



# THE GUARDIAN

College of Court Reporting

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose.”

-Dr Seuss



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Issue 4

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## Court Reporting – What’s It Really All About?

Why is court reporting such an underrated profession? I think one of the main reasons is that the general public is both uninformed and misled. Here are just a few mistaken beliefs of the court reporting world.

### **Court reporters only work in courtrooms.**

This is one of the most common misconceptions about court reporting. Although some court reporters do work in courtrooms on a daily basis, a greater number work in different settings every day, including hearings, depositions, trials, arbitrations, and other legal proceedings. Court reporters also provide realtime captioning for live television programs and communication access for the deaf and hard-of-hearing in classrooms and other public settings. So, we’ve got courtrooms, conference rooms, law firms, classrooms, auditoriums and stadiums, homes, or behind the scenes at a live event. Wherever there is a need to convert speech to text, there is a court reporter!

### **Technology will soon replace court reporting.**

Many have long assumed that court reporting is a short-lived career. Not the case! In fact, the NCRA just completed its annual Court Reporting and Captioning Week to raise awareness of the court reporting field and its growing number of opportunities. Let’s get real — you don’t speak to Siri or Cortana the same way you would speak to another human being. Likewise, witnesses do not speak in a perfectly enunciated monotonal manner. There are just too many variables to be considered when trusting a machine to accurately translate speech. For example, a court reporter can understand accents and disregard irrelevant noises during a trial. This is critically important because accuracy is essential in this field — which brings me to the next misconception.

### **There’s only one requirement to become a court reporter — type fast!**

Court reporting requires several skill sets, both instinctive and learned. In many states, court reporters must pass a certification exam and participate in continuing education. The entry-level certification of the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) is the Registered Professional Reporter, which requires 95% accuracy at 225 words per minute. Court reporters must have a strong grasp of the English language, grammar, punctuation and spelling. They must also be organized, impartial, responsible, and reliable.

## Students of the Month

### Kayde Rieken

Kayde is a great student who has impressed her instructors as well as her mentor. Sheryl Teslow, Kayde's mentor said, "It's a pleasure to work with Kayde. I'd be happy to help any student, but I've been quite impressed with Kayde. When it's time to do her internship, we are happy to help with the freelance hours, and I've reached out to a couple officials to see about getting that set up."



### Mary Margaret Hurst

Mary has been nominated this month because she is a very conscientious student. She always turns work in on time, has great quiz scores, attends classes regularly, and is participates in class.

Keep up the great work, Mary!

### Lauren Mancusi

Lauren is a wonderful student. Her teachers have said that she is progressing nicely. She always has a positive attitude and working very hard!

You are going to make a great court reporter, Lauren! Keep it up!

Clearly, this profession entails more than just typing fast!

### **Court reporting is repetitive and boring.**

As a court reporter, you interact with many types of people on a daily basis, including lawyers, paralegals, and expert witnesses. It is a constant learning experience. As an independent contractor, court reporters work wherever and whenever they choose. Some travel the world!

If you're interested in a career in court reporting, visit NCRA's Take Note information page.

By Julia Alicandri

## NCRA Member Develops Steno Arcade to Promote Learning Steno and Keyboarding

In March, Mirabai Knight, RDR, CRR, CRC, and The Open Steno Project is launching a crowdfunding campaign to fund the development of a series of games called Steno Arcade. Knight, a CART captioner in New York, N.Y., founded The Open Steno Project (which was originally called The Plover Project) in 2010.

Steno Arcade has been developed in conjunction with For All To Play, a game studio that designs and develops video games that are accessible to people with visual, hearing, physical, and cognitive disabilities. The first game in the series, *Steno Hero*, is now available for download for free. The press release compares *Steno Hero* with "singing karaoke with your fingers," but it can also be compared to the popular video game *Guitar Hero*. Players hit steno chords or keyboard keys to produce the lyrics of music while the song plays; it can be played using either a steno or QWERTY keyboard. Players can use either the Plover software or any professional court reporting software, such as Case CATalyst, Eclipse, and DigitalCAT. Currently there are four songs by artist Jonathon Coulton, with more in the works, at a variety of speed levels.

"A lot of people learned to type using typing games, and some QWERTY-style typing games are useful for drilling certain steno skills, but we realized that there were some aspects of the steno learning process that needed direct, focused attention (like steno layout drilling, stroke rhythm, and dictionary building) and there aren't any QWERTY-style typing games that can help with those skills. So we decided to build our own. The great thing about video games is that they can easily be calibrated to your own skill level, so that they're just challenging enough to be worth playing, but not so hard that you give up in frustration," said Knight.

