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Contact NOTA
notatranslators@gmail.com
www.notatranslators.org
Newsletter Editor: Victoria Chavez-Kruse

Announcements

December 7th – Holiday Banquet
Keep an eye on your inbox for details.
Dear NOTA members:

This fall season marks the halfway point of my two-year term as President of the association; time has really flown by! Reflecting on these past 12 months, I am thankful for the strides we have made, namely setting up a new website, renewing our logo, hosting two educational trainings, organizing our 3rd Annual Networking Event, proctoring the ATA certification exam, and publishing periodical newsletters.

As I reminisce on the two-fold goal expressed in my October 2018 message, I realize that only the first part (offering quality trainings and events) has been fulfilled while the second (providing client education at the local level) has yet to be tackled. With the efforts of our newly installed Board and yours—our members—I hope the latter goal will start taking shape. Your ideas on this or any other issue are welcome, and we urge you to get involved to make your voices heard.

After the summer lull, we resumed our activities on September 14 with a two-part legal training held in Chagrin Falls, that featured Cindy Hazelton and Olga Shostachuk. These two talented speakers attracted a full house, and attendees learned both about civil/criminal legal terms and how to better understand U.S. immigration policies and procedures. More on that in this issue!

Immediately following the training, we brunched at the Paris Room Bistro for NOTA’s Annual Meeting during which we reviewed the status of the association (current balance and membership), talked about past and future events, honored our two outgoing board members, Silvia d’Amico (former Secretary) and Vitaliy Plinto (former Event Chair), and welcomed the new ones: Gwendoline Bocher (Secretary), Olga Shostachuk (Event Chair) and Julia Villasenor (Vice-President). Victoria Chavez-Kruze, our excellent interim Public Relations Chair, was also officially installed.

NOTA’s Executive Committee met on October 7. Among other things, we discussed NOTA potentially hosting its first conference in the Spring of 2020 and we will work towards fulfilling that goal.

Our next event is the holiday banquet and it is scheduled for December 7th. You will soon be contacted with more info.

We hope that many of you will attend!

By the time you read this message, ATA’s 60th Annual Conference in Palm Springs will be right around the corner. For those of us heading out West for the event, we look forward to attending a wealth of industry-related sessions, networking with our international and US-based colleagues, making new professional contacts, and perhaps… escaping for a few hours to bask in the Californian sun while admiring the beautiful mountainous scenery.

Regardless of where you find yourself, I wish you all an excellent autumn and happy translating/interpreting endeavors!

Hélène V. Conte
President of NOTA
notatranslators@gmail.com

Hélène V. Conte is an ATA-certified English>French translator with 13 years of 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, and an ATA-Conference speaker. Before being elected as NOTA’s president in 2018, 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, Ohio.
On Saturday, September 14, NOTA held a legal training featuring Cindy Hazelton, a licensed attorney and freelance legal translator who teaches French legal, commercial, and diplomatic translation at Kent State and who is currently co-designing its new online legal and commercial translation course, and Olga Shostachuk, a PhD candidate in Translation Studies at Kent State and expert in immigration-related translating and interpreting. Students, translators, and interpreters came from all around—locally in northern Ohio and some even as far as Detroit, Michigan—to benefit from this event. Both speakers discussed important legal issues in the translation industry today and offered tools and tips on how to best tackle them.

In the first half of the training, Cindy Hazelton started by defining and comparing the major legal systems in the world (civil, common, and religious) and also discussed some of the difficulties of legal translation in general. She then went over several of the more common legal terms in both criminal law and civil law. Many of these terms were especially relevant to translators. For example, “Miranda Warning” is a term that many of the attendees were already familiar with, as law dictates that this warning must be issued in the native language of the person being arrested and/or interrogated. However, alarmingly, some attendees stated that they had witnessed circumstances where this had not been the case. This triggered a discussion of the importance of translators and interpreters in the legal system.

