



JULY 2008 e-NEWS President's Column

Dear Members:

When I became president of RID last year, I promised to devote time and energy on building a foundation of *TRUST* to support Past President, Angela Jones' platform of *COMMUNICATION and COLLABORATION*. True collaboration and partnership requires TRUST. One of the core values of TRUST is to 'Talk Straight.' That concept leads me to share with you what will become the focus of the *RID e-NEWS* President's Columns. In future columns, I will not only share with you recent RID Board of Directors' decisions, but also how we came to these decisions collectively, as a group, elected to represent the 13,000+ members of RID.

In past issue of *VIEWES* and on the RID Web site, the board has taken the time to explain its decision-making process regarding recent initiatives, including entering into a partnership with Boys Town, Inc., the administrators of the Educational Interpreters Performance Assessment (EIPA). However, I will go over that process again as an introduction to this inaugural *e-NEWS* President's Column.

Regarding the EIPA initiative, recent analysis of historical voting patterns and precedence on membership matters determined that the board would be exposed to a greater sense of the membership's opinion if it sought feedback through more meaningful channels. The board focuses on education strategies that enabled us to reach a wider audience than previous voting processes demonstrated to reach in the past. The board sought member feedback through a variety of avenues, including communication tools such as e-mail; articles in *VIEWES*; contacting affiliate chapter, committee and member section leadership to solicit feedback via their e-mail discussion groups; hosting member forums at state, regional and national conferences; appointing a task force of experts with extensive credentials and experience in the field; consulting RID legal counsel; and requesting a thorough analysis that the EIPA tool met every psychometric standard. The consensus of membership opinion from these efforts was in support of the board's decision and, in fact, helped the board and executive director to shape negotiations to match the majority of members' vision for having Ed:K-12 interpreters held to the same standards as RID certified members who participate in NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct, the Certification Maintenance Program and the Ethical Practices System.

As a result of the board's decision on the EIPA initiative, members brought motions to the 2007 RID business meeting to clarify the RID Bylaws regarding new credentials, membership categories and voting rights. Rather than come together and make decisions impacting the future of the association during a discussion limited by the amount of time allowed during a business meeting, the board recommended, and the membership voted, to entrust this work to a task force of members who are passionate about the issues brought forth. I'm happy to share with you that

333 Commerce St., Alexandria, VA 22314 ■ 703.838.0030 V ■ 703.838.0459 TTY ■ 703.838.0454 Fax ■ www.rid.org



Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.

the Strategic Challenges/Bylaws Review Task Force, SC/BRTF, represents the diversity of opinion and background of RID. They truly represent the face of RID. The task force will be sharing a report of their first face-to-face meeting, held on June 12 - 15, 2008. Their work has just begun. It was essential to hold this face-to-face meeting to get the issues on the table and find that members with different opinions can come together and move forward with recommendations that everyone can support. The next step of the task force is to hold regional forums with the membership at the region conferences.

It is my hope that, not only will the SC/BRTF bring forward recommendations on the above-mentioned issues of credentials, membership categories and voting rights, but they will also have thoughts and recommendations on the future of inclusive voting for this growing member-driven association.

It is important for me to note that the board of directors considers issues thoughtfully and deliberately, often requesting more information, discussion and negotiation until the proposal looks like something we can all support. The board takes seriously the fact that they represent our most cherished resource, you, the members. It is clear to see at board meetings and during conference calls that no board member harbors a hidden agenda, and they truly consider the impact to the members on each and every decision they collectively make. They represent you well, and I am proud of the amount of time the board members take to deliberate properly. John Carver states in his book, *Boards That Make a Difference*, "Healthy governance requires that board members agree up front that any position resulting from a fair process is and rightfully should be the position of the board. After the vote is taken, the official pronouncement must be as firm as if there had been no disagreement at all."

Next month, I will share with you how the board came to the decision documented in Motion #2008.06: To accept the national office proposal to delay the initial implementation of the degree requirement to stand for certification testing deadline by one year, to June 30, 2009.

If you would like me to address a specific topic or decision of the board in future columns, please send an e-mail to president@rid.org or publications@rid.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl Moose".

Cheryl Moose, CI and CT
RID President



August 2008 e-NEWS President's Report Cheryl Moose, CI and CT

Dear Members,

As I stated last month, I plan to use the *RID e-News* president's column to share with you the rationale for recent decisions made by the RID Board of Directors, which are made collectively, as a group, elected to represent the 13,000+ members of RID.

