII. Facility Operations Plan

A. Facility Operations Plan

1. Geographic Location. The Language Interpreter Center will be located in Anchorage at 431 W. 7th Ave. on the second floor of a two-story office building.

2. Facilities Description. The office space includes individual office space, a conference room, and reception area.

IX. Sustainable Income Plan

A. The Current Revenue Picture

Building a sustainable income stream is important so that the center can meet the future language interpretive needs in Alaska. This stream means identifying, pursuing, and achieving a diverse mix of revenue from sustainable and non-sustainable sources. Earned income and charitable giving are two types of sustainable income. This balance is critical to the Center's future viability. To that end, the Center anticipates building a revenue stream comprised of 75% sustainable sources and 25% grants.

Federal funding is critical to meet the requirements of *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964* and giving the Center the foundation for continuing to build competent language interpreters for complex situations.

Stakeholders have pledged over \$100,000 to the Center for initial curriculum development, interpreter screening, and agency training.

B. The Proposed/Desired Revenue Streams in Subsequent Years

1. Membership Fees

The Alaska Court System's Language Interpreter Project reported that expenditures for various types of interpretation services exceeded \$1 million annually. About 74% of responding organizations indicated they were "somewhat likely" or "very likely" to use the services of a statewide interpretation center, if one existed⁹. Therefore, a primary source for future Center funding will come from contributions from government, non-profit, and for-profit Center stakeholders through user fees, training scholarships, and general contributions.

It is anticipated that qualified interpreters will pay a nominal fee to register with the Center and to become members of an Alaska Professional Interpreter Association that will provide ongoing professional development.

Fees will be charged for program instructors, training materials, language lab usage, and testing for interpreter certification.

⁹ Alaska Court System Project Report: Oral Language Interpretation Needs Assessment, September 9, 2005.

2. Grants/Foundations/Federal Funding

Stakeholders will research grants and foundations to secure the success of the Center's mission. Key stakeholders such as health care providers have access to a variety of sources to underwrite interpretation services. The Alaska Department of Transportation—a key Center stakeholder—was awarded a grant for \$50,000 to contract with the Center for interpreting training and staff training on the appropriate use of interpreter services.

The Center will request local corporations and businesses, who engage in community outreach, to contribute to interpreter training scholarships and interpreter fees for limited English proficient individuals.

The Center will target Alaska Native corporations for scholarship funding to train Alaska Native language interpreters.

3. Service Fees and Contracts

A sliding fee scale will be established for government, non-profit, for-profit and individuals who access the Center's services.

4. Donated Income/In-kind Contributions

In-kind donations from government and service providers include expertise in grant writing, fundraising, and curriculum design; facility space for training programs; faculty for instruction in legal and medical interpreting; advertising channels through agency list-serves; and public service announcements.

The Consortium for State Court Interpreter Certification will provide consultation services in the development of court interpreter proficiency tests and for identifying qualified interpreters.

X. The Financials

Revenue:

	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010
Federal Funding	276,300	175,000	85,000
Grant-Funded Scholarships		25,000	90,000
Corporate Sponsorship		40,000	60,000
Purchased Interpreter Services		30,000	48,000
Foundation Funding		20,000	50,000
Interpreter Training fees		20,000	20,000
Total Projected Revenue	276,300	310,000	353,000

Expenses:

Personnel Costs:

Executive Director - (1/4 time)	20,750	21,580	22,440
Development Director	70,000	72,800	75,710
Program/Training Manager	65,000	67,600	70,300
Administrative Assistant - (1/2 time)	16,000	16,640	17,310
Gross Personnel Costs	171,750	178,620	185,760
Fringe at 20%	34,350	35,720	37,150
Subtotal Personnel Costs	206,100	214,340	222,910

Facility Costs:

Leased Space @\$1,000/month	12,000	12,000	12,000
Communications (telephone, fax, copier)	3,000	3,000	3,000
Subtotal Facility Costs	15,000	15,000	15,000

Business Plan for the Language Interpreter Center

Travel & Per Diem:			
Travel 2X: Barrow, Fairbanks, Juneau, Ketchikan, Nome, Palmer, Bethel, Sitka, Kotzebue, Kenai Peninsula, Unalaska Hotel & Per Diem (33 days X \$150 X 2 trips)	8,800	8,800	8,800
	9,900	9,900	9,900
Subtotal Travel Costs	18,700	18,700	18,700
Professional Fees:			
Curriculum Development	5,000	5,000	5,000
Web Site Development	6,000	1,000	1,000
Advertising & Promotional Materials	1,000	1,000	1,000
Translation of Promotional Materials	5,000		
Software/Maintenance for Interpreter Database	7,500	1,875	1,875
Interpreters' Trainers		20,000	20,000
Subtotal Professional Fees	24,500	28,875	28,875
Equipment & Supplies:			
Computers (2) & Printer	4,000		
Desks (2) & Chairs (2), Office Furniture	5,000		
Office Supplies	3,000	3,000	3,000
Subtotal Equipment & Supplies	12,000	3,000	3,000
Total Projected Expenses	<u>276,300</u>	<u>279,915</u>	<u>288,485</u>
Revenues in Excess of Expenditures			
(to fund balance)	-	30,085	64,515

Financial Narrative

The Language Interpreter Center requires \$276,300 in federal funding for the first year. The initial operating budget describes the necessary personnel, facility expenses, and professional expertise necessary for the Center's start-up and on-going success.

