

# Nota Bene

October 2018 Issue

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## Contact NOTA

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **SAVE THE DATE:** Holiday Potluck – Dec. 1, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. More details to come.
- **HELP WANTED:** If you are interested in helping with social media posts or the quarterly newsletter, please contact Victoria ([victoria@vcktranslation.com](mailto:victoria@vcktranslation.com)).

# President's Message

Dear NOTA members,

First, I'd like to say that it is an honor to be taking over as President of our local ATA chapter for the 2018-2020 term and I will strive to rise to the challenge.

NOTA's primary mission is to support and promote the interests of professional translators and interpreters, and it is what I, along with our dedicated board members, aim to accomplish over the next two years. Your Executive Committee is comprised of volunteers who generously invest time, effort, and energy to offer you, their fellow NOTA members, quality trainings and events throughout the year. Running an association requires a lot more work and coordination than meets the eye, and I am very grateful for their dedication to the profession and to their colleagues! The Executive Committee is also grateful to all the members who volunteered their time in 2018.

As President of NOTA for the next couple of years, my goal is twofold: 1) to continue to offer our members and colleagues **quality trainings and events**, and 2) to provide **client education** at the local level. Our profession being unregulated and often misunderstood, it is up to us to advocate for it to ensure its recognition and protect the interests of the competent and committed professionals who practice it. We work in a fast-paced environment that seems increasingly profit-driven rather than quality-oriented. Our clients—whether agencies or direct clients—are often facing similar demands and constraints on their end. This too often results in poor working conditions (e.g. unsuitable equipment, extremely tight deadlines, increasingly lower compensation, etc.). How do we advocate for our profession at the local level to be able to provide our clients the high-quality services they should receive under the terms and conditions we deserve? This is a question we will tackle as a Board—and, hopefully, with your contribution—while keeping in mind that for our profession to gain more respect and recognition, we must stay committed to quality, keep educating ourselves, act with the utmost professionalism, and continuously hone our skills. Working as a freelance translator and interpreter for the past 12 years, I've tried to remind myself that **what I practice at the individual level has a collective impact—be it positive or negative—on the rest of my colleagues and on the profession.**

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage you to get involved, whether by contributing suggestions, ideas and training proposals, or simply by volunteering at events. NOTA is only as strong as its members are involved. Without you, this association would cease to exist. It can only thrive when willing and passionate members get involved. As Marjorie Moore said: "Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in." We need you and look forward to your contribution!

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Enjoy the rest of 2018 and see you at our next event!

Hélène V. Conte  
NOTA President  
president@notatranslators.org



## MESSAGE FROM JILL SOMMER

September 5, 2018

Hi everyone,

This is my last President's Message. It's hard to believe, but I am stepping down after serving you for the last 16 years. I haven't been perfect, but I have tried my best to keep this organization afloat. Now it is up to you to continue on without me. This organization will only be strong with a membership that is willing to support it. We need your ideas. We need your help with events. We need you to keep renewing your membership and notifying us when you change your mailing or email address. In short, NOTA needs you to remain a vibrant and thriving organization.

When I took over in 2002 we only had \$3,000 in the bank. Now we have \$19,000. This allows us a little more flexibility when it comes to planning events and redesigning the website, but I am confident that the Board will continue to ensure that it uses your funds wisely to the benefit of all the members.

By the time you read this we will have held this year's Annual Meeting at Balaton on Shaker Square. I would like to thank Vitaliy and Silvia for organizing this lovely meal. We are having it at lunchtime this year, but that doesn't mean there won't still be a ton of food. I remember the takeout boxes groaning with leftovers last time. It is sure to be a delicious afternoon

I am also getting excited about the upcoming ATA Annual Conference in New Orleans from October 25-28. It is the weekend before Halloween, and Halloween in New Orleans is a great experience. Consider attending the conference this year. The conference is not an expense; it is an investment into your business. Attendance at the conference has been one of the best ways I have spent my marketing dollars, gaining new clients through agency meetings and word of mouth from colleagues.

We had a great turnout for the marketing event with Tess Whitty. Attendees had the chance to brainstorm ideas and learn some low-key marketing tips from Tess, a Swedish translator who lives in Utah. I hope some of you who attended have implemented the ideas you learned at the event.

I would like to thank the Executive Board members over the last 16 years for their hard work. I would like to thank H el ene Conte, Silvia D'Amico, Reinhold Federmann, Catherine Pina, and Vitaliy Plinto for their hard work and cooperation in the last few years. I've enjoyed working with you. I'd like to thank all of the volunteers who have helped us organize events, and, most importantly, I would like to thank Catherine Pina, Yrene Starke and Kaoutar Sniba for their help with the election. We would have never been able to do it without your help. Lastly, I would like to welcome Christine Mack Joyce and Mourine Breiner to the Executive Board and congratulate H el ene Conte for taking over the reins as President. I leave the Board in your capable hands. Good luck to the future of the organization!

