November 23, 2026

As we move into the holiday season, I want to take a moment to express my sincere appreciation for our interpreter community. Whether or not you celebrate Thanksgiving, this time of year offers an opportunity to reflect on the people whose contributions make a difference every day. Your professionalism, dedication, and commitment to quality interpretation help ensure meaningful language access for court and probation users across our state. Through your work, individuals with limited English proficiency are able to participate fully in court proceedings and probation services and better understand a process that can often be complex and intimidating. I am grateful for the expertise, patience, and care you bring to every assignment. Thank you for your partnership in advancing access to justice and serving our communities. I wish you and your loved ones a safe, peaceful, and restorative holiday season. - Kathleen

Upcoming State Holidays

The Nebraska Judicial Branch will be closed in observance of:

- Thanksgiving, November 26th – 27th
- Christmas, December 25th
- New Year's Day, January 1st

Sunkist Judson Achieves Second Provisional Certification

Effective November 1, 2026, Sunkist Judson achieved Provisional Certification as a Burmese court interpreter, adding a second credential to his professional accomplishments after earning Provisional Certification in Karen earlier this year. Mr. Judson is the first interpreter partner in the history of the Nebraska Judicial Branch Language Access Program to attain Provisional Certification in multiple languages. This achievement reflects his exceptional dedication to professional development and his ongoing commitment to expanding language access services for Nebraska's courts and probation offices. His continued success strengthens access to justice for limited English proficient court and probation users and serves as an example of the value of investing in interpreter training and advancement. Congratulations Sunkist!



Christmas Together: A Celebration of Hope 🎅 *(courtesy of Adrian Hinojosa)*

It's that time of the year again! The season of giving is here, and once again, we have an opportunity to bring smiles to children's faces and make the holidays a little brighter for families in need. Please see the attached Adopt A Family document for our 10 families.

Our gift-giving event will take place on December 13th from 5:00–7:00 p.m. at 5602 S 22nd Street in Omaha. ***All are welcome to attend!***

If you would like to participate, please email me at Adrian.Hinojosa@nejudicial.gov to let me know ***which family you would like to adopt***. *If adopting an entire family is not possible, you are welcome to adopt* ***an individual family member.*** Every little bit helps!

Please make sure all gifts are delivered to me no later than **Friday, December 11th**, so we have time to get everything organized.

Every contribution, big or small, makes a difference. Thank you for helping us spread some holiday joy and bring smiles to the faces of children and their families!

Your generosity and support are truly appreciated! Thank you! ❤️

Continuing Education Units

Continuing education is required by the Nebraska Judicial Branch to ensure that certified, provisionally certified, and registered interpreters maintain and improve their interpreting skills. Annual Interpreter Continuing Education Compliance Form for January 1, 2026- December 31, 2026, **are due to Kathleen no later than February 1, 2027.** Annual CEU submission is a condition to remain on the Statewide Register of Interpreters. A big thank you to those interpreters who have already submitted their forms – way to be on top of it!!

- Foreign language interpreters shall complete and report 5 credit hours of approved continuing education every year. At least 2 continuing education hours must be earned in professional responsibility.
- Every certified Sign Language and CDI must complete and report the RID required 20 contact hours with the minimum of 15 hours in Professional Studies.
- Every non-certified Sign Language and DI must complete and report the NCDHH required 12 clock hours with a minimum of 9 hours in Professional Studies and 1.5 hours in interpreter ethics

Nebraska Latino Youth Summit 2026

The Executive Director of the Nebraska Commission on Latino-Americans invited Language Access to highlight interpreter services, interpreter credentialing programs, and career opportunities within the Judicial Branch. The summit hosted approximately 700 high school students from across Nebraska who are exploring educational pathways, careers, and opportunities to serve their communities. This event presented an excellent opportunity to:

- Increase awareness of court and probation interpreter services.
- Engage directly with Latino youth who may have an interest in public service careers.
- Strengthen relationships with community organizations and educators serving Nebraska's Latino population.
- Support the Judicial Branch's ongoing efforts to recruit diverse and qualified professionals.



L-R Angie Diaz Kearney Adult Probation, Ana Laguna Kearney Adult Probation, and Kathleen Valle.

Office of Dispute Resolution (ODR) Releases FY2026 Annual Report

ODR has published the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Annual Report. This report provides a breakdown of the 3,730 cases managed by the six ODR-approved mediation centers from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. Case types include parenting plans (53%); general/community, including small claims (18%); juvenile justice (13%); child welfare and pre-hearing conferences (13%); and other family/adult criminal cases (3%).