Staff

The personnel structure of the Center will be approached as a team model. The team includes the Alaska Immigration Justice Project Executive Director, the Language Interpreter Development Director, and the Program/Training Manager. The Center will share the cost of an administrative assistant with the Alaska Immigration Justice Project.

Staff benefits are calculated at 20% and include health insurance, contributions to an employee retirement plan, and required state and federal contributions.

Facility Costs

In FY2008, the Center will occupy one office at the Alaska Immigration Justice Project. Facility expenses include an office, telephone, fax, and copier.

Travel & Per Diem

In the first year, the Center will focus efforts in Anchorage and other geographical areas that report the highest number of limited English proficient individuals. The primary languages spoken in these geographic areas are Spanish, Yupik, Inupiat, Tagalog, Russian, and Korean. The Center staff will travel to these designated locations to engage community leaders in the Center's mission, access interpretation needs, and recruit and screen bilingual persons for interpreter training.

Professional Fees

Consulting services will be needed to provide specialized services for development of the Center's programs and program outreach:

Curriculum Development Consultant: An expert in developing multi-tiered interpreter training curriculums will work with the Program/Training Manager to create an orientation program and advanced academic training as outlined in this business plan. The Center will also organize a statewide interpreter training institute in FY 08 using the developed curriculum.

Web Site Development: The Center will contract with a technical specialist to create and maintain a Website for interpreter registration, opportunities for community financial support, and client services. The initial start-up fee is estimated at \$6,000 with on-going maintenance expenses to commence in FY2009.

Advertising & Promotional Materials & Translation Services: The Center will use available community resources such as public service announcements, cable bulletin boards and newspapers to advertise its mission and programs. Center advertising and promotional materials will be translated into targeted languages of geographic areas by translation specialists to ensure accuracy of information.

Software/Maintenance for Interpreter Database: A data tracking program will be necessary to track interpreter training certification and interpreter contracts. While basic tracking software can be purchased, the software will need modifications.

Interpreters' Trainers: In FY2009 and 2010, the Center will develop a comprehensive professional interpreter program to test and certify individuals in specialized fields including medical, legal, law enforcement, business, social service, and education.

Equipment & Supplies

Computers, office furniture, and office supplies are needed for the Center staff.

In-kind Contributions:

The Center will receive \$30,000 a year in professional services and expertise from the legal, medical, social service fields and government entities.

"Pledged" Support

Key stakeholders have "pledged" over \$100,000 for interpreter services.

XI. Critical Success Factors

The Center's critical success factors include initial federal funding and stakeholder contributions, the ability to sustain and maintain entrepreneurial partnerships with statewide stakeholders; a comprehensive planning process for ongoing sustainability; and access to long-term, adequate and appropriate financing.

XII. Appendices

- A. Alaska Court System Executive Summary Project
- B. Letters of Support

APPENDIX A - Alaska Court System Executive Summary Project

ALASKA COURT SYSTEM PROJECT REPORT ORAL LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

September 9, 2005

In January 2004 the Alaska Court System received a technical assistance grant from the State Justice Institute to assess governmental and private sector organization needs for oral language interpretation services in Alaska. Court system staff worked with two contractors--Catholic Social Services and the University of Alaska Anchorage--to develop two surveys and to distribute the surveys to state and local government stakeholders, non-profit and for-profit organizations and businesses. The surveys gathered information about interpretation needs and resources spent on interpretation services statewide. The second phase of the assessment studied the feasibility of creating a statewide interpreter referral center that would be available to public and private sector agencies and businesses. This report is a summary of the findings and recommendations of the needs assessment and feasibility study.

I. Scope of the Problem

According to the 2000 Census, about 37% of Alaskans who speak foreign languages speak English less than "very well." That 37% translates into about 24,700 adults in Alaska who speak English less than "very well." Although this group represents only about 4% of the total population of the state, anecdotal experience suggests that these adults access government, nonprofit, and other social services at levels disproportionately greater than their percentage representation in the general population. Historical trends suggest that Alaska's population will continue to become increasingly linguistically diverse in the future.

The lack of qualified interpreters available to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals is a critical need facing government and service agencies in the state. A growing number of agencies and entities in Alaska need oral language interpretation but have trouble finding qualified and available interpreters. In addition, no comprehensive system of interpreter services or statewide pooling of financial resources for such service currently exists.

II. Overview of Oral Language Interpreter Study

Using grant funds from the State Justice Institute, the Alaska Court System asked for proposals to conduct a study of language interpretation usage and needs statewide. The contract was awarded to Catholic Social Services (CSS), in partnership with the University of Alaska Anchorage and the Foraker Group.

III. Methodology

CSS and the University of Alaska Anchorage developed two Internet-based surveys that were distributed to state and local government stakeholders, non-profit and for-profit entities and businesses. One survey (“user” survey) asked about statewide interpretation needs, and the second survey (“cost” survey) assessed the amount of financial resources spent on interpretation services. While more individuals were sampled in major population areas (i.e. Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau), the surveys were distributed statewide. A total of 913 “user” surveys were distributed resulting in 379 usable surveys returned. A total of 182 “cost” surveys were distributed resulting in 71 usable surveys returned.