Excerpt from the JCR

### Word Tripper By: Barbara McNichol

Homonyms, such as this pair - hangar and hanger - mean two different things but have the same sound and a similar spelling. You can hang up your frustrations by paying close attention to how each is spelled.

**Hangar, hanger** – A “hangar” is a covered and usually enclosed area used for housing and repairing aircraft. A “hanger” is a triangular piece of metal, plastic, or wood used for hanging clothes when they’re not being worn.

“I left my flight jacket on a *hanger* in the airplane *hangar*.” – Dick Dale

### February Evaluations Passed

*These students have all passed one or more SAP evaluations during the month of February.*

<b><u>11 SAPs</u></b> Lauren Reinchenbach	<b><u>5 SAPs</u></b> Erin Claybrook Jamie Bleicher	Madeline Lauer Sarah Hamilton Yvette Granados	<b><u>1 SAP</u></b> Adam Marcus Alisa Church Allison Allen Amanda Olivares Angela Viray Ashley Guillermo Barabara Ufer Camille Montgomery Carolyn Collins Christine VnaDam Danielle Savidge Darby Valle Deborah Pascal Denise Hoisington Holly McKay Holly Reese Jennifer Wesner Jessica Bustos Jessica Rhykus	Katie Jaraczewski Kelly Garland Kolby Garrison Lindsay Heaton Lindsey Young Lucetta Robertson Marialaina Rintone Mary Margaret Hurst Melanie Segalla Melissa Hicking Nicole Burns Onni Beene Roxanna Yau Stephanie McGinnis Taylor Behnke Thomas Herman Tyler Adkins
<b><u>8 SAPs</u></b> Corree Brooks Erica Jenkins	<b><u>4 SAPs</u></b> Allison Oosterhous Christil Mcallister Mackenzie Smith Taisha Herr	<b><u>2 SAPs</u></b> Ashley Wilson Baley Sargent Geneva Wildcat Jennifer Hurst Jessica Frizzell Jessica Vanatta Kiana Luke Lexi Klasing Lisa Major Martha Obstalecki Michael Roberts Natalie Sandi Priscilla Romans Beraducci Rhonda Wentzell Sheila Sinclair Veronica Stewart		
<b><u>7 SAPs</u></b> Clara Brooks Jamie Johnson Katherine Evangelou Rachel Schmidt	<b><u>3 SAPs</u></b> Amanda Vernon Carol Casstevens Debra Selsavage Holly Granquist Jennifer Hall Jessica Williams Karina Hannah Katelyn Berch Kathleen Steadman Kathy Bruner Kristine Rebar			
<b><u>6 SAPs</u></b> Kristi Hendrick Lauren Mancusi Nicole Miller Sindee Baum				

## Graduate Spotlight: Interview with Debrina Jones

What was your start date, and when did you graduate?

Start date: October 2013

Finished: September 2015

What lead you to pursue court reporting as a career?

I was studying forensics and active in areas of the law. A former coworker told me his wife had attempted it but quit at 120 wpm, but he felt I could do it and I would love it. I researched it and loved how it encompassed so many areas of law and grammar that I had already studied and pursued. I started school in Southern California. Right when I started I found out I was expecting. After I completed theory and started speedbuilding, we decided to move to North Carolina to be closer to my family.

What made you choose CCR?

I tried another online school, and it didn't work out too well for me. I started to really research online schools and their success rates, since there were no brick and mortar schools in my state. CCR stood out at the top. After speaking with Nicky and hearing about the program offered, I knew it was the school I needed for me to get to the finish line.

Do you have any certifications? If not, do you plan on getting any/which ones?

I am currently working towards the RPR. I plan on obtaining the CRR and RMR.

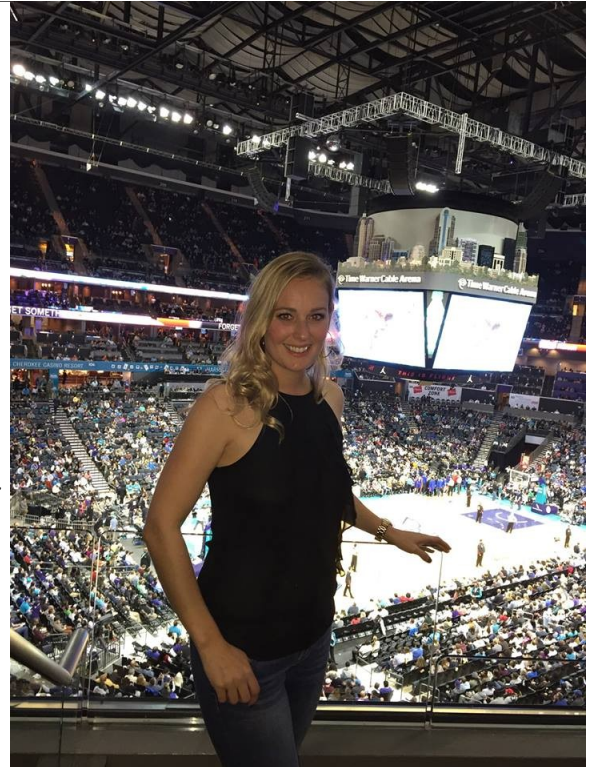
Are you currently working?

