

# CRB\* TODAY

COURT REPORTERS  
BOARD NEWSLETTER

GUARDING THE RECORD  
FOR CONSUMER PROTECTION



## Message from the Chair

*Davina Hurt*

### *Living Life in the Public Eye*

Justin Trudeau, the Prime Minister of Canada, has said that “Living your life in the public eye is a greater burden than most people can imagine.” Imagine every act and word uttered is open to complete and unrestrained public scrutiny. This runs counter to one's natural inclination for privacy and pure freedom of self. However, the Board wholeheartedly welcomes the review and public scrutiny to support accountability, transparency, and trust.

While the Court Reporters Board is by no means of famed athlete, movie star, or politico status, we do perform our mandated duties in the public eye. As our current sunset review period begins, we are entering the apex of review. Yes, a heavy lift for our small Board and staff. The Legislature will look at every aspect of the Board's actions for the past three years to see if it is effectively and efficiently protecting the various consumers of court reporting services through proper oversight.

This year's sunset review coincides with the launch of the Board's new strategic plan, a serendipitous turn of events akin to a New Year's resolutions. It's a time of looking back at what has been accomplished, evaluate what worked and what was less optimal. It is also a time of creative visioning where we look forward to the next five years. The guideposts for our future progress is in professional qualifications, enforcement, educational oversight, consumer information, and organizational effectiveness.

As part of the strategic planning process, the Board worked with its sister agency SOLID, who facilitated the entire process, including surveying

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### *Board Members*

DAVINA HURT, *Chair*

TONI O'NEILL, CSR, *Vice Chair*

ELIZABETH LASENSKY

CARRIE NOCELLA

YVONNE K. FENNER, *Executive Officer*

PAULA BRUNING, *Layout Designer*

*Message continued from cover*

industry stakeholders to create a full environmental scan of the factors affecting the Board's activities.

"It's an exciting time to work for the Board," said Yvonne Fenner, executive officer for the Board. "There are so many changes driven by technology and demographics that are affecting the court reporting industry right now. It's an amazing opportunity to influence the direction of those changes for the benefit of the consumer."

Some of those changes include online skills testing and testing of voice writers as another means to capture the record. How will computers, media, and communications continue to develop? Will reliable remote court reporting take hold? What new technology is being developed that will allow court reporters to do their job of creating a verbatim transcript of oral proceedings more easily?

It is a privilege and an honor to serve the consumers of California. Yes, even in the public eye. As George Washington stated, "Truth will ultimately prevail where there is great pains to bring it to light." We do this willingly in furtherance of California consumer protection.

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## Task Force Update

### *AB 2084 (Kalra) Becomes Law*

Expect the best, plan for the worst, and prepare to be surprised. AB 2084 (Kalra) began this legislative session as a firm registration bill. After multiple discussions with the Governor's Office and industry stakeholders, it was determined that movement forward required a different approach. Namely, the focus changed to drilling in to protections on the integrity of the transcript and transcript delivery process by making the laws that apply to licensees also applicable to entities handling the transcript.

The bill was signed into law on September 21, 2018, by Governor Jerry Brown. As of January 1, 2019, no one, including non-licensee-owned firms, may charge for a transcript that is formatted in violation of the Minimum Transcript Format Standards nor charge fees for court transcripts that are not in compliance with those set out in the Government Code. Additionally, all transcripts must be made available to all parties at the same time, and all parties must be notified of a request for preparation of all or any portion of a transcript, excerpts, or expedites.

Violators are subject to a civil fine up to \$10,000 per violation. The action may be brought by the Attorney General's Office, the CRB, or any city or district attorney.

While it may be a small part of all of the laws that apply to court reporting, it is a significant step forward for consumers in California who now will be able to turn to the CRB for assistance in those areas. "I would expect all reporters and firms to comply with the new law," asserted Yvonne Fenner, executive officer to the Board, "but it will be nice to be able to take a complaint from a consumer knowing that no matter who they hired, the same standards apply."

The CRB is deeply grateful to Assemblyman Kalra for authoring this bill, as well as his staff who so passionately advocated for the consumers of California by successfully shepherding this bill into law. Kudos and much appreciation also goes to the Deposition Reporters Association and to the California Court Reporters Association for their support in moving the bill forward. When the Board Chair Davina Hurt was asked about her thoughts on the bills passage, she simply quoted Ben Franklin. "Diligence is the mother of good luck" in Sacramento.

## Court Reporters Board Member Resigns

It is with a heavy heart that we report that licensee board member Rosalie Kramm has resigned from the Board. Appointed by Governor Brown effective July 3, 2013, Ms. Kramm served the Board through August 7, 2018.

Ms. Kramm served on multiple task forces and subcommittees and strongly advocated for protection of consumers. “Ms. Kramm brought the Board a unique perspective and in-depth knowledge to the everyday occurrences in the profession as a licensee,” noted CRB chair, Davina



Hurt. “She has a grasp of the profession and where it’s going in the future,” added Toni O’Neill, vice chair.