After the surveys were complete, CSS shared the results with Michael Walsh, a consultant from the Foraker group. Mr. Walsh and CSS reviewed the data to consider business plan strategies and make recommendations for improving access to qualified interpreters statewide.

A. Survey 1: Statewide Interpretation Needs Assessment (user)

Survey 1 gathered information about statewide interpretation needs. The 2000 Census data was referenced to identify the Alaska communities with the highest number of residents with limited English proficiency (LEP). Communities targeted to receive the survey were located in southcentral, interior, southeast, and western, regions, and on Kodiak Island. The number of surveys distributed to each particular area by the contractor was calculated to elicit an adequate response rate from all areas of the state.

Targeted “user” survey respondents included Alaska Court System Clerks of Court, school system counselors and principals, social service providers, private therapists, state, municipal, and borough managers, public health clinics, private physicians and other health care providers, non-profit program directors, real estate agents and the Alaska Library Association. The survey was also distributed in a manner to avoid multiple responses from the entities surveyed.

B. Survey 2: Financial Resources Spent on Interpretation Services (cost)

The second survey was sent to 182 respondents and targeted individuals responsible for budget development and expenditures for their respective organizations. Respondents included executive directors of non-profit agencies, school district superintendents, local and state government department directors, hospital administrators and presidents of for-profit organizations. Of the 182 surveys distributed, 68 surveys were completed and 71 surveys were usable for the purposes of the study.

The geographical distribution, the number of surveys distributed to each area, and the contractor's report of the percentage of responses shows reasonably good geographical distribution, with a strong showing from Kodiak and southcentral respondents.

IV. Findings

The study found that the need for qualified language interpreters exists and is increasing. About 40% of respondents reported that more than 10% of their clients speak a primary language other than English. The most common languages encountered include Spanish, Russian, Tagalog, Yupi'k, Hmong, Korean, Ukrainian and Inupiaq.

About a quarter of respondents reported that their organizations use family or friends of the clients to communicate with them, and 14% use bilingual staff. Respondents further indicated that a minority of the interpreters they used had passed an interpretation test or received ethics training. Less than half (47.9%) indicated that they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the way their organization handles clients who speak a primary language other than English.

About 54% of respondents reported that they sometimes use a professional interpreter. A strong majority (73.9%), of the respondents indicated they were "somewhat likely" or "very likely" to use the services of a statewide interpretation center, if one existed.

Finally, the surveys indicated that expenditures for various types of interpretation services currently exceed \$1 million annually, for the responding organizations.

V. Next Steps

The survey data suggests that a centralized and reasonably priced referral center could be programmatically and financially viable. However, additional issues need to be addressed before a center can be established. The recommendations describe proposed next steps.

The information gleaned from the surveys and the recommendations of the contractors focus on two primary substantive areas:

Focus #1: Developing the Language Interpretation Center

The survey results strongly suggest that the development of a Language Interpretation Center may be financially feasible, and that such a center could address at least a substantial part of the language interpretation needs of the organizations that responded to the surveys. Certainly, the survey results establish that unmet needs for competent, accessible interpretation services exist in Alaska, and that significant funding is already being spent for interpretation services.

The logical next step is for a small working group to design a more concrete model for such a Center. The model would include a basic blueprint of how the Center would operate, and would include estimates of requirements for physical space, staffing, training, advertising, and other business-related needs. Although the model must be general enough in concept to allow for ongoing refinement and development, it must be definite enough to provide the basis for developing a financial plan.

When a model is developed, it will be possible to use the model to approach funding sources to seek monies for establishment and start-up costs for the Center, with the long-term plan of having the Center become self-sustaining at some point in the future.

Alternatively, when the model is developed, it could be used as the basis for an issuance of a Request for Information or Requests for Proposals, to market the development of the Center outside of the governmental arena, with short-term support from public monies or grant funding.

It may well be that the best way to structure the new Center will emerge as the specifics of its operation are better defined.

The court system asks representatives from interested organizations to join in a short-term effort to develop the plan for this new Center. A representative from the court system will serve as committee chair. (Representatives who serve on this committee would eliminate their organizations from eligibility to respond to an RFI or an RFP, should the decision be made to develop the Center through a method that involves these competitive mechanisms.)

Focus #2: Offering interim training about ethics, confidentiality requirements, and language proficiency in interpretation services

Respondents to both surveys indicated that less than 30% of interpreters used were trained to resolve the ethical issues that arise during the provision of oral language interpretation

services. The need for ethics training is particularly important given the confidential nature of most transactions in the court system, medical providers, and social service agencies. The working group might consider a plan for offering such training.

VI. Conclusion

This study shows a promising but not-yet-fully-developed market for professional interpreter services in Alaska. Certainly, it shows that most businesses and government entities in the state regularly interact with limited English proficiency clients. Notably, the people on the front lines of that interaction perceive that most of the interpreters they use lack training and proficiency (although that perception may not decrease their satisfaction with the current system). Nevertheless, about three-quarters of respondents said that they would be likely to use an interpreter referral center.

