



Speech from  
2011 RID National Conference  
Opening Ceremonies  
July 18, 2011  
President, Cheryl Moose, CI and CT

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*The delivery of this speech was not in total of the written comments below, but the sentiments remained the same.*

Good evening everyone!! Welcome, welcome, welcome!

Welcome to Atlanta and to the 2011 RID National Conference.

Thank you for joining me this evening as we open the doors to RID's 22<sup>nd</sup> Biennial Conference. It is great to see so many familiar faces and equally as great to see many new faces. This is sure to be a week full of growth for all of us and I am looking forward to every moment of it with all of you.

This conference is about growing globally and what better way to do that than through partnerships.

Not so many years ago, RID was founded with the basic concept of partnerships as the focal point – a partnership with the Deaf community to provide excellence in interpreting. It has been a crucial partnership within RID that has molded and been shaped as RID has also molded and been shaped to the changes, challenges and opportunities of the interpreting field and growing and changing needs of the consumers we serve.

I am happy to report that RID's partnership with the Deaf community has further evolved over the last two years as the Deaf Advisory Council has been launched and for the very first time is included in the current call for volunteers. The work of the former Deaf Members in Leadership committee really focused the need for the Deaf community perspective to be visible and present within all levels of the organization – from the board and committees to the member sections and national office staff. I must thank Jimmy Beldon, Janis Cole, Alisha Bronk and Lewis Merkin for their tireless efforts and leadership in this area and for their patience as we worked through the path we needed to take. During our planning meetings, we frequently talked about bringing back the Deaf-heart within RID. One such way was the Deaf Members in Leadership recommendation and the creation of the Deaf Member-at-Large board position. It is our hope that the creation of the Deaf Advisory Council will support the DMAL and the DMAL will be the liaison to the DAC as well as their "voice" on the board of directors. Establishing the DAC demonstrates our association's commitment to maintaining Deaf-heart always within the leadership of RID.

But Deaf-heart is not just about being inclusive in the decision-making at RID, that is a big part of it but it can not solely be based on RID as an organization alone. Deaf-heart, on an individual basis, is the

cultural awareness that each and every one of us commit to as members of the esteemed profession of sign language interpreting; it is our dedication to language; to culture; to understanding; to access; to inclusion. Deaf-heart also has personal meanings for each of us. For me Deaf Heart means what is best for the profession and the impact to the Deaf community go hand in hand – they are one in the same with neither having a priority over the other. In an association of 15,000 members, less than 2% are deaf. I still say loud and clear, “That must change!” That is my vision and my interpretation of Deaf Heart.

I ask that this week, as part of your own challenge to yourself, that you define what Deaf-heart means to you. And not only what it means to you but how do you put that meaning into your every day practice?

The point I am trying to make is that ‘Deaf-heart’ is a very personal commitment in which we must each find our own meaning in and how we incorporate it into our everyday lives of interpreting as well as our everyday lives of just being. If we do that, then it will always have a place in everything we do; it will naturally be weaved within all structures of RID because it will naturally be weaved within all of us.

So, whether growing globally as an organization or as an individual, Deaf-heart is a key element to our success, and your board of directors is so very pleased with the steps we have taken with the Deaf Advisory Council as well as the partnership with the NCIEC to appoint a task force to review the process to become a certified deaf interpreter. And we are even more excited to see its future impact. So, all you leaders within the Deaf community, check out the call for volunteers and submit your application today!

We are excited to see how the DAC will be implemented and grow over the first inaugural term!

Throughout our nearly 50 year history, partnerships in many different shapes and sizes have guided RID through the journey we have taken to where we are today.

For example, RID’s partnership with NAD has been undeniable. From our memorandum of understanding, which was signed at the 2009 conference in Philadelphia, to our work together on the NIC, to ensuring NAD representation on the Professional Development Committee, the Ethical Practices Committee and the Certification Council, NAD and RID have remained steadfast in our reliability upon each other. I look forward to this continued collaboration under the reign of my good friend, Howard Rosenbloom.

As you may have read with my recent announcement related to long-time Executive Director Clay Nettles retirement, RID is ripe to begin a search for an individual to lead the national office – a leader with vision, passion for the profession and commitment to the needs and opportunities of our members. So just as NAD heralds in new leadership, so does RID – we are proclaiming a new era as we begin our search for a new executive director – not just a new face for RID that exemplifies our commitment to our partnership with the Deaf community and with the profession of sign language interpreting but a new voice that stands with us as we journey ahead together.