I am currently working as a freelance reporter in both North and South Carolina.

What were your strengths/weaknesses in school? If you could give any advice to a struggling student, what would that be?

My strength in school was my ability to keep going when I felt I couldn't go one more step. The weakness I had was trying to balance all the requirements handed to me along with my personal life.

To any student struggling to cross that finish line, I would say you will have to give it all you have and then some. Dig as deep as you can and find that tenacity you possess that brought you here in the first place. Only look back to see how far you've come. Keep reminding yourself of all of the hurdles you have overcome, and be proud every single day.





Position: Official court reporter

Location: U.S. Dist. Ct. Northern Dist. of Georgia, Atlanta, GA

Salary:

Realtime certification: \$87, 113 per annum

Merit and realtime certification: \$91, 072 per annum

Position: Realtime closed captioner

Location: Media Captioning Services, California and Florida locations

Qualifications: CSR and/or RPR

If you would like more information about any of these positions, please contact

[Natalie.Kijurna@ccr.edu](mailto:Natalie.Kijurna@ccr.edu)

## Student Corner: Interview With My Mentor By Sarah Hamilton

Name: Megan Strawn

Currently resides in: Denver, CO

Position: Official Court Reporter

Certifications: RPR

### Why did you decide to become a court reporter?

After going through the horrible experience of losing my job as a construction accountant and being unemployed, I wanted a skill that would always be in demand. I quite literally stumbled upon court reporting school while doing an Internet search, and I thought it sounded interesting.

### What were your strengths/weaknesses while in school?

Believe it or not, speed was a strength of mine in school. I played piano for eight years in my childhood, so it was a very easy transition to write shorthand because I felt like I was playing piano. My weakness was my own insecurity. I'd let nerves get the best of me during tests. Be confident in your skill level no matter what it is. You'll pass that next test whether it's today, tomorrow, next week, or next month. This skill requires patience!

### What are you most proud of in your career?

I passed all three portions of the RPR while I was still a student, and I had my certification upon graduating court reporting school. It was a great feeling of accomplishment!

### What advice/tips would you offer for any students or new reporters?

Never stop practicing! I've only been a reporter for three years, but I still practice every day. Don't be afraid to network and ask questions. There is so much you don't know that only comes from experience, but don't be intimidated. All reporters have been in your shoes. Sign up for the NCRA Virtual mentor program to get one-on-one interaction with a working reporter.

### What do you love most about your career?

Every day is a new learning experience. You learn new words, new statutes, new case law. There is always a chance to be better, write shorter and faster. I never get bored.

### Have you accomplished something unrelated to your career that you'd like to relate?

I acted with Ryan Reynolds back when he was a lead character on a Nickelodeon series. I was only a featured extra, but he looked nothing like he does now!





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 "Work for yourself...Work for the world!"

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WWW.CCR.EDU




## ANY SUGGESTIONS?

*Your CCR newsletter is always changing. Contact Jen at [jen.lewis@ccr.edu](mailto:jen.lewis@ccr.edu) with any ideas that you may have for the next one.*

# April

*Birthdays are in bold print! Happy birthday, CCR students and faculty!*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<sup>1</sup> April Fool's Day	<sup>2</sup> Priscilla Romans Berarducci
3 Kathy Lazart Cassi Knight	4 Tammy Garber 140/160 Multivoice	5	6 <b>Mindi Billings</b>  SEEDS For Growth Presentation 1:30 -2:30	7	8	9 Katelyn Berch
10	11 10-Page Mock	12	13	14 Megan Reeves	15	16 Shameeka Williams
17 Tiffany Dority	18 180/200 Multivoice	19 Robert Leifer	20 SEEDS For Growth Presentation 1:30 -2:30	21 Faculty Meeting	22 Passover Earth Day 	23
24	25 Jessica Williams 140/160 Multivoice	26 Ashley Willamson	27 Michael Roberts	28 Darby Valle	29 Najah Danner Arbor Day	30 Rachel Quinn