

# CATI QUARTERLY

Winter 2003-2004

The Newsletter of the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters

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**CATI is a chapter of the American Translators Association. For more information, see the ATA website:**

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*From the CATI President*

## Exciting plans for the Year of Foreign Languages

By Jackie Metivier



Welcome to the first edition of the *CATI Quarterly* in 2004. Despite the cold spell outside, our spirits are up, our plans for the year

are at full throttle, and the Association is thriving!

If you are new to the translation business, this issue will give you great tips on how to start a translation / interpretation business

from your home. Thanks to Eta Trabing who continues to offer her knowledge about these professions from sunny Florida.

This issue contains Part 2 of the CATI Survey Results addressing the Conference, Administration, and Organization issues written by Dr. Naomi Kleid. As you can tell, this survey brought a wealth of information and feedback from the members that the board will incorporate in its discussions. Don't miss our consultant's recommendations regarding CATI; they include you and the contributions you can make to our association. Naomi: Thanks again for a job well done!

Did you know that 2004-2005 has been declared the Year of Foreign Languages? U.S. Senators Chris

Dodd (D-CT) and Thad Cochran (R-MS) introduced a proclamation in June 2003 designating the years 2004 and 2005 as "Years of Foreign Language Study." During this year, "foreign language study is promoted and expanded in elementary schools, secondary schools, institutions of higher learning, businesses, and government programs"

(Senate Resolution 170, 2003). The purpose of the proclamation is to celebrate the nation's multilingual heritage and to promote the

value of learning foreign languages in the 21st century (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages [ACTFL], 2003).

As ACTFL Director of Communications Steve Ackley noted, the primary goal of the Year of Foreign Languages in the United States is to "advance the concept that every American should develop proficiency in both English and another language" (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2003).

To celebrate the year of Foreign Languages, CATI has teamed up with the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portu-

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This series was first published in FLATAflash, the Florida ATA Chapter's electronic newsletter.

## Running an individual translator/interpreter business from home

### Part 1: Personal preferences, work discipline, and financial considerations

By M. Eta Trabing

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*This is the first part of a multipart series. It deals with the decisions you need to make, based on your personal preferences and expertise, the financial considerations involved, and the pros and cons of working for yourself rather than working for someone else. Part 2 will deal with estimating translation costs, estimating interpretation costs, and preparing the price quotes. Following parts will describe your home office, hiring professional help, quality control, preparing the invoice, multiple booking for court cases, delinquent payments, marketing yourself, the client-translator/interpreter relationship, professional ethics, bookkeeping, record-keeping, and filing.*



**A**lthough running a translation/interpretation business takes more or less the same talents whether you run

the business out of your home or out of a rented office, there are some major differences that need to be taken into account. Many of them have to do with personal preferences, work discipline, and money.

You decided you will run a business interpreting, or translating, or both. You know the skills required for each, and you know your skills and limitations. You have also decided on the language pairs you will work with. If you are translating, you would

generally go into your dominant language, but you may also get requests to translate in the other direction. Your options are to team up with someone else or use a good editor, whom you will have to pay. If you are interpreting, your chosen

pair should be about equally dominant, because you will be going back and forth.

Also, you will have decided what fields of expertise you have or want to learn and add on. Some subjects have a broader audience and therefore generate more work than others. So pick some (even if not your favorites) that will allow you enough scope to make money and still have your narrowly defined specialty. If a

**If you are translating, you would generally go into your dominant language, but you may also get requests to translate in the other direction. Your options are to team up with someone else or use a good editor, whom you will have to pay.**

subject is totally unknown to you, work with someone who has the necessary expertise and from whom you can learn; or better yet, pass the job on to them and they will return the favor in the future. Do not accept work that you are not prepared for – it's unprofessional.

The more you know about yourself and your likes and dislikes, and your work habits, the more comfortable you will feel with your decisions – and although that sounds

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# Desert reflections: the ATA Conference in Phoenix

By Mike Collins



As a second-time attendee, I looked at the ATA Conference in Phoenix through different eyes this past November. Though my perspective was different, my overall assessment was the same as the previous year: the ATA Conference is a great opportunity for learning and socializing with fellow professionals.

Three of us from our company attended the conference. Although we were unable to book rooms in the conference center itself, we found

good accommodations less than half a mile away.

The dominant topics in Phoenix were interpreting in health-care settings and, of course, the new ATA certification requirements.

For the health-care issues, the conference organizers provided a slate of presentations for interested professionals.