Another obvious partnership to me, are the ones we are forging right here during this conference. These collaborations are indicative of where RID is going in the future.

For the first time ever, RID is partnering with Mano a Mano to create a trilingual (Spanish-English-ASL) track within the schedule that provides a focused thread throughout the larger RID conference. While Mano a Mano has held a pre-conference in years past, this is the first time we have collaborated to have a clear trilingual track within the program.

And to borrow the words from my dear colleague, David Quinto-Pozos, President of Mano a Mano, “this cross-germination of ideas within the RID conference will have positive results for years to come for all attendees and the variety of sign language interpreting disciplines from which they practice. This new trilingual track provides greater depth in the variety of educational opportunities provided to attendees and is intended as a way to meet the growing need in this area.”

As the interpreting profession moves forward, more diverse and unique assignments are becoming increasingly more common. The RID National Conference is a forum in which we can provide the interpreting field with the educational opportunities they need to strengthen their skills and grow their expertise to better serve consumers of interpreting services. We are excited about the collaborative partnership with Mano a Mano to include the additional focus on trilingual interpreting as well as the many other events, activities and workshops that will truly enable all of us to ‘grow globally’ as our theme so aptly implies.

Other partnerships include the wide variety of member section events that are taking place this week. Our member sections are in touch with the needs of our members and have tremendous ideas on how to shape programs and services, such as the conference program. Volunteers from our member sections have worked tirelessly to put together additional programming options for you this week. From the always enlightening community forum sponsored by IDP and the Deaf Caucus, to the additional workshops sponsored by IEIS, BLeGIT, VIMS and LIMS! Member Section events are schedule every day and evening of the conference. There’s something to do day and night – I’ve been wondering for weeks when I can fit in a few hours of shut-eye! But shut-eye is an issue for another day – a day when I am no longer the president of this magnificent organization.

Also, we have some member section partnerships just beginning. The new Student Member Section that was created within the past year will be having its first gathering at this conference. RID must encourage relationships with students going into the professional of sign language interpreting and increase the opportunities provided them. We must remember that the students are tomorrow’s potential RID members, and RID should develop creative methods of recruiting them so there is a place at RID, a place to call their “professional home” for them to learn and growth professionally.

Another great opportunity of partnership and collaboration has been the implementation of the RID Government Affairs Program. This has been a long time coming to RID – a means for the membership and those in the profession to have a voice – but since its inception, in 2009, just nearly a year and a half ago, GAP has made great strides, under the representation of Janet Bailey, past RID president and RID distinguished service award recipient, to develop much needed partnerships with consumer groups as well as with regulators and administrators.

To me, the most important aspect of GAP is the connectivity it has provided between the national efforts in interpreter advocacy and state-level efforts. GAP works closely with affiliate chapter leaders, our committees and member sections, so that when issues arise, RID is representing the standard and practice that addresses quality interpreting services and fairness to consumers and our members.

In a short time, GAP has provided a voice for RID on many different fronts and this can only expand and extend as GAP continues its efforts. Continued development of partnerships with the consumer groups, stakeholder associations and governmental and regulatory entities will only help to enhance RID's sphere of influence – and continue our growth globally.

### *TRUST*

Four years ago, I stood to take the oath of office as president of RID and as part of that acceptance of responsibility, I committed to restoring trust within the organization.

In this effort, we elicited the help of volunteer leaders at the member level as well as the committees and task forces. These volunteers, along with support from staff, sought member feedback in a variety of methods on a wide-array of topics.

The Strategic Challenges Bylaws Review Task Force was created to review Motions E-S from the 2007 RID National Conference. While they were specifically tasked with that review; the depth of those motions into the philosophical core of RID quickly manifested into a much more complex to do list for this group of volunteers.

The most important element that came from this investment of time and energy was that the answers we were seeking were not always clear nor were they consistent from member to member and perspective to perspective. Their work really demonstrated to us that we, as an organization with a nearly 50 year history, are at a moment in our journey where we together must define where we want to go – together.