Sincerely,  
Jill

**“NOTA needs you to remain a vibrant and thriving organization.”**



*Jill R. Sommer is a full-time freelance German>English translator. She holds a dual BA in German and Russian from Bowling Green State University and received her MA in German translation from Kent State University in 1995, after which she lived and worked as a freelance translator in Germany for six years. After moving back to the States in 2001, she continued freelancing and was an adjunct professor for the translation graduate program at Kent State University and a contract linguist for the FBI. She has been on the NOTA Board, as President and Membership Chair, since 2002. Her popular blog, Musings from an Overworked Translator, features reflections on her life as a translator and the translation industry. She has attended the ATA conference and presented regularly there since 2002 as well.*



## 2018 ANNUAL MEETING – HANNAH SAMPSON

On September 15, the Northeast Ohio Translation Association (NOTA) held its annual meeting at Balaton Restaurant in scenic Shaker Square (Cleveland, Ohio). As members of the association arrived at the meeting they nibbled on lángos, traditional Hungarian fried bread. After all the attendees were seated, eight-term NOTA President Jill Sommer recognized the new NOTA board members who had won the elections for their respective positions in May 2018: H  l  ne Viglieno Conte, President; Christine Mack Joyce, Membership Chair; and Mourine B. Breiner, Treasurer. Sommer made it clear that she was confident in the future of NOTA under its new leadership. She read the financial statement of the organization aloud, stating that the organization had \$18,719.09 at the time the financial statement was made (prior to the deposit of an additional \$774 into the account later that day). Sommer emphasized that the organization had made great strides from 16 years ago, when it only had roughly \$3,000 in the bank. The former president urged those in attendance to support the board and to not be afraid to suggest improvements. In fact, she credited NOTA's recent debut onto social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter to the suggestions of current members. Sommer also mentioned that the NOTA website was in the process of being redesigned and renovated. While praising current members for their dedication and contributions to the association, Sommer emphasized the need for increased membership. She thanked Secretary Silvia Damico and Programs and Events Chair Vitaliy Plinto in particular for their constant "enthusiasm and steadfast support" during her time as President. Reinhold Federmann, former Treasurer, and former President Sommer were thanked for their service to the association and presented with gifts by the new board members. After a round of applause, a traditional Hungarian lunch was served family style. Attendees dined on an assortment of dishes including homemade salads, stuffed cabbages, weiner schnitzel, chicken paprikash, mashed potatoes, and speatzels (homemade dumplings). After the main course, members chatted over coffee and Hungarian strudel before taking several photos.



*Hannah Sampson is a Spanish to English translator and editor who lives in Kent, Ohio. Hannah graduated from Kent State University with a Master of Arts in Translation in 2017. She currently translates a variety of text types in areas such as marketing and tourism.*





**Are you primarily a translator or an interpreter?**

Both and much more.

**How did you decide to be a translator/interpreter, and how did you choose your language combination?**

Many translators/interpreters often end up in our profession precisely because their linguistic environment changed over the course of their lives, and even though their background might in a different field, they find themselves translating/interpreting for their family members or friends. I have always been fascinated with languages, and despite my family wanting me to become a medical doctor, I still chose words over blood. I did not choose my language combinations—they kinda just happened. I grew up bilingual (Russian/Ukrainian) and the second language at school back in the Soviet Union was always English, unless you went to a high-profile school.

**What do you consider to be your native tongue and how did you learn your second language?**

Russian and Ukrainian were the languages I learned and spoke from birth and English was added in the fifth grade, but you know, language is always evolving, so you are constantly learning, even the language(s) you grew up with or your dominant language. Note that I am deliberately omitting the term “native language/tongue.” Someone might initially grow up with a particular language but due to an array of circumstances be immersed in an entirely different language community as an adult, eventually acquiring a better facility with that new language than he/she had with their “native” one. This happens to many people and migrants around the globe if they move to a place where their childhood language is not spoken, so to me a much better term would be a “dominant language,” meaning the language you are most fluent in.