“It has been a true privilege to work with such an intelligent, forward-thinking person,” reported executive officer Yvonne Fenner. “Staff will miss her enthusiasm.”

Her service to the state was commemorated with a resolution passed by the Board at the September 17, 2018, meeting. Members and staff thanked her for the time she devoted to the consumers of California.

## Legislative Update

### *Another Legislative Year Comes to a Close*

In addition to AB 2084 (Kalra) being signed into law, another bill affecting court reporters became law, namely AB 2664 (Holden). This new law requires a civil trial court to appoint a court reporter at the request and expense of one of the parties even if there is no stipulation as to the presence of a court reporter.

Bills that were unsuccessful this session included AB 2757 (Reyes), which would have increased the statutory fees for court transcripts, and AB 2531 (Gallagher), which would have tasked the Board with approving certifiers of CART providers.

## Fee Increase Update

The Board’s regulatory package to effectuate the license and exam fee increases approved at the July 2017 meeting was filed with the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) on October 9, 2018. OAL has 30 working days to review the regulation to ensure that it complies with the standards of the Administrative Procedure Act. OAL reviews for required authority to create or amend the regulation, consistency with existing law, clarity, non-duplication, and necessity, among other standards.

The regulation package was approved by OAL with regard to the license fees on November 20, 2018, and the increase will become effective January 1, 2019.

“As a practical matter, it will take a few more months to implement the change, reported Kim Kale, Licensing Analyst for the Board, “simply because it takes time to change the necessary fields in the databases.” She added, “Since renewal forms are printed two months ahead of time, that too will result in a minor delay in implementation.”

OAL did not agree with the Board’s interpretation of the statute regarding the examination fees. That was removed from the package and will be brought before the Board at its next meeting.

## Industry Update

### *Board Plans for Inclusion of License Voice Writers*

At its July 19, 2018, meeting, the Board directed staff to acquire input from stakeholders regarding the possibility of voice writers becoming licensed in California to report court and deposition proceedings. A survey was deemed the most efficient way to accomplish this task before the next Board meeting in September. The survey consisted of one question: Do you support voice writers being licensed in California? There were three choices of response: Yes, No, and Neutral. Additionally, there was a comment field. The survey was sent to licensees using a voluntary email list provided on license renewals as well as the subscriber list of interested stakeholders.

The Board received 1,421 responses, including 872 comments. 66% of the responses were No, 21% of the responses were Yes, and 13% of the responses were Neutral.

Reviewing the comments accompanying the No responses, it was clear the survey respondents are not familiar with the current state of voice writing because they objected to no reporter being present, akin to electronic reporting, as well as stating no realtime record is available and asserting a lack of any type of written record, none of which reflect what voice writing is.

Voice writers, in fact, perform the same functions as steno writers. They simply use their voice to create the transcript rather than their hands. A mask is utilized to cover the mouth to minimize any noise from the reporter. The voice writer

uses briefs and arbitrary identifiers, just as a steno reporter does. The voice writer uses voice recognition software to create their transcripts, and they build their dictionaries, just as steno writers do. Just as with steno reporters, once the voice writer's dictionary is robust enough for an excellent translation rate, they can offer realtime services. They create a backup of their note file, just as steno writers do. Many of them create an audio file of the room proceedings, just as many steno writers do.

At the September 27, 2018, meeting, the Board voted to pursue including voice writers as licensees. The voice writers will have to qualify the same way as other test candidates. Since none of the Board-recognized court reporting schools in California offer voice writing at this time, the voice writing candidate would have to qualify by having an RPR; be licensed in Nevada, Texas, or Georgia; or have one year's full-time experience in creating verbatim transcripts of judicial proceedings. They will be required to take the exact same license exam as steno writers, including the two written portions of the exam.

Board staff is working with the Legal Affairs Division and the Office of Information Services on the best way to implement the licensing. It will take some time to change the existing databases. The Board will keep interested parties up-to-date via their website, this newsletter, and emails to the subscriber list. To sign up for notifications from the Board, follow this link: <https://www.dca.ca.gov/webapps/crb/subscribe.php>.

## Board Vacancy

The Board currently has one licensee-member vacancy. If you are a licensed CSR, currently working in the profession, and are interested in applying for the vacant seat on the Court Reporters Board, you can use the following link to reach the application on the Governor's Web site: [https://www.gov.ca.gov/m\\_appointments.php](https://www.gov.ca.gov/m_appointments.php).

## **Board Heads Into Sunset Review Cycle**

The California Legislature aptly identified early on the need for protecting the record through court reporting rules and regulation governed by a board. As of late, Virginia is reviewing the need and importance of an oversight board in court reporting. Understandably, California is continually looking to perfect their oversight and streamline costs to cut excess government. Thus, all boards operate on the premise that they will sunset or dissolve on a specific date. The Court Reporters Board will sunset on January 1, 2020, which puts us in the current sunset review cycle where the Legislature looks at all aspects of the Board's activities.