Although I did not attend any of these, the reviews I heard were mixed: some found them to be very helpful, while

others heard little new information. Kudos to the organizers for the panel discussion on Friday night entitled "National Forum: Language and Healthcare in Crisis." The panel speakers were outstanding, and the audience was given much to think about, from the heart-rending stories of the impact inadequate interpreting has had on people's health and lives, to the refreshing innovative approaches being taken by one California HMO.

The issue of the proposed amendment to the bylaws concerning the continuing education (CE) requirements was on everybody's mind. One session that was held to discuss the workings of the new system generated so many questions from the audience that the panel was unable to address them all. Most of the people I talked to seemed to be in favor of the new system,

if a bit unsure about how it was all going to work. The ATA board did their best to assure members that the system is a "work in progress," and that all suggestions and input will be taken into consideration. The general support for the CE requirements was reflected in the defeat of the amendment by members during the vote taken at the conference.

## The dominant topics in Phoenix were interpreting in health-care settings and, of course, the new ATA certification requirements.

Otherwise, I catered to my own interests and spent time in presentations on translation tools and technology, project management, and a few language-related sessions.

The translation tools forum was a bit disappointing for me. Very little new information was brought forward, and I felt the presentation was dominated by one of the translation software companies at the expense of the others. However, it is always good to see how this area of our profession is expanding, and how the competition is resulting in new and better solutions for translators. Judging from

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## The CATI Quarterly

The *CATI Quarterly* is a publication of the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters, a nonprofit organization to promote the recognition of translating and interpreting as professions in the Carolinas. Opinions expressed herein are the author's and not necessarily those of the Editor, the Association, or its Board of Directors.

Reader submissions are welcome. Suggested length limits are:

- Articles 1500 words
- Reviews 500 words
- Letters 300 words

Submissions become the property of the *CATI Quarterly* and are subject to editing. For details, see the "Submission Guidelines" at

[www.catiweb.org/guidelines.htm](http://www.catiweb.org/guidelines.htm)

If you have questions or would like to submit an article, please contact the editor, G. David Heath, at

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Please contact CATI at (919) 577-0840 for advertising information.



Above, a general view of the conference resort

guese, North Carolina Chapter; the American Association of Teachers of French; and the Foreign Language Instructors in Community Colleges to hold a Joint Annual conference on April 3 at Durham Technical Community College. Because this event is made possible in part by a grant provided by Verizon we have been able to reduce the conference fee to \$20 this year.

The keynote speaker at the CATI conference will be **Walt Wolfram, William C. Friday Distinguished Professor** in the Linguistics Department at North Carolina State University. Over the past three decades, Professor Wolfram has pio-

neered research on a broad range of vernacular dialects. Please see "Upcoming events" on page 12 for more information.

We will have two booksellers at the conference, our faithful vendor i.b.d., Ltd. and McGraw Hill. Please let us know if there is a particular book you would like to purchase and we will get it in advance for you.

The conference and the dinner social will offer the opportunity to network with your fellow professionals and language lovers. The dinner will be at Parizade in Durham, where the menu is excellent and the ambiance eclectic.

On Sunday, CATI will be hosting

the ATA Examination sitting at Durham Tech. Please visit [www.atanet.org](http://www.atanet.org) for registration information and requirements.

Please mark your calendars and come learn about a wide variety of subjects including foreign language education, software globalization, distance learning, interpreters' expectations from the employer's point of view, and the fundamentals of English grammar.

All ATA-certified members will obtain 4 credit hours for attending the CATI Conference.

The board is planning several social, networking, and learning opportunities for 2004, so stay tuned and make it a habit to visit the website at [www.catiweb.org](http://www.catiweb.org).

*Jackie Metivier*

## Desert reflections: The ATA Conference in Phoenix *continued from page 3*

how well-attended the forum was, this is a topic that is very important to us as translation professionals.

The exhibitor area was a little off the main path; it was located in a separate pavilion across the main drive from the conference center. This meant that it took a little extra time and effort to get over there, but there was plenty to see, try, and buy once there. Most of the usual exhibitors were there, including i.b.d. Ltd., TRADOS, MultiTrans, Termium, and many more. In addition, there were a few new booksellers, educators, and other service providers. I enjoyed meeting people from several different organizations.

Last but certainly not least, there were the opportunities for fellowship both with fellow CATI members and with translators and interpreters from around the world. Several of

us took turns (wo)manning the CATI table, and a group of us enjoyed a

late dinner on the outdoor terrace at the conference center restaurant. The networking sessions provided other great opportunities to exchange infor-

mation with other professionals.