**Do you have a daily or weekly routine that helps you maintain a healthy work-life balance? What is it?**

You have to love what you do and this passion will bring satisfaction no matter the hours you work. The compounding stress from the never-ending workday is damaging only if you treat it as work, so I don’t actually mind being accessible around the clock if need to be. But I agree work-life balance nowadays seems like an impossible feat. I try to unplug in the sense that I “enjoy the moment” in whatever I do, but it does not mean that I would completely shut off and go off the grid. Healthy eating, yoga, and meditation are crucial in life for me to pump some endorphins through my body and also focusing on the people and activities that reward you the most. (Hint-hint: That’s a polite way of saying “ditch the people with negative aura and enjoy what you do!”) Life is good but too short to fritter!



### What has been one of your favorite projects this past year?

For the past few years, as a company, we've been expanding to and exploring new arenas and niches and have been working on some interesting projects in investments and trading that require highly specialized professionals, super fast turnaround, and 24/7 availability on different continents in over 50 languages, so it's been pretty challenging. As for interpreting, my favorite projects are always the ones when I can educate the clients on how to work with an interpreter. For example, one of the projects that's been going on forever, since last year, I believe, and that I consider "interesting" has been a series of depositions where the client was trying to have these depositions over the phone in the PI case involving roughly 45 cars... It's been interesting to see how the client's understanding and knowledge about interpreting and interpreters and how to work with them have been growing this past year.

### If you could go back in time and choose a different career, what would it be?

What I do is fun and I love it, so I don't really want to change anything. If there were, let's say, 72 hours or so in a day, I'd pursue some additional trainings, probably in business or marketing, but not necessarily a different career. I also always wanted to become a lawyer and I am still cherishing this idea, but first things first—let me finish my PhD. 😊

### In your experience, what are the most important qualities in a translator/interpreter?

Some are a must and a given, for example, linguistic competence and specialty knowledge, transfer competence, cultural competence. Translation or interpreting is also a service and a business, and thus, just having the above competencies is not enough if you want to stay afloat. Aptitude is the key in addition to possessing a skill, knowledge, or qualification. Motivation, ethics, curiosity, interpersonal skills, organizational skills, business skills, emotional resilience—all of these are crucial for success.

### What advice would you give to a translator/interpreter who is just starting out?

Well, there is no easy answer as to where the treasure of success is hidden as every young and/or aspiring translator/interpreter is not the same as every other one. I'd say there is no real secret—just start by working hard and by making smart decisions. Find your true calling, your specialization, your strong intellectual or artistic curiosity or proficiency in two or more different fields; you can't be a multipotentialite or jack of all trades. Your reputation is the most valuable thing you'll ever have, so build it brick by brick, no rush, imagine yourself climbing a very steep mountain—you have to go slow, so that not a single rock moves or falls; otherwise, you are going down the hill. Don't be afraid of asking questions, seeking advice, or admitting that you don't know or understand something, because people/clients will appreciate your curiosity. Learn to be a business person in anything you do, not just translation/interpreting, and always use common sense. Join a professional organization, or several, get involved with the community, and help build the profession. Love what you do, enjoy life, and never give up!



Olga Shostachuk is a PhD Candidate in Translation Studies at Kent State University, Kent, OH, where she previously completed her M.A. in Translation degree. She also holds an M.A. in Education and Linguistics from Lviv National University in Ukraine and a paralegal degree from the Academy of Court Reporting in Cleveland, Ohio. Ms. Shostachuk served as the Vice Chapter Chair for Ohio IMIA and currently is a Ukrainian editor for SlavFile, the newsletter of Slavic Languages Division of the ATA. Her research focuses on legal and medical translation, computer-assisted translation, psycholinguistics, localization, pedagogy, and assessment.

# Meet the Board



**President:** Hélène V. Conte is an ATA-certified English>French translator with over 10 years' experience in the T/I industry, specializing in the medical, judiciary and technical fields. She is certified as a judiciary interpreter in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. Hélène is also part of the small and carefully vetted team of translators currently contracted by the U.S. State Department for the EN>FR language combination. Before being elected as NOTA's president, she first served as the association's secretary and then as membership chair. Born and raised in the South of France, she has been living in the U.S. for more than 20 years and currently resides in Chagrin Falls.

**Secretary:** Silvia D'Amico is a freelance translator working mainly from English into Italian. After a traineeship at the Italian Translation Unit of the European Parliament in Luxembourg, she has worked on EU projects for a few years. In recent years, she has specialized in clinical trials and the translation of corporate material. She is currently serving as secretary of the Northeast Ohio Translators Association (an ATA Chapter).