In the second half of the training, Olga Shostachuk discussed the topic of translation and interpretation as they relate to immigration policies and procedures—a topic that is highly relevant in today’s legal and political climate. She began by offering an overview of the immigration system, including all of the various departments and their organization. She also offered a detailed explanation of various immigration processes and the common terms that accompany them. Her presentation was very helpful in that she highlighted terms throughout so that the participants could reflect on how they would best translate them into their target languages. She also gave the participants handouts with examples of transcripts for common immigration procedures so that they could practice simultaneous or consecutive interpretation on their own. Her presentation built on Cindy Hazelton’s foundation, as immigration falls under the legal umbrella, but went into further depth and specificity. For example, “parole” was a legal term that Cindy discussed, but the term could have a totally different meaning in an immigration context. This was a great lesson for the participants without a strong immigration background.

Overall, this training session was extremely valuable because it provided information to participants who were seeking to gain more knowledge about common areas of translation and interpretation, and because of how relevant this field is in today’s political and social climate. Translators and interpreters need this knowledge of the legal and immigration system now more than ever, and this session gave participants the knowledge and skills to engage that they may not have had before. It was highly worth attending, and any members of NOTA who missed it should definitely consider going to the next legal training when it is offered.

Carmen Phillips is a French to English freelance translator specializing in legal and commercial translation. She obtained her Bachelor's Degree in French and Anthropology from Oberlin College and her Master’s Degree in Translation Studies from Kent State University. She is a member of the American Translators Association and the Northeast Ohio Translators Association. Carmen currently lives and works in Cleveland.
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.

Vice President

Julia A. Villaseñor is a freelance English-Spanish translator and interpreter who specializes primarily in medical and legal/immigration interpreting. She completed her undergraduate degree in Spanish at the Universidad de las Américas Puebla (México), holds a M.A. in Spanish from the University of Akron and a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from Kent State University, and more recently completed the M.A. in Translation Studies from Kent State (2018). Prior to making the transition into translating and interpreting, Julia had a long career in teaching Spanish and ESL at both the university level as well as in non-profit contexts, and has also served on numerous professional boards and councils.

Secretary

Originally from France, Gwendoline Bocher has been living in the United States since 1999. After living in various states, she finally settled with her family in Ohio, which she now calls home. She worked as a full-time translator for A&F for 5 years, and eventually fell in love with the interpreting profession 3 years ago. She's had the opportunity to interpret both in legal and medical contexts. Gwendoline is currently a paralegal in a law firm in Columbus.

Event Chair

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

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.

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.

Public Relations 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.
Are you primarily a translator or an interpreter?

I am primarily a translator. I have been toying with the idea of becoming a medical interpreter since I already have the terminology from 25 years of experience, but if given a choice I prefer to sit behind my computer and find the perfect word.

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

I say I fell into it, but I think I was destined to become a translator. Growing up I toyed with the idea of being a detective and a librarian, which are key skills for a translator. I was fascinated by German in Grimms’ Fairy Tales and Wilhelm Busch's Max und Moritz and “Hogan's Heroes” and other movies. My family also joined the German-American Club (Donauschwaben) in Olmsted Township in the 1970s, and I grew up hearing German spoken there.

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

I am born and raised in the United States. None of my family members spoke a second language. Inspired by my German surname, I started learning German in high school and kept going when I went to Bowling Green State University. I studied abroad my junior year in Salzburg, Austria, which really opened my eyes to living in another culture and speaking another language. I graduated with dual Bachelors of Arts degrees in German and Russian, but it was during a recession and I could not find a job. My mother worked at Kent and heard about the translation master's program. I met with Dr. Greg Shreve with a brochure I was trying to translate for a local company, and he walked me down to get an application for the M.A. in German Translation. The program changed my life, and I was living in Germany a month after graduating with my M.A.