The review starts with the Board providing a report based on questions from the oversight committee, a joint committee made up of the Senate Business, Professions, and Economic Development Committee and the Assembly Business and Professions Committee. That report is due December 1, 2018, and compiled by the Board with assistance from staff.

Based upon a review of the report, legislative staff will provide the Board with additional questions on areas of concern they have. The Board will have a chance to respond in writing. Then comes a hearing before the joint oversight committee. At the end of the process, legislative staff will form a conclusion – hopefully to extend the sunset date of the Board. If that is the case, the joint oversight committee will work with the Board to author legislation to extend the sunset date. The sunset bill often contains language to extend multiple boards, as well as noncontroversial items such as technical corrections to existing law.

While taking the time to compile the report is significant, it allows the Board and staff alike an opportunity to take a look at everything that has been accomplished since the last sunset review. “It’s a great opportunity to ensure the Board is on track with meeting its legislative mandates,” commented Davina Hurt, Board Chair. “George Strait has a song that says, ‘You don’t know what you’re missing until it’s gone.’ But, in our case, a full review will reiterate the importance and value of the Court Reporters Board, where we should focus our efforts to improve our protection of the consumer.”

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## **Transcript Reimbursement Fund Update**

As reported in the Spring 2018 CRB Today, the Transcript Reimbursement Fund (TRF) was temporarily shut down. Unfortunately, the fund remains closed at this time.

The Board must stop transfers to the fund when its overall budget reserve falls below six months. Although previous reports indicated that the Board's fund condition would not fall below six months in reserve until fiscal year 2017-18, a new analysis showed the drop in fiscal year 2016-17. The funding that previously existed in the TRF account from prior transfers and relied upon by the Board in future planning was exhausted.

All TRF applications received on or after July 7, 2017, that had not been approved by the Board were returned in April 2018. Invoices for applications that were previously provisionally approved before the temporary shutdown are being paid from the funds that were set aside for them.

The Board will not be able to accept and process applications until restorative measures put in motion by the Board come to fruition. As part of these measures, the Board voted to increase license fees, which requires a change to the regulations. For more information regarding the status of the fee increase regulation, please refer to page 3.

Applicants may reapply when funding is reestablished. To be added to the Board's email notification list, visit the website's consumer section at [www.dca.ca.gov/webapps/crb/subscribe.php](http://www.dca.ca.gov/webapps/crb/subscribe.php).



### Student Spotlight



*“Those who don’t jump will never fly.” – Leena Ahmad Almashat*

Nicole Duzich is always looking for a challenge and an adventure or two. She loves experiencing nature and new cultures and is willing to try anything. And try she has.

“I earned a black belt at the age of 12,” commented Nicole. “I love skydiving, mountain biking, white-water rafting, anything that takes me out of my comfort zone.” The list goes on. She found one of her biggest passions at Bungee America. After her first jump, she spent eight months pursuing a position with the company. Her persistence paid off, and six years later she still loves hiking 10 miles a day as a jumpmaster. *“It’s extremely fun to see people conquer their fears,”* Nicole shared.

In middle school she had thoughts of being a lawyer. She got her first glimpse of stenography when a CART reporter provided services for a deaf classmate in high school. After high school, Nicole earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology at Cal Poly Pomona. She planned to go into social work but decided to switch directions when the financial aid she needed to earn her master’s degree fell through. She started thinking about court reporting as a way to marry her interests in both law and human behavior when a close friend started attending court reporting school. With the support and encouragement of her boyfriend, she jumped in with both feet and enrolled in the court reporting program at Tri-Community Adult Education. She prefers the physical location of the school versus an online program.

“Court reporting school is challenging and demanding,”

Nicole said. “But you have to be willing to *give it your all.*” She sees the commitment as necessary because she knows *the reward is worth it.* She added, “There is a lot of test-taking. It is essentially failing until you pass. But once you become comfortable with the idea that you will be failing, you can get past those humps much quicker, and the passes will be that much more rewarding.”

Nicole says that staying positive no matter how frustrating things get is the greatest thing that has gotten her through school. She also has a competitive nature and always wants to do her best, especially in subjects she is passionate about. She also learned from her mother to work hard and be grateful for everything she has.

“I know this field will provide for me financially but that’s not why I entered it,” Nicole said. *“We can’t do things just for the money* – that won’t sustain happiness for a long period of time. Nothing is perfect, but we have the choice to change our outlook and our mindset. *I am successful if I can remain happy* through the good and the bad.”

After graduation, Nicole hopes to continue working at Bungee America on the weekends while reporting depositions or providing CART services a couple days a week. “I like to go with the flow, but also find it important to be prepared,” Nicole said. “Life is unpredictable, and I am very interested in all directions this skill can take me.”