In April 2008, RID extended the deadline requiring an associate's (AA) degree for hearing candidates for certification from June 30, 2008 to June 30, 2009. The one year extension will enable the national office to ensure that the proper procedures are in place to handle and assess alternative pathway requests. (i.e., equivalent alternative criteria allowable in lieu of the educational requirements)

Originally, the AA degree requirement was voted on by the membership at the 2003 National Conference in Chicago, IL.

So, why did the RID Board of Directors pass the following motion at the April 2008 board meeting?

Motion #2008.06 To accept the national office proposal to delay the initial implementation of the degree requirement to stand for certification testing deadline by one year, to June 30, 2009.

Brenda Walker Prudhom/Kelly Flores

Opposed: Jeremy Brunson

Carried

Let me share with you the historical background information the board considered that led to this decision:

As part of the original movement to implement the degree requirements, the membership also tasked the RID Certification Council with developing "in lieu of" or alternative pathways in achieving degree requirements. As stated in conference motion C2003.05: "By June 30, 2006, the Certification Council shall establish equivalent alternative criteria allowable in lieu of the educational requirements such as one or more of the following: life experience, years of

professional experience and years of education (credit hours) not totaling a formal degree.”

This was an important part of the motion (text included below) that was passed at the 2003 RID Business Meeting. The intent of this motion from the membership was to respect the life experience and culture of our founding members, the Deaf community, deaf interpreters, hearing interpreters with deaf parents and interpreters whose native language is American Sign Language.

The recommendation that ultimately came from the Certification Council in 2006 was that test-takers could put together a portfolio of life experiences, work with an accredited college and essentially earn a degree with some credits waived for life experience.

This work by the Certification Council in 2006 in laying the groundwork for the “in lieu of” or alternative pathway was just the first step in clearly establishing the guidelines and processes needed to be in place to make the “in lieu of” option available to candidates.

The next step is to provide the tools and resources for individuals who want to explore this opportunity. This is currently lacking and the national office needs the time to ensure the intent of the motion from the membership is clearly provided to any individual who wishes to seek the in lieu of or alternative pathway to the degree requirement.

While the board thoughtfully deliberated from all angles and perspectives the issue of prolonging the degree requirement deadline, we ultimately came to the resolution that, after assessing the situation, the national office did not have the resources in place for those candidates wishing to pursue the alternative pathways. It would be irresponsible of the board to continue with the degree requirements without ensuring the national office could provide clear, accurate and sufficient guidelines to also meet the intent of the alternative pathways motion.

In a way it would be like if the federal government said all U.S. citizens have to have e-mail access by 2010 but then they don't follow through with the service providers to ensure every home actually has internet capabilities.

Enforcing change without the resources to make it happen just doesn't work, and as much as it pained the board to have to make this decision, we just could not justify the enforcement of degree requirements knowing the national office could not adequately provide guidance and support for the alternative pathways.

At the same time that the board approved the degree requirement extension in April 2008, we also tasked the national office to make it a priority and do their due diligence in ensuring these guidelines will be created and in place come the June 30, 2009, deadline.

We are confident with the hire of Heather Trusty, Director of Certification, in November 2007, that the national office has the expertise and guidance to manage the development of the alternative educational pathways. With 15 years experience in national testing and certification and 20+ years experience in association management, Heather is truly an expert in testing, and we are fortunate to have her working for RID.

Under her guidance, we have already seen dramatic improvements in the testing department, especially in the area of customer service. Extending one deadline (not affecting the others) by 12 months is the sacrifice we had to make to ensure there are processes and programs in place so that our members are supported and protected as well as required, at the appropriate time, to adhere to standards in the profession.

I hope you will come to see that the decision, though difficult, was in the best interest of our members.

Conference Motion C2003.05

RID adopt and publicize the following schedule for when all test candidates must have a degree from an accredited institution to stand for any RID certificate:

Effective June 30, 2008, candidates for RID certification must have a minimum of an associate's degree. Effective June 30, 2012, Deaf candidates must have a minimum of an associate's degree.

Effective June 30, 2012, candidates for RID certification must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree. Effective June 30, 2016, Deaf candidates must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree.