During the reporting period, referrals were received from the court (45%), attorneys (20%), self/family/friend (19%), government agencies (12%), and schools (3%). For the referrals that resulted in the participants attempting mediation, 56% of the cases reached a full or partial agreement with an additional 18% of referrals being facilitated. This represents 74% of cases referred resulting in parties coming to the table and participating in either a mediated or facilitated process.

Professional Resources

- The Chinese Court Interpreters offer CEUs in Cantonese and Mandarin, state exam prep and one-on-one tutoring.
- Interpreting Alcohol Related Crimes
- Certified Practice Labs 70 certified legal interpreting sessions, 5 languages, vetted by professional translators
- Tennessee Language Center Simultaneous Interpretation Boot Camp
- NAJIT call for proposals for their 2027 conference to be held in May in Salt Lake City
- Emotional Intelligence Under Pressure: Interpreting High-Emotion Encounters

- College Board- the organization that runs CLEP (the College-level Examination Program). CLEP provides college credits based on experience and demonstrated competence (via a test) for intro-level college material in subjects including Spanish, French, and German. The tests cost $97, and the college credit that people who pass the exams receive is typically worth 3 credits or more.

Recognitions

- Just wanted to say I had the privilege of having **Maizuyen Nguyen** interpret for me this morning! It was a preliminary hearing, so witnesses and we did it via Zoom, which makes it extra challenging. She did phenomenal- particularly with an attorney and witness who took a moment to get into the rhythm of speaking through an interpreter, and a Judge who knows no Vietnamese so can't really help referee natural pauses. Appreciate her help this morning! – *Judge Fliam, County Court, Seventh Judicial District*

- Thank you to **Adrian, Kari, and Amiel** for the time they dedicated in putting together a demonstration video. – *Kathleen Valle, Language Access Director*

- Sitting in Judge Hansen's courtroom today and just observed a hearing with an interpreter!! **Sunkist Judson** was amazing It was a sad/difficult case, and he showed so much professionalism and empathy with the family. – *Leah Cech, Director of Court Education*

- **Perla Vasquez** has been such a help. She is great about keeping in touch with updates and hops in wherever needed. Thank you, Perla! - *Kari Corkle, Language Access Coordinator*

- I would like to thank all the **block interpreters** that pick up short notice stuff during lulls in their blocks. Oftentimes things pop up unexpectedly so your flexibility and willingness to help where needed on reserved time is greatly appreciated! - *Kari Corkle, Language Access Coordinator*

- **Perla Alarcon-Flory** does a really great job. 😊 - *Kathleen Iles, County Courtroom Clerk, Scotts Bluff*

- **Ernest Thervil** was great! On time, turned his camera on. Thankful he was there. - *Liz Hussey, Bailiff to Judge Strong, Lancaster District Court*

- **Stacey Con** was fabulous… as usual! Thank you, thank you, thank you! - *Kathy Woodmancy, Clerk Magistrate, Perkins County Court*

- **Nick Nersesian** does a wonderful job for us. - *Chelsie Sparks, Clerk Magistrate, Cheyenne County Court*

- Such great teamwork! Thank you for all your help so we could get him [the defendant] sorted. And please thank **Jale Bryant** for her observation! - *Shannon Foote, Courtroom Clerk, Cheyenne County Court*

- **You (Kari Corkle) and the interpreters** are all great to work with!- *District Court Judge Cindy Volkmer, District 11*

- **Tara Trindle**– Thank you for your prompt responses, it's a pleasure to work with you– *Olivia Brockman, Interpreter Coordinator*

- **Caleb Corbin, Rocio Pastor, Monica Silva & Tirza Corbin**– Thank you for all of your hard work in covering the many PSI assignments. I appreciate your prompt responses. – *Olivia Brockman, Interpreter coordinator*

- We are grateful for **Olivia's** prompt response to every request and truly value **the entire language access team**!- *Jessica Kisela, Deputy Clerk, Seward County District Court*

Skill Building

The 2027 Skill Building session will be conducted jointly with the Missouri Judicial Branch's Language Access Program. This collaboration allows both states to share the cost of instruction while providing participants with the same high-quality training experience. Register to attend Skill-Building.

Snapshots from the Field

Barre Hassan (Somali) stands in front of the Dawson County Courthouse which was built during 1913-14. Designed by William F. Gernandt in the Beaux Arts style of architecture, the building was said to be completely fireproof except for doors, window casings, and furniture. As of the 2020 census, the population was 24,111. The county seat and the largest city is Lexington.



University of Nebraska College of Law

UNL's Housing Justice Clinic Director recently invited Amy Prenda and myself to speak to student attorneys on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), language access and best practices for requesting linguistic assistance. Engaging with student attorneys early in their careers is valuable, as it provides an opportunity to reinforce best practices before professional habits are established.

Did You Know?

Thanks to Monica Silva for sharing this pictograph with me. I found it interesting and hope you do too!