She plans to stay in her home state of California and enjoy the “million things that we can do in this state.” Outside of obtaining her CSR license, Nicole has grand goals for the next 10 years, including getting married, completing a base jump and a triathlon, and helping the less fortunate.



## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q** What should I do when the judge asks me to include Title IV findings, for example, but the judge does not actually state what those findings are out loud?

**A** Shorthand reporting is defined as making a record of anything that is stated orally in the proceeding (Business & Professions Code § 8017, Title 16 California Code of Regulations § 2403). If someone asks you to include something that has not been said out loud, you could let them know that you will record anything that is stated orally and that if they want something included in the record, they will have to have its contents said out loud.

**Q** May a court reporter issue a certificate of non-appearance if the reporter wasn't present at the start time to see if the person appeared?

As a specific example, the court reporter arrived at 1:30, half an hour before the 2:00 start time of a deposition. The receptionist said, "Don't set up. The depo has been canceled." The court reporter asked if the witness was a no-show or if the depo was canceled. The receptionist said the deposition had been canceled. Two weeks later, the attorney from that office asked the court reporter for the certificate of non-appearance. The court reporter stated to her agency that she can't do a non-appearance cert because she left around 1:45, which was before the start time of 2:00 p.m. The attorney is insisting that she do the cert. She stated she could do a cert stating that she was informed the deposition was canceled. May the court reporter issue a certificate of non-appearance in these circumstances?

**A** No. The court reporter may not certify to something without personal knowledge that it is factually true. In this case, the court reporter would have no personal knowledge whether the deponent showed up before the 2:00 o'clock start time. The court reporter is correct in offering to certify that she was informed of the cancellation.

**Q** Is a court reporter required to produce the transcript regardless of the outcome of the case or the proceeding?

In this example, a jury trial ends in a hung jury. The DA retries the case. The defendant is found guilty. Appellate counsel files an appeal of the guilty-verdict trial and later files "augmentation" for a limited part of the hung-jury trial. The reporter submits an affidavit indicating that since there was no judgment in the hung-jury trial, she will not produce transcript. Is it appropriate for the court reporter to refuse to produce the transcript based on the outcome of the case?

**A** No. The transcript should be produced. It is not the role of a court reporter to decide how a transcript is going to be used. The duty of the court reporter is to report judicial proceedings and prepare a verbatim transcript from their notes.

**Q** I am an official court reporter producing a transcript from another court reporter's notes. May I charge a transcript page rate that is more than what is set out in the Government Code because I am acting more like a scopist than a court reporter as I didn't take the original notes?

**A** No. The production of court transcripts is billed at the statutory rates set out in the Government Code (§ 69941 et seq). Even though you did not create the original notes, you are producing and certifying the transcript; therefore, you would charge the same rates as provided in the Government Code.



## CSRs Needed for Exam Workshops

If you currently work as a CSR and your license is in good standing, *we need you.* The CSR exam development process involves a series of workshops that requires active CSR participation. Without valuable subject matter expert input, the workshops cannot take place, and without a good supply of test questions in the test bank, the Board will not be able to continue to offer the written exam three times per year.

For the health and growth of the industry, please consider accessing the Board's calendar at [www.courtreportersboard.ca.gov](http://www.courtreportersboard.ca.gov) to see if any of the upcoming exam workshop dates might work for you. Each two-day workshop is held from Friday to Saturday in Sacramento. All travel accommodations are arranged by Board staff. All workshop participants will be provided with a per diem rate of \$150 per day. Those living farther than 50 miles will be reimbursed for hotel accommodations at the State approved rate.

Please pass this important message on to reporters you know. The future success of the CSR industry lies with you. For more information on participating in an exam workshop, contact Kim Kale at [Kim.Kale@dca.ca.gov](mailto:Kim.Kale@dca.ca.gov).

## Examination Statistics

Written Exams				
July 1, 2018 - October 31, 2018		Total	Pass	Overall %
English	Overall	41	24	58.5%
	First Timers	17	11	64.7%
Professional Practice	Overall	32	18	56.3%
	First Timers	18	9	50.0%
March 1, 2018 - June 30, 2018		Total	Pass	Overall %
English	Overall	39	11	28.2%
	First Timers	13	6	46.2%
Professional Practice	Overall	31	18	58.1%
	First Timers	15	10	66.7%

Dictation Exam			
July 2018	Total	Pass	Overall %
Overall	112	6	5.4%
First Timers	14	2	14.3%
March 2018	Total	Pass	Overall %
Overall	121	17	14.0%
First Timers	20	11	55.0%

## School Update

Bryan University has graduated its final court reporting class, as conveyed to the Board on June 29, 2018.

Bryan University enjoyed a 78-year history serving students with a reputation for excellence. Established in 1940 by Dr. Mildred T. Bryan as Bryan Stenotype School, the school later became well known as Bryan College. The institution gained university status when it began offering graduate programs.