Although the market for interpreters is developing, the unique difficulties associated with training and recruiting interpreters is an economic disincentive that is unlikely to be overcome without assistance from government. The situation suggests that the public and private entities with the most need for qualified interpreters should work together to create organizational and funding opportunities to consolidate and pool their needs to develop the market. Such a partnership could provide a way to improve the quality and availability of interpreter services in Alaska.

APPENDIX B - Language Interpreter Center Letters of Support

Abused Women's Aid in Crisis (AWAIC)

Alaska Bar Association

Alaska Children's Services

Alaska Railroad Corporation

Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center

Anchorage School District

Equal Employment Opportunity Office
Office of the Superintendent

Bridge Builders of Anchorage

Catholic Social Services

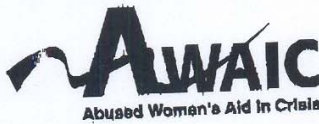
Federal Public Defender for the District of Alaska

Municipality of Anchorage

Anchorage Women's Commission
Anchorage Police Department
Department of Law, Criminal Division
Office of the Mayor

State of Alaska, Dept. of Transportation, Civil Rights Office

University of Alaska Anchorage, Department of Languages



February 6, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

Abused Women's Aid in Crisis, Inc. (AWAIC) is pleased to partner with other government agencies, non-profits and for-profit service providers to establish a statewide Language Interpreter Center that will (1) maintain a roster of language interpreters, (2) match and refer language interpreters to meet the needs of its customers, (3) provide and coordinate training to improve interpreter skills, and (4) deliver and manage an interpreter certification program.

For a number of years, individual agencies and groups have made fragmented attempts to address individual aspects of providing competent interpreters to help limited English proficient persons (LEP) access state and local services.

AWAIC consistently provides services to domestic violence victims who speak limited or no English. Working with domestic violence victims requires a high level of confidentiality, an understanding of professional boundaries, and some training regarding working with individuals who are in crisis and may not be speaking clearly. To provide appropriate interpretation, we need immediate access to trained, certified interpreters. One center that provides all of the information needed to access trained, certified interpreters would make it easier for us to provide for the immediate needs of domestic violence victims who come to AWAIC for support.

AWAIC will be happy to assist other providers in the Anchorage area of the network with domestic violence and cultural responses to domestic violence trainings for their staffs in order to better understand the cycle of violence and how this impacts individuals' relationships with others. AWAIC also has connections in the community with other domestic violence providers as well as those serving Anchorage's homeless population. AWAIC is excited about the opportunity to collaborate with others in order to provide clear communication with victims of all cultures and the Language Interpreter Center will provide opportunities for AWAIC to provide quality services to a broad spectrum of victims and their families.

The Language Interpreter Center will combine the resources of many entities to increase language interpretation resources throughout the state, and benefit many Alaskans who have limited English capability.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Suzi Pearson", is written over a long, thin horizontal line that spans across the width of the signature area.

Suzi Pearson
Acting Executive Director



ALASKA BAR

A S S O C I A T I O N

February 7, 2006

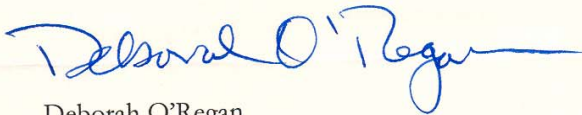
To Whom It May Concern:

We are pleased to have the opportunity to lend our support and future collaboration to the creation of a statewide Language Interpreter Center. Their purpose of maintaining a roster of qualified language interpreters, matching interpreters to clients, providing training for sustained quality of interpreters, and the delivery of a certification program will be a great asset to the Alaska Bar Association.

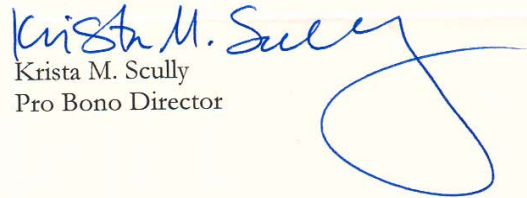
The Alaska Bar Association has two primary clients: our 3,700 membership and the public. A Language Interpreter Center would assist our service to both constituencies. Language is often a barrier for many of the cases managed by pro bono attorneys; a Language Interpreter Center would provide a vital resource for pro bono attorney for on-site and demand interpretation services integral to providing the highest level of representation. Additionally, the Alaska Bar Association receives countless calls each year from community members seeking qualified interpreters and there is currently no resource referral.

We fully support the creation of a statewide Language Interpreter Center. Please don't hesitate to contact either one of us if you need additional information.

With sincere thanks,



Deborah O'Regan
Executive Director



Krista M. Scully
Pro Bono Director



February 6, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter serves to support work in establishing the Language Interpreter Center in Anchorage, Alaska. At Alaska Children's Services Community Programs, and as providers of behavioral health services to the community, it is not uncommon for our agency to come into contact with clients needing language interpretation services throughout the course of treatment. A local provider who could be contacted to assist in providing language interpretation is a much needed and welcomed addition to the Anchorage service community. We look forward to working closely with the Language Interpreter Center.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maureen Suttman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maureen Suttman, LPC
Assistant Director Community Programs
Alaska Children's Services

✠ 4600 Abbott Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99507-4314. (907) 346-2101 • Fax (907) 348-9230
email: akchild@ak.net • www.acs.ak.org

A Christian mission of American Baptist Churches USA, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the United Methodist Church. A United Way agency, ACS is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations.

ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION

Corporate: P.O. Box 107500, Anchorage, AK 99510 • 327 Ship Creek Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501



February 9, 2006

To Appropriate Individual(s):

For a several years, individual agencies and groups have made limited and fragmented attempts to establish a centralized resource for addressing the need and provide competent interpreters to assist limited English proficient persons (LEP) access to state and local services.

The Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) is pleased to cooperatively partner with other government agencies, non-profits and for-profit service providers to establish a statewide Language Interpreter Center that will (1) maintain a roster of language interpreters, (2) match and refer language interpreters to meet the needs of its customers, (3) provide and coordinate training to improve interpreter skills, and (4) deliver and manage an interpreter certification program.

The ARRC is the only full service railroad in the country, providing both passenger and freight service. We have customers who visit from around the world, many of whom either do not speak English or have limited English as a second language. Historically our interpretation has been provided primarily by ARRC employees who speak the other language and/or individuals traveling are usually accompanied by a friend or family member who can speak and understand some English. However, we have encountered challenges on the telephone and in person, where no one in the party could speak English.

Also, it is important for us to have quick access to interpreters especially for oral interpretation. Our trains go up and down the rail belt and in the event of an emergency, either ARRC train crews or emergency personnel, may need to immediately be able to communicate with a passenger. We currently provide our boarding and written emergency information in a couple of languages. However, we will need revamp in the future and perhaps include information in additional languages.

The Language Interpreter Center will combine the resources of many entities to increase language interpretation resources throughout the state, and benefit many Alaskans who have limited English capability. We wholeheartedly embrace and support the opportunity to work together for a common objective, while maximizing and utilizing resources. Simply put, it's just good business sense and we are on board.

If you need additional information or clarification, feel free to contact me at 907-265-2529.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ouida Morrison".

Ouida Morrison
Manager, Equal Opportunity



February 2, 2006

Alaska Court System
820 W. 4th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501

To Whom It May Concern:

The Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center is a 330 funded community health center that receives a federal grant to allow us to discount fees for people who are uninsured and/or low income. The center has seen a huge rise in new immigrants and has documented demographics that Anchorage has new citizens from many different countries. The largest area of growth for our services has been in the Hmong, Samoan, Korean and Pilipino populations.

People who come to the health center seeking health care must be able to communicate with their provider in a confidential manner. An interpreter must know and understand medical terms so the provider can accurately describe their diagnosis and plan for treatment. If the interpreter is not bi-lingual, they may not be able to translate the consent for treatment form or the label on the prescription vial and may give inaccurate information to the patient. Confidentiality is crucial so using family members or neighbors who may not keep medical information to themselves is discouraged.

As a recipient of federal money, ANHC is required to respond to the LEP Federal Guidelines in two ways, interpretation for services and translation of critical documents. The best and most efficient way of interpreting is having bi-lingual physicians, mid-levels and clinical staff and the organization is fortunate to have several who are proficient. The organization does not have the capacity to cover all of the different languages and is reliant on contracted interpreters. It is difficult to find interpreters for the many languages and the demand is not enough to keep a person busy on a full-time basis so many of the interpreters we contract with are doing it on a part-time basis and are unavailable at times. In that situation, staff knows to use the telephone interpreter lines.

ANHC would like to see Anchorage join together and support a language center that would attract bi-lingual speakers who would be trained in interpretation/translation techniques and used widely by many businesses within the community. ANHC is committed to supporting this business monetarily to meet our needs.

Joan L. Fisher

Executive Director

Mailing Address
P.O. Box 201849
Anchorage, AK 99520

Fairview Center
1217 E. 10th Avenue
(907) 257-4686 *appointments*
(907) 257-4654 *fax*

Fairview Dental Clinic
1217 E. 10th Avenue
(907) 257-4661 *appointments*
(907) 257-4654 *fax*

Mountain View Health Center
3521 Mountain View Drive
(907) 792-2300 *phone*
(907) 792-2369 *fax*

Administrative Office
903 W. Northern Lights, #218
(907) 792-6538 *phone*
(907) 792-6526 *fax*

Patient Accounting
903 W. Northern Lights, #218
(907) 792-6500 *phone*
(907) 792-6546 *fax*



Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center
~Our Care is Centered on You~



Anchorage School District
Equal Employment Opportunity Office

Margo Bellamy, Director
4600 DeBarr Road
P.O. Box 196614
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6614
(907) 742-4130/4131

February 7, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

The Equal Employment Opportunity Office of the Anchorage School District is pleased to partner with other government agencies, non-profits and for-profit service providers to establish a statewide Language Interpreter Center that will (1) maintain a roster of language interpreters, (2) match and refer language interpreters to meet the needs of its customers, (3) provide and coordinate training to improve interpreter skills, and (4) deliver and manage an interpreter certification program.

For a number of years, individual agencies and groups have made fragmented attempts to address individual aspects of providing competent interpreters to help limited English proficient persons (LEP) access state and local services.