All in all, I rate this conference a success, and I was pleased and proud to be a part of it.

**Right, Graciela White and Sandra Bonifacio at the conference**

*Michael Collins graduated from the University of North Carolina with a master's degree in Slavic linguistics. He has studied in Yugoslavia and Germany, and has been active in translation since 1985. He is currently president of Global Translation Systems, Inc., in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.*

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# Running an individual translator / interpreter business from home

## Part 1 continued from page 2

like a given, apparently to many people, it isn't.

For instance, do you want to work at translating/ interpreting full-time or part-time? Occasionally or consistently? Are you working to supplement your spouse's income or the full-time/part-time job you already have? Or because you want to earn a living at translating/interpreting? If the latter, do you have sufficient income to tide you over until your business really picks up? Business wisdom indicates that it may take up to two years to really get a busi-

ness going to where it produces profits. So those are major decisions.

**Business wisdom indicates that it may take up to two years to really get a business going to where it produces profits.**

Yet another decision you will have to make before you start your home business is whether you want to freelance rather than

work for someone else (for example, as a salaried or contract employee of an agency). For those who may not be familiar with each, these two different situations have their pros and cons (see below).

You will have to decide which of those outlines fits your personality

best, what things you can live with and what things you can't. If you are a newcomer to the business, you might prefer to start out working for someone else until you have learned enough and feel confident enough to go out on your own. Just remember, you cannot take their clients with you to start your own business.

The next consideration is, do you have the necessary funds to invest in the materials and equipment that you will need immediately before even starting to translate? Hardware, software, basic dictionaries, office supplies, modem, e-mail, fax, phone lines. And if you're going to interpret, answering machine, beeper, or cell phone, as well. This can represent a sizeable investment and you may decide this is not a good time for such an investment. Therefore, working for someone else will have to be your choice.

Other things you can bring to the table to increase your earnings are:

- Get certified in your language pair(s) - this will show that you are good enough to pass the exams and that you wish to be professional about your career.
- Join professional organizations that cover your subjects of expertise - that's usually the only way to stay current with rapid technological changes.

Travel, if at all possible, to keep up with your languages or if that's not possible, read newspapers in all your languages (on the Internet, if necessary, for the foreign ones) And be careful of the "mixed languages" papers put out in local areas - sometimes these languages are poorly written and too mixed to be useful. Keep up-to-date on the politics and news from your home country and other countries that use

### If you freelance:

- You will have to do your own marketing and sales.
- You can charge the prices you set for yourself, provided the market is willing.
- You will be totally independent and not have a "boss" (except the client, of course).
- You will need self-discipline to keep selling and marketing rather than playing or gardening or cooking when times are slow.
- You can turn down work you don't want to do or that interferes with your plans.
- You will have to manage your time carefully.
- You can be a recluse, up to a point.
- You will need self-discipline to set funds aside for the lean times and for taxes.
- You will have to learn to live with great insecurity in a somewhat "feast or famine" type of business.
- You will have to pay for your own retirement fund, insurance, and 15% Social Security.

### If you work for someone else:

- You will have much less independence.
- You will have to do whatever work they give you to do.
- There will be at least one "boss," if not two or more (plus the client).
- You may be allowed to do what you do best, but not always.
- You will have a monthly salary that provides some security (although no job is guaranteed in this day and age).
- You may or may not receive paid insurance, Social Security, and a pension.
- You will have to face traffic going to and from work.
- You may have to work overtime on occasion because of difficult deadlines and not be available at home.
- There will be people that you have to interact with in the office.
- Your working time will be managed for you by the office rules.

*continued on next page*

# CATI survey results

## Part 2. CATI Conference, administration, and organization

By Naomi A. Kleid, Ph.D.



This article continues the analysis of the data obtained from the 93 (out of 190) CATI members who participated in the 10-question,

online survey during September, 2003. (The first part of this analysis, which appeared in the Fall 2003 issue of the *CATI Quarterly*, addressed the *CATI Quarterly* and the CATI website.) This article focuses on the CATI Conference, CATI administration, and CATI organization.

### CATI Conference

As reported in the first part of this analysis, Question 1 investigated a variety of issues, including attendance at the CATI Annual Conference. The table below summarizes

the findings for that part of the question, and it shows that most members (74%) have attended a CATI conference, while some members have attended more than one conference in the past 6 years.