As with many other private schools in the country, Bryan University lost its accreditor when the U.S. Department of Education ceased recognition of Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools. This action resulted in Bryan University no longer being able to offer court reporting programs.

Bryan University, now based in Tempe, Arizona, successfully transferred to a new accreditor and continues to offer online classes in many other disciplines outside of court reporting. "We will miss serving the court reporting community of California and sincerely thank everyone for the opportunity to serve for so many years," commented Eric Evans, president of Bryan University.



## COURT REPORTERS – How to Write SUPER FAST with Stress

*The following blog from Rosalie Kramm is re-printed with her permission. Ms. Kramm is a former member of the Court Reporters Board and continues to inspire us to be the best in all we do.*

I was reading a fantastic article in the *Wall Street Journal* about Francesco Molinari's win at the British Open Golf Championship, "The Uncomfortable Practice Habits of a Champion," and immediately thought about court reporters and particularly court reporting students.

The article, by Brian Costa, talks about how in past years Molinari would practice hitting balls on the driving range, hitting perfect shots, was always considered a top golfer, but never made the cut. Molinari was frustrated and decided to hire Dave Alred, a soccer/rugby sports psychologist. Alred wrote the book, "The Pressure Principle." He advises athletes (court reporters) "you need to add stress to sometimes otherwise mindless practice shots" (speed tapes).

Golfers in many ways are like court reporters. They practice at their own speed, improve at their own pace, and don't require teammates to make them successful. Becoming a great golfer takes hundreds of hours of practice and a special talent that only certain people are born with. Court reporters learn their theory and then spend hundreds of hours practicing for speed and accuracy, many hours alone only motivated by their strong desire to be great (or pass a speed test).

When Alred was hired by Molinari, Alred asked, "Do you want to be comfortable, or do you want to be ready?" As a court reporter, I know that I can write clean and fast when everyone is speaking clearly with a consistent cadence. But when it is time to pass the CSR, CRR, RMR... even though the speakers are speaking clearly and with a consistent cadence, nerves set in, and the writing becomes a challenge.

Costa writes, "Molinari went on to win the British Open with a stellar short game and almost robotically steady play on a volatile leaderboard. But his ascent to become the first Italian to win a major championship is rooted partly in a change he made only to the past two years. It wasn't in the way he swung. It was the way he practiced."

Costa goes on, "Their first session together, at the Riviera Country Club outside Los Angeles, was a preview of how things were about to change. Alred had Molinari practice a tricky flop shot on a downhill lie and asked him to keep hitting it until he had stopped five balls within three feet of the hole. It took him 48 tries." Alred made Molinari practice at a high frustration level.

Another sports psychologist, Cordie Walker says, "We want to have learning environments that foster skills that are retained on the golf course." (Speed test.) "Desirable difficulty," a term coined by cognitive psychologist Robert Bjork argues that introducing a certain degree of challenge to the learning process boosts long-term retention.

The bottom line is the experts believe that practicing just for the sake of practice is not good enough. Practice needs to be intense and even uncomfortable. I am thinking it would be good to practice at quick bursts of speeds beyond my capability, slowing down to write sustained complex material, and then have another speed burst. That would be very tiring for my brain, but perhaps a beneficial exercise for increasing speed and accuracy.

I found the article about Molinari to be inspiring. I want to be better. Pushing out of our comfort zone will make us better than ever!

## Dictation Exam Update

### *Two Dictation Exams to be Offered*

Because of the extremely low pass rates on the July 2018 dictation exam, Board staff performed an in-depth analysis of the test and of the test results.

First, staff looked at the timing of the test. Each group is timed at the exam, but staff confirmed the average speed was 185 words per minute for group 1, 187 for group 2 and 189 for group 3. Additionally, staff timed each minute of each group to ensure at no time the test went above 200 words per minute.

Staff then looked at the errors on the failed transcripts. It was determined that the number of wrong words or dropped words occurred almost equally between the witness and the main questioning speaker, which is logical as they had the largest roles. Grader feedback was that the colloquy was a common source of error, either misidentifying a speaker, which is a five-point error, or dropping words immediately after colloquy.

The analysis also revealed that 17.8% of the candidates have taken the exam 10 times or more.

As the test is demonstrably within Board policy, a number of other suggestions to improve the pass rate were considered. The one suggestion the Board voted to pursue is the administration of two tests for each group, one court and one deposition. The tests will be dictated back to back for each group, pausing only long enough for the readers to switch scripts and identification name plates. The candidates will choose which test they will transcribe for grading.

“It is hoped that offering the two tests will help alleviate test nerves, which completely interfere with a candidate’s ability to write,” noted Board Member Toni O’Neill. “It’s a way of basically doubling the number of tests offered to candidates but at almost no additional cost to the Board.”

The two-test format began with the November 2, 2018, exam given in Sacramento and will continue through the end of 2020. “The new arrangement went smoothly, and candidates seemed pleased to have the option of picking which test to transcribe,” noted Yvonne Fenner, executive officer.