**Membership Chair:** Christine Mack Joyce is a freelance French>English translator. Ms. Joyce holds Master's degrees from Bowling Green State University and Case Western Reserve University, a Diplôme Supérieur de Français des Affaires from the Chambre de Commerce de Paris, in addition to advanced studies at the Institut de Touraine and the Sorbonne. Ms. Joyce has substantial organizational experience as a non-profit administrator and extensive experience in curriculum development as an academic dean of a private academy. Most recently, she has worked on translations for an international human resources firm and has provided general and technical translations to an international technology company.



**Treasurer:** Mourine Breiner is a full-time freelance French-English translator with expertise in the technical/IT, business and medical domains. She holds a Master's Degree in Translation, a BA in Bilingual Studies and certificates in CAT and Website Localization and Translation. Prior to becoming a full-time translator, she worked for the public and private and sectors including the Department of State, the Swiss Cooperation for International Development and 2 private companies.



**Events Chair:** Vitaliy is a freelance Russian to English and English to Russian translator, proofreader, tutor and interpreter. He also acts as project manager and CEO for Vital Language Solutions, a local company that provides translation, proofreading, interpreting, transcription and tutoring services in more than 30 languages to local as well as international clients. Aside from his work, Vitaliy has been serving on the NOTA Executive Committee as programs and events chair, where he plans, organizes and hosts professional and social events for NOTA members and guests since 2011.



**Interim PR Chair:** Victoria Chavez-Kruse is an ATA-certified Spanish-into-English translator specializing in the life science, medical, and legal fields. She received an M.A. in Spanish Translation in 2013 from Kent State University's Institute of Applied Linguistics and a B.A. in Spanish from Malone University. She is a member of the American Translators Association and the Northeast Ohio Translators Association. In 2016 she helped launch the Black Squirrel Translator Collective along with three other Kent State University alumni; the collective functions as a small agency for Spanish-into-English projects.



# 2018 Events in Review

Medical Translation Workshop presented by Olga Shostachuk, *March 26, 2018*



NOTA-CCIO Networking Event, *April 28, 2018*



Marketing Training presented by Tess Whitty, *June 9, 2018*



NOTA Annual Meeting, *September 15, 2018*



MINUTES  
NOTA Board Meeting  
Saturday October 6, 2018  
Time: 2:00 p.m.  
Panera (Solon, OH)

Meeting starts at 2:36 pm

Present: Hélène V. Conte, Christine M. Joyce, Vitaliy Plinto, Mourine Breiner, Victoria Chavez-Kruse.

**President's Update:** Hélène welcomes Victoria who was appointed by the Board as NOTA's interim PR chair after Catherine Arrieta stepped down from the position. She reports that she ordered the NOTA ink stamp and *Thank You* cards since last board meeting. *Thank You* cards were sent to all our 2018 volunteers in early September.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mourine reports that NOTA's current balance is \$18,691.84. Expenses currently exceed revenue by \$275.69 (not taking into account a positive balance of 367.80 as of 10/6/18 on our PayPal account).

Mourine and Hélène are signatories on the account. Checks were received. The debit cards have not yet been received. Mourine mentions setting up online banking (w/ 3 different users) and will look into it.

**Membership Report:** Christine reports that we currently have 63 members who have renewed, 22 have not (yet?) renewed, 2 said they were not renewing.

She will send another reminder email by Oct 15.

**PR Chair Report:** Victoria reports that NOTA is on Facebook, linked Twitter.

She would like some help with the Facebook group and will reach out to specific members.

Newsletter: Projected date is 10/15. Will look for someone who can help with Newsletter. Victoria suggests we encourage our members to reach out to the community on International Translation Day 2019 or Career Day (presentations in schools with coverage in local media).

Renewing the logo: Aimee Juarez possible choice as designer. Will ask for a quote.

**Event Chair Report:** Vitaliy reports that the luncheon at Balaton on Sept 15 (12-3 pm) brought together 26 people (28 actually registered). Everything went well and attendees enjoyed good networking. The NOTA Board thanked Jill Sommer & Reinhold Federmann for their many years of service to the association as President and Treasurer, respectively.

#### Future Events

- **Holiday Banquet:** Potluck. Waiting to hear from Catherine Arrieta if her community room is available.  
Alternate location: Fairview Park community center? (Silvia)  
Preferred date is Dec. 8. (Dec 1 or 15 are alternatives).
- **Training Proposal:** Loubna Bilali offers to give NOTA members a training on localization. Board agrees. March 2019 (Date tbd. Preferably a Saturday afternoon @ Akron Library). Hélène will coordinate with Loubna.
- **Speaking Fee:** The board agrees that \$150 is a good standard fee to compensate presenters.

#### Next meeting

The next NOTA Board Meeting will take place on January 26, at 1 p.m. (Hélène will host).

Meeting ends at 4:25pm.