I must take the time to thank the members of this task force for their committed efforts over the past four years. If you attended the region conferences in 2008 and 2010, the national conference in 2009, as well as various state conferences throughout the last four years, you were privy to some of their work and your feedback guided them. The culmination of their work will be reported this week during their forum so please try to make time within your schedule to attend this forum. Thank you to Dan Langholtz who chaired this group as well as to Margaret Ransom Cobb, Jeremy Brunson, Rachel Olson, James Van Manen, Chris Prudhom and Tracey Frederick. While there may have been moments of “where do we go now,” your work has inspired and directed this association to take the next steps of a true and in-depth philosophical review of “what is RID” and “Who do we serve?”

So, the question, “Who do we serve?” Answering this question plays a very important role in trust. The answer must be one that we all agree on for if we think of RID's role as something different than what it really is or what it really can be, then our expectations cannot be met.

Because this question has been constant and an underlying element of all board discussions, the PMGD task force was formed. This group will review the current philosophy, mission, goal and diversity statements of RID through member input and participation. Do these statements reflect the RID of today or the RID of tomorrow? Through member-driven feedback, RID will set the path of our function and role in the interpreting profession. There will be a board forum on this topic during the week, so please make sure to join us as we hit the ground running looking to dialogue with members about this topic.

I suspect the work of this task force will take several years to complete to ensure member input on the final recommendation that will go to members for a vote. Expect to see more regional and local forums as well as online discussion forums as we delve into the philosophical question of “who are we? and who do we serve?”

Another area of trust has been our certification program. This organization has a long history of setting standards for programs and services that address our professional practice. The certification program is a prime example of RID’s quest for excellence--a quest that not only members expect but also consumers of interpreting services.

As you all know, our trust has been greatly jeopardized recently, and just a few short weeks ago, the national office reported the unfortunate and regrettable actions of a former staff member. This individual’s fraudulent efforts and quest to embezzle funds, affected the scores of 34 individuals’ NIC Interview and Performance Examinations.

While this former staff member is serving time in jail for his crimes and the board and staff are working diligently with the 34 affected individuals, we know and understand that you ALL may feel affected by this – and rightfully so.

The 11 individuals who serve on the board of directors with great dedication to RID are members of RID just like you, and news of this incident disturbed all of us deeply, just as it has each of you. Because of our commitment to a resolution that would be fair to the affected candidates as well as to the consumers of interpreting services, we ensured that the board was kept apprised of all of the investigative matters and processes from the onset of the discovery last September.

While the board struggled with the need to keep this important information confidential during the investigation, it was necessary to do so while the national office examined the situation fully and determined exactly which individuals were affected by the invalid rater scores. In addition, confidentiality was necessary because this was a sensitive criminal and legal matter involving both internal and external investigations. But throughout the process, the board was kept informed and up-to-date.

While the board and national office staff deeply regret that someone was able to cause so much inconvenience and anxiety, anxiety that was also felt by the staff who worked with this individual, we are extremely proud of the response and resolution. The national office staff quickly took steps to prevent similar incidents from taking place, including implementation of new systems and processes in our Certification and Finance departments, and plans for additional steps in the future.

While this is a situation no organization would want to experience, the board and staff truly appreciate the support we have received from the members, the community and our stakeholder organization. We feel the positive response from the membership related to this incident and how it has been handled is an indication that we have rebuilt trust within this organization, and we can only hope that will continue as we work to increase communication with you all through such means as our significant presence within social media and the nearly 12,000 followers of the RID Facebook page.

We have tried to be responsive to the questions as they come in to the staff or to the board related to this matter and others, but also through Facebook and trying to post replies as quickly as they come in. However, we also know that some of you may have additional questions regarding this matter.

In an effort to give you every possible opportunity to present your questions, we have ensured that a certification department staff member will be onsite at the RID Conference Resource Center (CRC) during all hours of operation. The CRC is located on the Marquis level outside of the Exhibit Hall. In addition, there will be a drop box there in which you can submit your questions, comments or feedback related to this. Please be sure to put your name and contact information on the card so that we can get back to you with a response. And as always, the board and staff are here onsite at the conference and will be accessible to you related to this matter or any other you would like to bring to our attention.

The matter of the invalid rater scores came to light on the heels of the NIC Task Force wrapping up their work and their recommendations, which were presented and approved by both the RID and NAD Boards of Directors.

These recommendations will be unveiled during the NIC Task Force Forum on Tuesday from 4-6 pm in the Atrium Ballroom.