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## CSRs Needed to Write Skills Exams

Would you like to help write the “CSR”? The Board is looking for licensed court reporters to develop dictation exams.

More tests are needed than ever! The Board recently authorized the reading of two exams to each test group. Additionally, a large bank of tests is needed for the future of online testing.

Participants attend a one-day workshop to learn the ins and outs of creating skills exams. The Board provides a per diem rate of \$150 for the workshop. Travel arrangements will be made by Board staff. For those who live more than 50 miles from the workshop location, hotel accommodations will be reimbursed at the State-approved rate (may vary by county).

Workshop dates and locations will be announced as they become available. If you have a CSR license in good standing and are not mentoring or instructing students, please contact Kim Kale at [Kim.Kale@dca.ca.gov](mailto:Kim.Kale@dca.ca.gov) to be added to our list!

## Best Practice Pointers Task Force Seeks Participants

The Best Practice Pointers Task Force was established in November 2014. Led by Board chair Davina Hurt, the previous group of participants met twice in 2015 and reached their goal of developing a total of 10 practice pointers.

“The practice pointers act as a springboard for discussion,” noted Yvonne Fenner, executive officer for the Board. “They are not used as grounds for discipline but are simply advice.”

Ms. Hurt will once again be convening the task force to develop additional best practice pointers and seeks to fill the group with new participants. If you are interested in lending your knowledge and experience toward this endeavor, please contact Paula Bruning at [Paula.Bruning@dca.ca.gov](mailto:Paula.Bruning@dca.ca.gov). If you would like to help but are unable to join the task force, you may send topics for new practice pointers to Ms. Bruning.

You may view the best practice pointers previously adopted by the Board by visiting <https://www.courtreportersboard.ca.gov/licensees/index.shtml>.

## Newly Licensed Certified Shorthand Reporters

*April 1, 2018 – October 31, 2018*

The Court Reporters Board of California is pleased to welcome the following people to the rolls of licensed California court reporters:

Sarah Anderson, Fullerton, CSR 14280  
Adam Bacud, Walnut, CSR 14277  
Tiffany Barbour, Bakersfield, CSR 14298  
Ilusion Barrera, La Jolla, CSR 14291  
Brijanne Byrd, Sacramento, CSR 14279  
Makayla Croteau, Rialto, CSR 14293  
Selena Duran, Los Angeles, CSR 14281  
Elaina Camacho, Fillmore, CSR 14295  
Sara Giammanco, Stevenson Ranch, CSR 14292  
Brittany Hitchcock, Anaheim, CSR 14287  
Paulina Iturriria, Bakersfield, CSR 14289

Leah Javanfard, Los Angeles, CSR 14286  
Joseph Johnson, San Diego, CSR 14288  
Susan Kiger, Reno, NV, CSR 14294  
Mikayla Lafayette, Cameron Park, CSR 14284  
Amanda Legore, San Diego, CSR 14290  
Mischa Milan, La Puente, CSR 14296  
Briana Pilato, Wildomar, CSR 14278  
Ashleigh Ratliff, Los Angeles, CSR 14297  
Christina Saldate, Selma, CSR 14282  
Lisa Spencer, Arroyo Grande, CSR 14285  
Morgan Wesney, Penryn, CSR 14283

### CSR Spotlight

*Trudy O'Brien, CSR 13641*



I was a commercial fisherwoman for 17 years. My husband, Jeremiah, and I fished together for 14 years. I am 5'1" and weigh 120 pounds, and at the age of 32 I realized I just wasn't big enough to do it any longer. My husband is 22 years older than me, and I knew that I needed to find something to do that would give us financial security in the event that he ever retires from fishing.

I was following a high-profile trial taking place in Monterey. I saw the court reporter and thought, "Oh. I can do that." *So began the journey.* I came home and told Jeremiah that I was going to become a court reporter, and he said, "Go for it."

In 2001 I started looking for a court reporting school. There are no schools in San Luis Obispo County, but I found a woman who was teaching the StarTran Theory created by Marlene Struss. Halfway through basic theory my teacher moved, so I taught myself the rest of the theory. I also took English and grammar at our local community college here.

When I began speedbuilding, I commuted to West Valley College for two years, driving up on Monday and returning home on Thursday evening. I will never forget the wonderful faculty there. The encouragement and support that I received at West Valley was tremendous from 40 WPM to the qualifier for the CSR. I will forever be grateful to them for helping me through all of those first-time rushes.