"Success for every child" is a unifying theme for the Anchorage School District. Providing opportunity for each child to succeed requires that the District address all barriers that impact learning, teaching and working. The **Language Interpreter Center** will assist the District in providing oral language interpreters for our employees and our growing number of LEP and non-English speaking families who experience language barriers. These individuals struggle with home-school communication or may be unable to access aspects of our system that require basic English literacy. Parents and students with limited English skills need assistance understanding programs and services, reading and interpreting schedules and following procedures and processes.

The District is committed to supporting the Language Interpreter Center and will provide the following:

1. Demographic data and statistics on the represented language groups, cultures, and language needs of children, families and employees in the Anchorage School District.

2. Provide the Language Interpreter Center with information about the District's various systems, processes and programs and identify where the most language challenges are for LEP families and employees.
3. Assist in the Center's efforts to develop of a cadre of qualified oral language interpreters that are representative of the students and employees in the Anchorage School District.
4. Access the Center's services, when appropriate, for students, families and employees.
5. Serve as a resource to the Language Interpreter Center on bilingual/multicultural education issues including access to available and appropriate training opportunities.

The Language Interpreter Center will combine the resources of many entities to increase language interpretation resources throughout the state, and benefit many Alaskans who have limited English capability.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margo Bellamy".

Margo Bellamy,
Director
Equal Employment Opportunity Office



Anchorage School District

4600 DeBarr Road
P. O. Box 196614
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6614
(907) 742-4000

School Board

Jeff Friedman
President
Crystal Kennedy
Vice President
John Steiner
Clerk
Macon Roberts
Treasurer
Mary Marks
Jake Metcalfe
Tim Steele

Superintendent

Carol Comeau

February 1, 2006

Brenda Aiken
Resource Development Officer
Alaska Court System
820 West Fourth Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501-2005

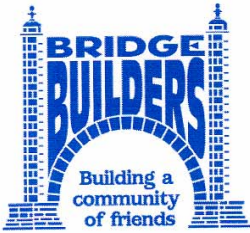
Dear Ms. Aiken,

The Anchorage School District would strongly support an Oral Language Interpreter Center. We have over 7000 students receiving bilingual or ESL services with 94 different languages spoken by our students. It is essential that we communicate with our parents and families regarding their legal rights to a free public education. Many of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch and specialized instructional services, and it is essential that parents receive assistance knowing about these opportunities, and how to fill out all of the required paperwork. Many immigrant families are fearful of immigration consequences and so are reluctant to fill out paperwork or seek services; interpreters in their native language would help us a great deal. Many of our students are forced into situations where they act as translators for their parents; this is particularly difficult when there are medical or emotional issues involved, or when the student is being disciplined. We do not have bilingual tutors or teachers who are conversant with legal and/or medical terminology.

In addition, to language interpreters, we have a need for additional interpreters for our deaf and hard of hearing students so they can access the appropriate instructional program, and for staff and parents/community so they can receive training or attend and actively participate in meetings."

Sincerely,

Carol Comeau
Superintendent



701 West 8th Street, Suite 230
P.O. Box 240294
Anchorage, Alaska 99524-0294
Telephone: (907) 263-3805
Fax: (907) 263-3801
bridgebuilders@ak.org

Bridge Builders of Anchorage

Malcolm Roberts
(Anglo-American)
PRESIDENT

Elsa Sargento
(Filipino-American)
1ST VICE-PRESIDENT

Ida Nelson
(Timothian/Siberian Yupik)
SECRETARY

Norwood Eggeling
(Anglo-American)
TREASURER

Angelina Estrada-Burney
(Mexican-American)

Talakai Finau
(Tongan-American)

Alice Hisamoto
(Japanese/Scottish-American)

Rev. Sailitai F. Maga
(Samoan-American)

Jesse Musliu
(Kosovar-American)

Yohyon Pharr
(Korean-American)

Donna Stephens
(Anglo-American)

Paul Davis
(Anglo-American)
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Susan Churchill
(Japanese-American)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Hon. Rene Gonzalez
(Mexican-American)
OF COUNSEL

February 2, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

Bridge Builders of Anchorage is pleased to partner with other government agencies, non-profits and for-profit service providers to establish a statewide Language Interpreter Center that will (1) maintain a roster of language interpreters, (2) match and refer language interpreters to meet the needs of its customers, (3) provide and coordinate training to improve interpreter skills, and (4) deliver and manage an interpreter certification program.

For a number of years, individual agencies and groups have made fragmented attempts to address individual aspects of providing competent interpreters to help limited English proficient persons (LEP) access state and local services.

The goal of Bridge Builders is to make Anchorage the first city without prejudice. Our organization has a membership of 1200 individuals representing at least 53 different cultures. We receive regular requests for interpreters and depending on the language have very limited resources of interpreters to refer them to, or in some cases there is no one for that particular language. As the ethnic diversity increases in our community we are finding an increase in the need for interpreters to insure their needs are being met by social service, government and health related agencies and services.

Over the past 10 years our organization has worked with leaders and members of the various ethnic communities and we have good working relationships with many groups. We can help the Center with making connections and/or provide the necessary expertise in working with the different ethnic communities.

The Language Interpreter Center will combine the resources of many entities to increase language interpretation resources throughout the state, and benefit many Alaskans who have limited English capability.