By June 30, 2006, the Certification Council shall establish equivalent alternative criteria allowable in lieu of the educational requirements such as one or more of the following:

- Life Experience
- Years of professional experience
- Years of education (credit hours) not totaling a formal degree.

National Council on Interpreting (In response to motion L from the 2001 Conference.)

Carried



September 2008 e-NEWS President's Report Cheryl Moose, CI and CT

Dear Members,

Sharing with you, in the monthly RID E-News president's columns, the rationale for recent decisions made by the Board of Directors has been a huge success. I appreciate the positive feedback as well as the follow-up questions that have come to me as a result of these columns.

At the July 2008 meeting of the RID Board of Directors, the following motion carried unanimously:

Motion 2008.17

To accept national office recommendation #2008.01 to convene a task force to review the current National Interpreter Certification (NIC) paradigm, as recommended by psychometric standards. The task force will look at all aspects of the testing system and will determine if there are psychometrically sound alternative approaches that are feasible, practical and supportable.

Jeremy Brunson/Brenda Walker Prudhom

Carried Unanimously

In order to maintain the value and integrity of the test, it is time to review the NIC suite of tests in psychometric terms of validity and reliability, examine the NIC Knowledge Test questions to determine which ones are working and which ones are not, develop new questions and additional versions of the test, examine all aspects of the NIC Interview and Performance Test formats and develop new versions of the NIC Interview and Performance Test as well.

Recent statistics from our psychometric consultant, CASTLE Worldwide, Inc., show that NIC rater reliability is extremely high – exactly where we want it to be, verifying that rater training, monitored by the NIC test development experts, national office testing staff and CASTLE, is appropriate. However, to avoid the NIC from becoming outdated, damaging the huge financial investment that was made to develop the NIC and discounting the blood sweat and tears of experts, staff and volunteers that worked on the NIC project, it is wise, at this time, to undertake a complete review of the NIC suite of tests.

It is interesting to note that the testing paradigm in our organization up until the development of the NIC was that knowledge and skills were tested separately.

The knowledge exam included questions of ethics. Passing the knowledge exam opened the door for you to take the performance test, and once you passed, you were deemed certified. With no levels of certification, it was simply a matter of being certified, or not. And in members' eyes, "certification" means "I'm good."

What we've migrated to with the NIC is a system in which the NIC Knowledge Test is simply that - a measure of one's knowledge about the organization, RID history, sign systems, linguistics, etc. The ethical component has been removed from the NIC Knowledge Test. While the NIC Interview and Performance Test does separate ethics and skills in the Interview and Performance sections, it is one test, testing both performance skills and ethical decision making processes at the same time. This is in opposition to our long-standing paradigm of being assessed competent based on skill alone through a performance test. This has caused a major paradigm shift in the way members need to approach certification through testing. Many members may still be viewing the NIC Interview and Performance test as a measurement of their interpreting skill, yet the interview portion is indeed a knowledge test.

There has been a lot of talk about the NIC. Members are questioning why some pass and others fail. In addition, members are questioning how some are achieving the NIC Master and others (many of whom are long-time, well-respected interpreters) achieve a different level.

If you are looking at skills alone, this does seem difficult to understand, however the experts who developed the test also developed the process to rate it. The rating is based on some of the newest research in the field. They have learned how to examine and articulate the ethical component of their work. It is a part of their learning about interpreting. Interpreters that have been in the field for a long time may not have had the same opportunities to examine the ethics behind their decision making process and may not be able to articulate as clearly why certain decisions would be made. They also may come from a different world-view than third and fourth generation interpreters.

The National Council on Interpreting (NCI) and the first NIC task force of experts that developed the NIC in its current form believe the NIC is a certification test and is not a tool to provide diagnostic feedback to the test-takers. That is why test-takers do not see more information on their results letters. The information test-takers do receive is more than what was provided during the 1990s when they received a pass or fail notification letter.

During a recent discussion regarding members' concerns about the NIC Interview and Performance Test with Executive Director, Clay Nettles, I learned that the raters look at hundreds of rating points – hundreds more than a test-taker sees on their results letter. A few rating points are averaged and shared with the test-taker. Sharing test results was a mandate from RID members, and it is

impossible to share comprehensive statistics from the raters without compromising the integrity of the test.

In the *RID E-NEWS* for August there is an article that speaks to the recent analysis of test results by CASTLE that indicate very high reliability statistics. A .80 is considered a high reliability rate – the NIC written test statistics show a .90 reliability rate, the NIC performance test shows a .971 and the NIC interview portion of the performance test shows a .985 reliability rate.