The NIC Task Force was comprised of members considered experts in the areas of certification and credentialing. They were chosen and approved by the NAD and RID boards of directors. These experts are members too and, like the board, represent your opinions, beliefs and feelings about the NIC and certification – a great dichotomy of views coming together and agreeing what is best for the profession as we move forward. Together, task force members, and RID leadership, including myself, will be joined by Clarence "Buck" Chaffee, president of The Caviart Group, RID's certification and testing consultants, for a presentation about the Task Force's findings and recommendations. The group will explain how input from RID members and the Deaf community was used to develop an exciting vision for an enhanced NIC program. They will present on immediate and long term changes to the NIC certification program and examination - all designed to meet RID's goal of keeping the NIC credential current, reliable and valuable to you and the communities you serve. The work of the NIC Task Force began in October 2009, and it continues with your participation here in Atlanta at the forum!

RID certification is something we all want to be proud of and have confidence in – both for ourselves and the consumers we serve. As such, we recognize one of our goals is to ensure that we administer a nationally recognized certification program. The work of the NIC Task Force focused on addressing concerns we heard from the Deaf and interpreter communities and provides for enhancements that

will strengthen the effectiveness and increase the value of the NIC credential for all stakeholders. This is a don't miss forum so make sure to join us!

Through this work, RID and will continue to gain support for RID certification and the criteria upon which it is based. And so, for certification as well as all other programs and services impacting the interpreting profession, RID will continue to serve as a mouthpiece for our profession, addressing contemporary issues and finding the means to support the membership.

The past four years for me, as president of this esteemed and forward moving organization, have flown by. I have had so many great opportunities to meet with members at state, regional and national conferences. You have challenged me, the board has challenged me and I have challenged myself.

For those who know me, or at least those who have read my articles, you know that I cannot take credit for standing before you without thanking the people who have stood beside me and with me, supporting me beyond my expectations for the demands that being the president of the RID Board of Directors can entail.

First, each and every member of the current board of directors, especially my Vice President, Rachel Coppelli, – we have been challenged as much as a board of directors can be challenged, and I am proud to stand beside you for what RID has accomplished and the direction we have provided its course.

Second, thank you to all the past board members I have had the privilege and opportunity to serve with on the RID Board of Directors – from being the Region III Representative, starting in the year 2000, to the present moment here on this stage. You were my teachers, advisors and mentors, especially Ben Hall, Angela Jones, Rob Balaam, Linda Stauffer, my first board buddy, and Judith Carson.

Third, I would like to thank each past president of the RID organization for the time and attention they have taken to personally advise me through the years. I walk in the footsteps of great leaders. And now I am close to the time where my footsteps will be followed by another. I promise to hold my tears until the closing ceremony.

And so, while my term as president is ending, I commit to a very active role as past president. I will serve as a nonvoting consulting member of the board; attending board meetings and conference calls. I have confirmed with Brenda that I will serve as board liaison to the History Committee, led by Carl Kirchner. We have great plans to celebrate RID's history in 2014, when RID celebrates the big 5-0. I will also serve as board liaison to the Bylaws Committee and board liaison to the Member Section Leaders. Our member sections are a vast source of knowledge and expertise and I think we can improve our communication and service to members through the Member Sections and find a bigger role for them within the organization. And finally, I am honored to be working on Succession Planning and the search for a new executive director for RID, new leadership that will provide our organization with a shining star, ensuring a bright strong future for RID.

And now this is where I am not sure I can keep my promise not to cry tonight.

Thank you to my daughters, Jennifer and Jeannine. They gave up their mother for over four years. They planned family gatherings around my travel schedule and even planned weddings and babies around my availability.

And most of all, thank you to my husband. He works harder than I do, first as a carpenter, building a successful career even in the midst of a poor economy and second as the maintainer of our relationships with families and friends, representing Derek and Cheryl when I was traveling so often for RID. He loves me for who I am and that includes being president of RID. In fact, I think he loves me more for having served. He beams with pride when he talks about my accomplishments. My successes are celebrated exponentially when I share them with him. Thank you, I love you, and I can't wait till we take the motorcycle for along weekend drive in August.

Finally to the members. I feel like I made 15,000 friends over the last 11 years. I look forward to an exciting week spending quality time with you, my dear friends. We all have a potential for greatness – as individuals, as members of this profession and as contributors to our professional organization. Let's capture that greatness together this week and carry it with us as we work together to set RID's course and journey into the next 50 years.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent you and our wonderful association.