Sincerely,

Susan Churchill
Executive Director
Bridge Builders of Anchorage



February 14, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

The Refugee Assistance Program of Catholic Social Services is pleased to partner with other government agencies, non-profits and for-profit service providers to establish a statewide Language Interpreter Center that will (1) maintain a roster of language interpreters, (2) match and refer language interpreters to meet the needs of its customers, (3) provide and coordinate training to improve interpreter skills, and (4) deliver and manage an interpreter certification program.

For a number of years, individual agencies and groups have made fragmented attempts to address individual aspects of providing competent interpreters to help limited English proficient persons (LEP) access state and local services.

It is vital that there be qualified oral language interpreters in Anchorage and Statewide. Alaska is changing demographically and the number of minorities who are non-English speaking is growing rapidly. In addition, because of Alaska's significant Alaska Native population, there has always been an unmet need for interpreters for indigenous community groups as well. In Alaska, not only is there no one place to call for interpreter assistance, there is no local training to create qualified interpreters. And there is no standard set to protect the public. Hence bilingual friends and family members are the most common interpreter for all agencies, despite the significant impact of misinterpretations in medical, dental, social service and justice settings. I am extremely hopeful that the plan for an Oral Language Interpreter Center will begin to correct this statewide deficit.

For the Refugee Assistance Program, our clients are frequently in need of interpreters within the community to assist them in finding housing, medical care and employment. Although the Refugee Assistance Program employs bilingual staff at times clients enroll who have language needs outside our expertise.

Catholic Social Services Refugee Assistance Program is committed to supporting the development of the Oral Language Interpreter center and will assist with providing expertise and community connections in this endeavor. In addition, when appropriate, interpreter funds are available to support the work of interpreters meeting the direct needs of refugee clients.

The Language Interpreter Center will combine the resources of many entities to increase language interpretation resources throughout the state, and benefit many Alaskans who have limited English capability.

Sincerely,

Karen A. Ferguson
Program Director/ State Refugee Coordinator

**Federal Public Defender
for
The District of Alaska**

Rich Curtner
Federal Public Defender

550 West Seventh Ave., Suite 1600
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Phone: (907) 646-3400/FAX: (907) 646-3480

February 8, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

As the Federal Defender for the District of Alaska, I strongly support the establishment of a statewide Language Interpreter Center for Alaska. For the first half of my 30-year career as a criminal defense attorney, I was completely ignorant of the critical need for professional and trained interpreter services in the criminal justice system.

In my tenure as Federal Defender, I have been educated and have learned how important it is to have court interpreters that attorneys and judges can have confidence in. I have long advocated for the creation of an interpreter certification program for Alaska. A Language Interpreter Center would be a great service for innumerable government and public agencies that serve our community.

Our office has a great need for qualified interpreter services as more and more non-English-speaking clients require our representation in the federal courts. The Language Interpreter Center would greatly address our needs, and we would support such a center as much as possible.

Sincerely,



Rich Curtner
Federal Defender

RC/km



Mark Begich
Mayor

Municipality of Anchorage

ANCHORAGE WOMEN'S COMMISSION

P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650
<http://www.ci.muni.org>



Telephone:
(907) 343-6302

February 6, 2006

Anchorage Women's Commission
825 L Street
P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, Alaska 99519

To Whom It May Concern:

The Anchorage Women's Commission is pleased to partner with other government agencies, non-profits and for-profit service providers to establish a statewide Language Interpreter Center that will (1) maintain a roster of language interpreters, (2) match and refer language interpreters to meet the needs of its customers, (3) provide and coordinate training to improve interpreter skills, and (4) deliver and manage an interpreter certification program.

For a number of years, individual agencies and groups have made fragmented attempts to address individual aspects of providing competent interpreters to help limited English proficient persons (LEP) access state and local services.

The commission works to improve the status of women and children in Anchorage. It is our belief that services should be available to all people, regardless of their communication skills. A Language Interpreter Center will ensure that the barrier to fundamental health and crisis intervention needs will be met.

The Language Interpreter Center will combine the resources of many entities to increase language interpretation resources throughout the state, and benefit many Alaskans who have limited English capability. We are committed to the success of this program and appreciate the work being done to better our community at all levels.

Sincerely,

Stacie Papireau, Chair
Anchorage Women's Commission



Municipality of Anchorage

4501 Denig Street • Anchorage, Alaska 99507-1501 • Telephone (907) 786-8500 • <http://www.muni.org>



Mayor Mark Begich

Anchorage Police Department

February 8, 2006

Alaska Court System
820 W. 4th Avenue
Anchorage AK 99501

To Whom It May Concern:

The Anchorage Police Department is pleased to partner with other government agencies, non-profits and for-profit service providers to establish a statewide Language Interpreter Center that will (1) maintain a roster of language interpreters, (2) match and refer language interpreters to meet the needs of its customers, (3) provide and coordinate training to improve interpreter skills, and (4) deliver and manage an interpreter certification program.

For a number of years, individual agencies and groups have made fragmented attempts to address individual aspects of providing competent interpreters to help limited English proficient persons (LEP) access state and local services.

We recognize the Language Interpreter Center as needed in the community and we fully expect this project to have a positive impact on our community.

The Anchorage Police Department comes into daily contact with many citizens who will make use of this important service, and will therefore include this information in our resource booklet and in our training to officers.