After a couple of years, though, the commute took a toll on me. I enrolled in an online program called Simply Steno with Marc Greenberg, which I continued until I was qualified to sit for the RPR. It was suggested by a court reporting friend that I was only going to pass the CSR if I qualify in a four-voice dictation program. I returned to West Valley on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Taking and passing the CSR was *one of the biggest accomplishments of my life.* It was Friday, March 11, 2011, the day of the earthquake in Japan and the tsunami here on the West Coast. My phone rang in the middle of the night from a concerned crew member asking if our boat was okay. I know that when preparing for the test the next morning my mind was less on how I was going to do on the test and more on hoping the people in Japan were okay, how our boat and Jeremiah were doing, and thinking about my sister in Hawaii. In other words, my test anxiety was lessened because I managed to get out of my own head. I drove home with that feeling you get after taking a speedbuilding test of, "I know I got that one."

One thing I would tell a person going to sit for the CSR is "When you go into the testing room, sit in whatever seat you end up in and know it is the right one. Don't change seats." I would tell a person starting this journey that it is really hard but that every minute of school is worth it. Persistence is the key. *Never give up.*

Once licensed, I wanted the freedom of being an independent contractor so I could take myself off calendar to be with Jeremiah. To establish myself with a deposition agency, I dressed professionally and walked into Merit Court Reporting & Video where I met the owner, Jeri Cain. She took me on as a mentee and taught me everything I know about being the best

*CSR Spotlight continued from page 12*

court reporter that I can be including all the thousands of details they can't possibly teach you in school. She continues to teach me about this amazing career with passion.

I think the proudest moment for me as a court reporter was one of the first times I was in court and the judge said, "Madame Reporter, could you read that back for me, please?" I remember reading it back just like I was taught to in school, with confidence and in a clear voice. The thing that went through my head was, "Oh, my God, she is talking to me." I still get that feeling and never want to take it for granted.

Today, I report depositions and proceedings in our local court, as well as transcriptions from recordings. Family law is fairly challenging as you are often a part of very sad times in people's lives. I think that being able to *be empathic and impartial* are qualities that are a must as a court reporter. And at the end of the day, without feeding off of other people's dilemmas, being able to walk out and say thank you is a blessing.

We have a great organization here in San Luis Obispo called SLO Legal Assistance Foundation. They provide legal services to those who cannot afford it. Every year they have a fundraiser that has a theme. It is one of my favorite events of the year as I get to put together a costume in order to attend. I wanted to be an actress when I grew up, so I have gotten to incorporate that into a once-a-year event. And I am *so proud to be able to help give back to our community* in a way I never thought I would.

I have TPAEUGT on my license plate, and I love telling people that it is the word "faith" in steno. That was a big part in what got me through court reporting school, and it is a huge part in what gets me through the long hours of producing a transcript in a timely fashion. I come straight home after a job and do the transcript in order to be ready for the next job to come. I am so focused on getting it done that other things sometimes get put aside. My biggest priority, though, is my husband, Jeremiah, whose support is paramount in my becoming and continuing to be a court reporter. He has learned to live, eat, and breathe it also. My mom gave me a needlepointing of "Balance is the Idea." I try to look at that once in a while, and when I am not working, I try to get to yoga in order to achieve that.

I have been a court reporter for seven years, but *I learn something new every day* and hope that I will continue to do so. I have been a member of NCRA, DRA, and CCRA since before I became a licensed court reporter. I admire the people who take the time to volunteer for and better our industry, and I will continue to support them and help in any way.

Getting off of the boat was the hardest thing I ever did as it was all that I knew. But now I consider myself one of the luckiest people around because I absolutely loved my first career as a commercial fisherwoman, and I love my second career as a court reporter.





**Court Reporters Board of California - Citations and Fines Issued April 2018 - October 2018**

The Citations and Fines remain posted for one year from the date initially issued. To find out whether a specific licensee has ever been issued a Citation and Fine prior to the date shown, or to obtain further information on a specific Citation and Fine, please contact the Board office toll-free at 1-877-3-ASK-CRB (1-877-327-5272).

The following respondents' Citation and Fines that reflect "Satisfied" have been satisfactorily resolved. Payment of a fine is not an admission to the violation.

RESPONDENT NAME - COUNTY	LICENSE NO.	DATE ISSUED	VIOLATION	SATIS- FIED
McGarry, Lisa – Riverside County	13114	09/17/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	Yes
Lauro, Monica – Los Angeles County	11550	09/14/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	No
Desimone, Teresa – Los Angeles County	3637	09/05/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	No
Rivera, Debra – Los Angeles County	10785	08/24/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	Yes
Tougas, Faith – Riverside County	14137	08/06/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	No
Tougas, Faith – Riverside County	14137	07/18/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	No
Kim, Hanna – Contra Costa County	13083	06/25/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8016: Engaging in the practice of shorthand reporting without a certificate of licensure in full force and effect. (late renewal)	Yes
Desimone, Teresa – Los Angeles County	3637	06/19/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d) and (e): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to produce transcript)	Yes
Tougas, Faith – Riverside County	14137	06/19/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	No