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

What is a healthy work-life balance? I deliver Meals on Wheels on Monday mornings. It really does feel good to deliver meals to shut-ins, and I'm glad my job allows me the flexibility to do it. I try to go out with friends a couple of times a week, since working from home can be a lonely occupation.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE.
In your experience, what are the most important qualities in a translator/interpreter?

It probably goes without saying, but the ability to understand the source text is crucial. If you don't understand it, you can't convey it into the target language. But the ability to meet deadlines and follow directions is also so important and sometimes not given the attention it deserves. If you can't do this, your clients will find someone who can.

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

I translated brochures and texts about Bauhaus for one of my direct clients in Germany. Bauhaus is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2019, and many cities in eastern Germany are hosting celebrations featuring Bauhaus works. Bauhaus was a German art school operational from 1919 to 1933 that combined crafts and the fine arts and was famous for the approach to design that it publicized and taught. The school existed in three cities—Weimar, Dessau and Berlin—and was closed under pressure from the Nazi regime. I had often heard the name Bauhaus bandied about, but I don't think I really realized the influence it had until I translated the texts for the celebrations and saw all the various art forms—including a cool "Bauhaus cradle"—google it! It's worth a look.

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

I already mentioned being a detective or a librarian. I think it would be fun to run a bed and breakfast on an island somewhere (I've frequently toyed with the idea of Kelley's Island, but the warmer months are short in supply here and that isn't very sustainable). Providing a delicious breakfast and perhaps setting out warm beverage dispensers and baked goods for guests and cleaning the rooms in the late morning/early afternoon and then spending the late afternoon in a hammock on a beach (or a pool—I'm not picky) with a good book just seems like the life.

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

Get a part-time job to ensure you can pay your rent/mortgage/bills. It isn't easy to break into the business, and it takes a lot of hard work. It also won't happen right away. Plan on 1-2 years. And then once you find yourself with enough clients, keep marketing yourself, because clients come and go with the tides.

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.
LEGAL TRAINING AND ANNUAL MEETING
MINUTES
NOTA Board Meeting
Monday, October 7, 2019
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Remote

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm

Present: Hélène V. Conte, Julia Villasenor, Victoria Chavez-Kruse, Olga Shostachuk, Christine Mack Joyce, Mourine Breiner and Gwendoline Bocher.

President’s update: Hélène talked about the possibility of having Michael O’Flaherty (our website tech) on standby and paid on a monthly basis to ensure the smooth running of website operations. She will contact him and get back to the board. Julia and Hélène will get together to discuss the duties of the Vice-President and present it at the next meeting. It was decided that it was still too early to set the 2020 calendar. Hélène also brought up the idea of holding a 1-day conference in the spring of 2020.

Treasurer’s report:
Beginning Balance: $17,588.46
Revenue: $0.00
Expenses: $784.07
Current Balance: $16,433.64*

*Information added to minutes 10/22/2019 by Victoria Chavez-Kruse

Membership update: NOTA currently has 74 members. Christine reported that 28 members didn’t renew. The reminder emails and ways to categorize non-renewing members in the system (so that they could keep receiving NOTA emails) were discussed at length.

PR update: Victoria stated that the newsletter will be out the week of October 21. Jill will be featured in the T/I Spotlight section. Carmen Phillips will also provide a review of the legal training held on 9/14.

Event Chair Report: Olga reported that 37 persons had registered for the latest legal training and 34 attended. 22 members attended the Annual Meeting that followed the training. The possibility of NOTA organizing informal trainings in the future was discussed. The format would be as follows: meeting for dinner at Panera (or similar location) while someone provides a quick ~30-minute training on a subject in an informal manner. The Holiday Banquet will be held on 12/7 at a location to be determined and will probably be potluck style. Olga will try to have invites ready by the end of October.

Remaining Events for 2019
● Annual Holiday Banquet: TBD

Next meeting
The next NOTA Board Meeting will take place on January 6th, 2020 at 6:30pm.

Meeting ends at 7:55 pm.