The Language Interpreter Center will combine the resources of many entities to increase language interpretation resources throughout the state, and benefit many Alaskans who have limited English capability.

Sincerely,

Audie Holloway

Deputy Chief

Community, Security, Prosperity

Municipality of Anchorage



P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650
Telephone: (907) 343-4250
Fax: (907) 343-6689
<http://www.muni.org>

Mark Begich, Mayor

DEPARTMENT OF LAW
Criminal Division
632 W 6th Avenue, Suite 210

February 17, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

The Office of the Municipal Prosecutor in Anchorage is pleased to partner with other government agencies, non-profits and for-profit service providers to establish a statewide Language Interpreter Center that will (1) maintain a roster of language interpreters, (2) match and refer language interpreters to meet the needs of its customers, (3) provide and coordinate training to improve interpreter skills, and (4) deliver and manage an interpreter certification program.

For a number of years, individual agencies and groups have made fragmented attempts to address individual aspects of providing competent interpreters to help limited English proficient persons (LEP) access state and local service

The Center will help us provide services in a number of ways. Anchorage has a diverse population, with a growing number of individuals who need assistance from interpreters. The Prosecutor's Office needs to be able to communicate with victims of crime, witnesses and defendants in criminal cases. By enhancing our ability to communicate with victims, witnesses and defendants, the Center will increase our ability to provide services to all the people of Anchorage.

The Language Interpreter Center will combine the resources of many entities to increase language interpretation resources throughout the state, and benefit many Alaskans who have limited English capability.

Sincerely,

John E. McConaughy, III
Municipal Prosecutor
Department of Law, Criminal Division



Municipality of Anchorage

P.O. Box 196650 • Anchorage, Alaska 99519-6650 • Telephone: (907) 343-4431 • Fax: (907) 343-4499 <http://www.muni.org>

Mayor Mark Begich

Office of the Mayor

February 10, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

The Municipality of Anchorage is pleased to partner with other government agencies, non-profits and for-profit service providers to establish a statewide Language Interpreter Center that will (1) maintain a roster of language interpreters, (2) match and refer language interpreters to meet the needs of its customers, (3) provide and coordinate training to improve interpreter skills, and (4) deliver and manage an interpreter certification program.

For a number of years, the Municipality has made fragmented attempts to address individual aspects of providing competent interpreters to help limited English proficient persons (LEP) access municipal services. The Mayor's Office of Equal Opportunity established a database of municipal employees who sign, speak or write a second language to assist the Municipality when situations arise that warrant a translator. This process is successful when advance planning occurs. However, many times advance notice is not an option, making it difficult for a successful outcome.

The Municipality appreciates the diversity within our workforce and remains inspired by the diverse community we serve. The Language Interpreter Center will combine the resources of many entities to increase language interpretation resources throughout the state, and benefit many Alaskans who have limited English capability.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Begich".

Mark Begich
Mayor

Community, Security, Prosperity

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI, GOVERNOR

CIVIL RIGHTS OFFICE

2200 East 42nd Avenue
P.O. Box 196900
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99519-6900
STATEWIDE TOLL-FREE NO. (800)770-6236
PHONE (907)269-0851
FAX (907)269-0847

February 14, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) Civil Rights Office supports establishing a statewide Language Interpreter Center that will

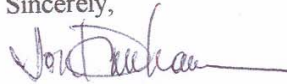
- maintain a roster of language interpreters,
- match and refer language interpreters to meet the needs of its customers,
- provide and coordinate training to improve interpreter skills, and
- deliver and manage an interpreter certification program.

It is my understanding the Language Interpreter Center will assist ADOT&PF by providing a centralized location for interpretation needs in both rural and urban Alaskan communities as well as document translation. Having a certification program will increase the credibility and raise the standards of interpreters utilized by the department.

ADOT&PF supports the concept of the Language Interpreter Center, however because of prior financial commitments, we are unable to commit funding to this project for the next 2 years.

The Language Interpreter Center will combine the resources of many entities to increase language interpretation resources throughout the state, and benefit many Alaskans who have limited English capability.

Sincerely,



Jon Dunham
Manager

UAA UNIVERSITY of ALASKA ANCHORAGE
Department of Languages

February 3, 2006

Sonja Wade-Davis
Alaska Court System
Snowden Administration Building
820 W. Fourth Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501-2005

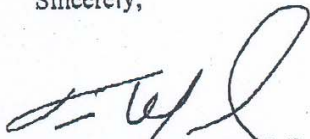
To Whom It May Concern:

The Department of Languages is pleased to partner with other government agencies, non-profits and for-profit service providers to establish a statewide Language Interpreter Center that will (1) maintain a roster of language interpreters, (2) match and refer language interpreters to meet the needs of its customers, (3) provide and coordinate training to improve interpreter skills, and (4) deliver and manage an interpreter certification program.

For a number of years, individual agencies and groups have made fragmented attempts to address individual aspects of providing competent interpreters to help limited English proficient persons (LEP) access state and local services.

The Language Interpreter Center will combine the resources of many entities to increase language interpretation resources throughout the state, and benefit many Alaskans who have limited English capability.

Sincerely,



Francisco Miranda, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Spanish