Let me also share with you recent statistics compiled by RID Director of Certification, Heather Trusty on the pass/fail rate of NIC test-takers. This data is based on test candidates from 1/1/2006 – 7/31/2008: The total pass rate for the NIC Interview and Performance Test is close to 50%. Taking the number of test-takers who passed, 6% achieved NIC Master, 14% achieved NIC Advanced and 79% achieved NIC. According to CASTLE, these statistics are right where they should be for a new test. As we see more training offered to help members prepare for the test, more trainers teaching “to the test”, and more members becoming familiar with the test due to the latter reasons, we will see these statistics improve.

RID is in the process of carrying out **MOTION 2008.17** by appointing a task force to review the NIC Written Test and the NIC Interview and Performance Test. RID is accepting applications and is communicating with NAD on the experts they'd like to appoint to this task force. The NIC is a collaborative effort between NAD and RID, and we'll be collaborating with them on the task force as well. If you are interested in being appointed to this task force, you can send a letter of interest and your resume to Director of Certification, Heather Trusty at htrusty@rid.org.

The task force will be looking at the paradigm of performance testing and researching other testing paradigms as well. RID is an organizational member of the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA). NOCA is the leader in setting quality standards for credentialing organizations. NOCA serves its membership as a clearinghouse for information on the latest trends and issues of concern to practitioners and organizations focused on certification and licensure. There are about 335 members and less than 10% administer an actual performance test whether it is video taped or conducted before a live panel. The task force will look at other professions and their criteria for issuing certificates/licenses to practice. This could lead to stricter policies on hours with a certified mentor before one is considered qualified to take a performance test and different criteria one must meet to take the NIC Advanced or NIC Master. RID is creatively exploring alternate testing paradigms that are more in line with the needs of members. This task force is designed to uncover potential paths that would satisfy RID members and uphold the integrity of the RID testing system.



October 2008 e-NEWS President's Report Cheryl Moose, CI and CT

Dear Members,

Last month, the RID Board of Directors unanimously passed the following motion:

MOTION #2008.25

That the RID Board of Directors appoint a work group to conduct an analysis of how best to elicit member input in reevaluating the overarching direction of the association through a review of the philosophy, mission, goal and diversity statements, and other relevant documents with recommendation due back to the board by March 2009.

Amie Seiberlich/Jonathan Webb

In September 2008, during a face-to-face meeting, the board and national office directors conducted their annual review of the RID Strategic Plan. During this discussion, the board and directors reviewed and approved the RID Strategic Challenges as they are presented in the March 2008 *VEWS* (page 6), and at: http://www.rid.org/UserFiles/File/pdfs/VEWS_articles/0308_Strategic_Challenges.pdf.

Because everything we do as an organization should map back to the philosophy, mission, goal and the newly adopted diversity statements of RID, during the strategic planning discussion, the board and directors looked at those as well, which follow:

Philosophy:

“Ensure Effective Communication”

The philosophy of RID is that excellence in the delivery of interpretation and transliteration services between people who are deaf or hard of hearing and people who are hearing, will ensure effective communication. As the national professional association for interpreters and transliterators, RID serves as an essential arena for its members in their pursuit of excellence.

Mission:

“Support the Continued Growth and Development of the Profession”

It is the mission of RID to provide international, national, regional, state and local forums and an organizational structure for the continued growth and development of the profession of interpretation and transliteration of American Sign Language and English.

Goal:

“Promote the Profession”

It is the goal of RID to promote the profession of interpreting and transliterating American Sign Language and English.

Diversity Statement:

To actively foster an inclusive environment in which the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) embraces diversity as an integral part of the association. RID is committed to establishing and maintaining a diverse, accessible, civil and supportive environment that adheres to RID's philosophy, mission and goals. RID is committed to providing growth opportunities that allow members to reach their full potential and maximize member value. RID pledges to seek partners who share our philosophy and commitment to upholding high standards of diversity within the association.

This review and the ensuing discussion brought forward these thought-provoking questions: **“Do the philosophy, mission, goal and diversity statements truly reflect the purpose of RID and really meet the needs of those we serve?”** and an essential philosophical question of, **“Who do we serve?”** We could not bring the discussion to a satisfactory close because we must have input from the members.

