

Alaska Immigration Justice Project



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Language Interpreter Center's First Court Certified Interpreter

Ms. Yolanda Martinez-Ley successfully passed the Consortium for Language Access in the Courts (CLAC) Spanish oral exam administered by the Alaska Court System. She is the first interpreter candidate to be fully trained in Alaska by the Language Interpreter Center and the first interpreter to receive court certification by the Alaska Court System.



Yolanda Martinez-Ley displays her court certification.

To prepare for certification, Ms. Martinez-Ley participated in a two-year curriculum of study developed by the Alaska Court System and the Language Interpreter Center. The curriculum is comprised of an orientation program, specific training in legal terminology, court process and interpreter ethics, and an interpreting practicum. She stated, "I feel very happy (and lucky) to have become a Certified Court Interpreter by the State of Alaska.

I cannot emphasize enough how important it was for me to participate in all the trainings and workshops provided by the LIC, as well as the use of their library materials." Ms. Martinez-Ley's hard work and dedication is inspiring. The LIC looks forward to assisting more interpreters on their path to court certification.



February 8th, 2011, Alaska Supreme Court Justices present Yolanda with her court certification.

**Code:
 LUA**



After attending and completing a leadership conference held in Anchorage in April 2005, a

group of Latinas formed the Coalition of United Latin Women, Alaska (CODE: LUA). CODE: LUA educates women about their rights, the cycle of domestic violence and available resources. The program has a unique concept; that immigrant women, themselves, are equipped to find solutions to problems that affect their lives.

The women began CODE LUA to help and support other women trapped in the cycle of violence and abuse. By forming this group, the women learned how to ask for help and protect themselves. CODE: LUA advocates for domestic violence victims, and with the help of many agencies, they ensure that Latinas have access to the community services they need. CODE: LUA is developing support

Thank you Rasmuson Foundation!

The Rasmuson Foundation recently awarded the Language Interpreter Center funding to purchase professional

interpreter and translator equipment, essential tools to increase our capacity to meet the language needs of Alaska's diverse

community. The Rasmuson Foundation has been instrumental in the implementation of the Language Interpreter Center and their vision of ensuring all services in Alaska are accessible to all Alaskans.

activities for women seeking help. The group plans to host a variety of conferences and workshops to promote women's confidence and inspire healthy lives independent from violence. CODE: LUA encourages women to integrate into the community to create an environment where they can thrive, avoiding loneliness and isolation. The community integration plan includes the creation of support meetings, information workshops, leadership training and technical assistance. It is great to have a small, close-knit community, but it is also a challenge. There are many reasons why women are frightened to end the silence including: the fear of what others think, the fear of tearing a family apart, and the belief

that they are victims. Code LUA's mission is to educate and show women that there are many ways to succeed, many people who care, and many services that help end the circle of violence. All Latin women are invited to attend the meetings. There is always someone waiting to take a stand to stop this silence. The group would love to grow. Currently, they are a small group of women who are there ready to listen and lend a hand to other victims of domestic violence. It is important that the community stands together, opens up about domestic violence and promotes a life free of violence.

If you are interested in joining Code: LUA, please contact AIJP at 279-2457 for more information.

AIJP Staff Attorney, Arundel Pritchett



Arundel returned to Alaska last July after almost 30 years of living “outside.” Before joining AIJP’s staff last summer, Arundel worked in the legal field, primarily in immigration

law, knowing that it is an important and an interesting area of law. She liked the idea of working for a non-profit, which enables wide representation in cases regarding the basic human rights inherent in areas such as family unity, detention, and due process. Arundel particu-

larly enjoys her clients, the great work environment and defending justice.

After finishing her J.D., Arundel earned a postgraduate degree in international human rights law from the University of Essex in the United Kingdom. She takes interest in the interconnection of immigration law and universal human rights. “I would encourage the readers to live abroad for at least a few months during their lives. Living outside one’s culture, besides being infinitely rewarding, is extraordinarily difficult. Only strong reasons compel an individual permanently to leave his or her homeland. Perhaps less xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment would exist if more people had the experience of foreign travel,” Arundel states.

She believes that the anti-immigrant rhetoric in this country tends to ignore

the fact that the United States government prosecutes (and deports) countless people who have the legal right to live in this country. Arundel reminds us that immigration law is civil, not criminal and currently, there exists no right to court-appointed counsel in immigration law. She states, “Immigration proceedings can produce far more dire results than criminal cases.”

The Portrait Project

The Portrait Project, a collaborative effort with Alaska Immigration Justice Project, the Alaska Humanities Forum Leadership Anchorage, and the University of Alaska Anchorage, depicts the lives of five immigrant families living in Alaska. Their stories, illustrated through cartoons and accompanied with narratives, shed light on immigration in Alaska. This graphic novel illustrates their contributions to the community, their hardships and their fears. The project is on display at the Loussac Library, 3600 Denali Street, in the 3rd Floor Gallery from Thursday, May 5th to Friday, May 27th. Please join us, the artists and the writers at the opening reception on Thursday, May 5th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

LIC Winter Interpreter Training

Professor Holly Mikkelson returned to Anchorage in early February for another series of workshops. In addition to conducting a train-the-trainers session so that the Introduction to Interpreting workshops can be presented by local talent in the future, she presented a workshop for bilingual court employees on what certified interpreters do and the limited circumstances under which bilingual employees can provide language assistance. She also gave a refresher workshop on ethics and deposition interpreting for LIC interpreters who have already received training at other workshops. And finally, she assisted Barb Jacobs, Yolanda Martínez-Ley, Robin Wahto, Brenda Aiken, and Stacey Marz in the presentation of an

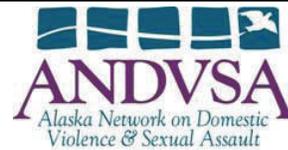
Introduction to Interpreting Workshop for aspiring interpreters of all languages. The highlight of her stay in Anchorage was the opportunity to attend the awarding of Yolanda Martínez-Ley’s certificate by the Alaska Supreme Court. She looks forward to returning to Anchorage in the near future. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming an interpreter, please contact the LIC at 279-2457.



Save the Date!

AIJP’s annual fundraising event
Mind Games
will be held on
Wednesday, September 22, 2011
at Snow City Café. We look forward to you seeing you there! Please call us at 279-2457 for more details.

Thank you Sponsors!



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