*Citations continued from page 14*

RESPONDENT NAME - COUNTY	LICENSE NO.	DATE ISSUED	VIOLATION	SATIS- FIED
Timberlake, Dawn – Sacramento County	11629	06/13/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	No
Grant, Beth – Sonoma County	10943	06/12/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	Yes
Alvarado, Tatiana –San Bernardino County	13769	06/07/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct; Section 8025 (f): Loss or destruction of stenographic notes; Government Code Section 69955 (e): Time requirements for retention of stenographic notes. (failed to retain stenographic notes as required by Code and unable to produce transcript)	Yes
Timberlake, Dawn – Sacramento County	11629	06/05/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	No
Tresidder, Kristi – Santa Clara County	10233	05/31/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	Yes
Morgan, Betty – Los Angeles County	2212	05/31/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	Yes
Timberlake, Dawn – Sacramento County	11629	05/15/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	No
Acheson, Beth – Orange County	12766	05/14/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8016: Engaging in the practice of shorthand reporting without a certificate of licensure in full force and effect. (late renewal)	Yes
Guzman, Diana – Los Angeles County	13373	04/27/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct... availability, delivery, execution and certification of transcripts... (failed to timely produce transcripts)	No

**Court Reporters Board of California - Disciplinary Actions** Current as of October 31, 2018

To find out whether a licensee has had disciplinary action, or to obtain further information on specific disciplinary action for a licensee listed below, please contact the Board office toll-free at 1-877-3-ASK-CRB (1-877-327-5272).

A disciplinary action is a formal proceeding that includes the basis for the action sought against the licensee. These disciplinary actions are held in front of an Administrative Law Judge and allow for attorney, testimony, and challenges as provided in the legal system. The Administrative Law Judge then issues a decision that the Board can accept, reject, or send back for additional information. In the case of a stipulated settlement, an agreement was reached before going in front of an Administrative Law Judge. Disciplinary cases can result in license suspension or revocation and/or a probationary status with conditions.

RESPONDENT NAME - COUNTY	LICENSE NO.	ACTION	EFFECTIVE DATE	CHARGES
Bourne, Kamaiya – Los Angeles County	14127	Stipulated Settlement and Disciplinary Order; 4 years probation; \$2,652.50 cost recovery.	10/18/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Fraud and dishonesty, unprofessional conduct; Section 8025 (j) and CA Code of Regulations, Title 16, Section 2475 (b)(4): Failed to prepare and deliver transcript; Section 8025 (j) and CA Code of Regulations, Title 16, section 2480 (e): Failure to comply with order of abatement; Section 8025 (h): Failure to pay Citation and Fine.
Wu, Valerie – Riverside County	14027	Stipulated Surrender of License	09/19/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d) : Unprofessional conduct; Section 8025 (e): Repeated unexcused failure to transcribe notes; Section 8025 (j) and CA Code of Regulations, Title 16, Section 2475 (b)(4): Comply with legal and/or agreed to delivery, dates, and/or provide prompt notification of delays; Section 8025 (j) and CA Code of Regulations, Title 16, Section 2480 (e): Failure to comply with order of abatement.



## Court Reporters Board Of California - Disciplinary Actions Pending Current as of October 31, 2018

RESPONDENT NAME - COUNTY	LICENSE NO.	ACTION	EFFECTIVE DATE	CHARGES
Tougas, Faith – Riverside County	14137	Accusation	10/15/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct; Section 8025 (e): Repeated unexcused failure to transcribe notes; Section 8025 (j) and CA Code of Regulations, Title 16, Section 2475 (b)(4): Failed to prepare and deliver transcript; Section 8025 (j) and CA Code of Regulations, Title 16, section 2480 (e): Failure to comply with order of abatement.
Timberlake, Dawn – Sacramento County	11629	Accusation	08/03/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025 (d): Unprofessional conduct; Section 8025 (j) and CA Code of Regulations, Title 16, Section 2475 (b)(4): Failed to prepare and deliver transcript; Section 8025 (j) and CA Code of Regulations, Title 16, section 2480 (e): Failure to comply with order of abatement; Section 8025 (h): Failure to pay Citation and Fine.
Wilson, Michelle	N/A	Statement of Issues	07/16/2018	Business & Professions Code Sections 480 (d): False statement in application; Section 480 (a)(3)(A) and 8025 (c): Acts that would be grounds for discipline of licensee.
Luciano, Catherine	N/A	Statement of Issues	07/13/2018	Business & Professions Code Sections 480 (a)(1): Conviction of a crime; Section 480 (a)(2): Act involving dishonesty, fraud or deceit; Section 480 (3)(A): Acts that would be grounds for discipline of licensee.
Minch, Jennifer – San Bernardino County	14087	Accusation	07/03/2018	Business & Professions Code Section 8025: Failure to notify Board of conviction.
Biggs, Janene – Solano County	11307	Petition to Revoke Probation	11/13/2017	Failure to comply with conditions of probation.



**COURT REPORTERS BOARD**  
OF CALIFORNIA