As a result, **MOTION #2008.25** was developed and passed, and a work group was established to develop an action plan of how best to elicit member input in reevaluating the overarching direction of the association through a review of the philosophy, mission, goal and diversity statements, and other relevant documents with a recommendation due back to the board by March 2009.

Members of the work group include: Past President Angela Jones, Moderator; Region III Representative Kelly Flores; Region IV Representative Amie Seiberlich; Region V Representative Jonathan Webb; and national office Director of Communications and Education Tina Schultz.

I look forward to sharing more with you in early 2009 as the work group develops the action plan.



November 2008 e-NEWS President's Report Cheryl Moose, CI and CT

Dear Members,

As you know, I have been using the *RID e-NEWS* president's column to explain the reasons behind and the impact of recent motions passed by the RID Board of Directors. This month, I have invited Lewis Merkin, Chair of the Deaf Members in Leadership Committee and Chair of the 2009 RID National Conference Program Committee, to highlight his involvement for a deaf-friendly RID. Please take a moment to read Lewis' column. Send both Lewis and I any comments or feedback you might have regarding his column and how RID and the Deaf community can work together to address challenges of common concern. Happy Holidays, Cheryl

RID 2009 Conference – What does it mean to be deaf-friendly?

Lewis Merkin, CDI

Chair, Deaf Members in Leadership Committee

Chair, 2009 RID National Conference Program Committee

As the Chair of RID's Deaf Members in Leadership (DML) Committee, it is my responsibility to work with committee members to fulfill the purpose of strengthening RID by including deaf members in leadership roles. To that end, I personally felt the need to "walk the talk" and volunteered to serve on the 2009 RID Conference Planning Committee. I am honored to report that I was recently appointed chair of the Conference Program Committee.

The 2009 RID National Conference theme is, "Embrace Change, Honor Tradition." As chair of the conference program committee, it is imperative that we consider this theme and its meaning for both the planning of the conference as well as the strategic direction of the association and membership.

HONOR TRADITION: I have noticed and discussed with members of the DML that Deaf cultural norms, which have always been present in RID since the beginning when membership in RID was made up mainly of native users of ASL and the Deaf community, are not as evident as they once were. RID has grown exponentially in the last 10 years. Through this growth, the institution of RID's cultural tradition has oftentimes been overshadowed by the viewpoint of the business. By focusing on honoring this foundational tradition, we cannot lose sight of RID's history and its close ties with the Deaf community.

The RID Board of Directors has begun dialoguing recently about oppression and what that means to deaf members of RID. NAD and RID leaders have also dialogued about the perception of oppression and have brainstormed how to provide education at all levels of RID. One of the ways to fight oppression is to provide an atmosphere at RID conferences (and within the organization) which is more Deaf-friendly. One of the first steps in achieving this goal would be to conduct meetings and events in a language directly accessible to all.

EMBRACE CHANGE At conferences that I have attended, communication in conference hallways, restaurants and lounges have been predominantly non-signed. In the recent past, RID has made commendable efforts to remind conference attendees of Deaf cultural norms and encouraged members to sign if there are deaf people present. We have also seen a movement at the affiliate chapter level toward annual conferences and meetings being conducted entirely in sign, and this has been gratifying. As chair of the program committee, I believe that once hearing and deaf members see the predominant language at their conference is ASL, participants will be quick and eager to follow. This is further verified at the 2007 RID conference when participants, who left workshops that were conducted entirely in sign, continued to converse in sign long afterwards. These factors were an essential consideration in my proposal to the 2009 National Conference Planning Committee, when I applied to serve on the program committee and advised that approximately 25 percent of the workshops be presented in sign only.

I have been a member of RID for more than 12 years and chair of DML for the past five years. I am a firm believer in the membership driven concept of RID, which is why I prefer to "walk the talk," instead of just "talking the talk." I shared this concept for an increase in ASL-only programming with President Cheryl Moose, and she is on board with the concept and supports and embraces the change for the national conference in 2009.

I am pleased to report that as of November 1, 2008, over 33 percent of the conference presentation proposals submitted for consideration stated the presentation would be conducted in ASL. The program committee is dedicated to creating a high quality conference program that is inclusive and welcoming to all members. We believe it is a concept the membership will truly embrace.

If you have already submitted a proposal and would like to reconsider how you present, please contact Cori Dossett, Director of Meetings.