People who attended a CATI conference said:

- "There's always something helpful for me there."
- "I think they did a good job for the 2003 conference. I know all the hard work that goes into it. The snacks, continental breakfast and lunch were great. I feel that Maria did a great job organizing it...."

Question 8 asked respondents to comment on the CATI Conference and two members replied:

- "Maybe have it [one day] in May instead of June, [because June]...is a vacation month and members go to their countries to visit families"
- "[Have an early] "condensed report from the planning committee as to what is planned for the next conference." [So that members can start to plan their attendance early.]

Another part of Question 8 asked members to suggest topics for conference sessions. Responses focused on skill-building, professional development, education (especially providing local opportunities to meet the ATA continuing education requirements), business growth, and financial and office management. Some suggestions included:

- "Practical, basic, hands-on, Internet skill building - e.g. finding and using foreign language glossaries, using Google, etc." and "how to use the Internet more effectively to search for terminology"
- "Seminar interpreting" and "conference interpreting."

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Frequency of attending the Annual CATI Conference	Number (out of 93)	Percent
I attended the Annual CATI conference in 2003	34	36.6
I attended at least one Annual CATI Conference 1998-2002	42	45.2
I have never attended an Annual CATI Conference	24	25.8
Overall	100	107.6

## Running an individual translator / interpreter business from home

Part 1 *continued from page 5*

the same language. How else will you know the latest acronyms and newest words and slang?

Remember that the translation/interpretation business is a service business. This means that you need to be available when clients need you. If you can't meet their needs, they will find someone who can and they won't always come

back to you if they are satisfied with the translator/interpreter who helped them out in their time of need. This occasionally means weekend work and rush work that may have you up half the night - but keeping a client happy is important to the future of your business!

*M. Eta Trabing, translator, instructor, writer, retired inter-*

*preter, ex CATI President, and owner of Berkana Language Center (see [www.eberkana.com](http://www.eberkana.com)) has been in the T/I business for about 35 years and now lives in Pensacola, Florida.*

**Part 2 of "Running an individual translator / interpreter business from home" will appear in the Spring 2004 CATI Quarterly.**



From the Editor's desk

## Client education gets welcome press

By G. David Heath

In 2003, CATI and its members worked hard to educate clients and the community at large about the importance of using professional translators and interpreters and the risks of using non-professionals. Fortunately, 2003 also saw the national press starting to pick up on this theme.

For example, the magazine *Inc.* in an article entitled "Speaking in Tongues" (June 2003) pointed out that finding the right translator is no simple task, and noted that "the \$7.8 billion translation industry is famously fragmented, with virtually no barriers to entry." The article warned against the temptation to save money by using translation software or even a bilingual employee.

Quoting the then President of the ATA, **Thomas L. West III**, the article said that using translation software or a bilingual employee is not a bad idea if all you want is to grasp the crude essence of something –

"If you don't know whether a piece of paper is a sandwich order or a lease agreement." But West then continued with an example

**"The work [translating and interpreting] is not just about speaking a language or providing the literal meaning of words ..."**

of the serious consequences that can occur if the communication is more important. The article recommended the ATA's website as a good place to start the search for a qualified translator.

An article in the *Washington Post* ("Translation Transformation," July 9, 2003) reported that translation and interpretation are now increasingly seen as necessities by school districts and local governments. Although the main focus of the article was on the growing need for T&I

and how it's being met, it also included some very appropriate client education. For example, "The work [translating and interpreting] is not just about speaking a language or providing the literal meaning of words. Experts say it takes as many as 22 cognitive skills to capture the nuances and meanings of the vernacular in various fields – education, law health or government. And the professionals say it's not as easy as it looks."

Also contributing to the client education effort was a recent article by CATI's **Ann Sherwin** in the *APG Quarterly*, the journal of the Association of Professional Genealogists, entitled "Clearing Language Barriers: Selecting and Working with a Professional Translator." (See "Focus on members" on page 11.) Ann wrote, "The language service industry in the United States is unregulated. As in genealogy, professional credentials are available but we don't have to have them before we can

hang out our shingle and start charging for our services. The widespread notion that knowing two languages makes one a translator is almost as foolish as the notion that having ancestors makes one a genealogist."

The not-so-good press – notably on the Guantanamo Bay case – isn't so much a reflection on the translation and interpretation professions as such, but rather on the shortage of suitably qualified translators and interpreters, especially those with

Arabic skills. "At Guantanamo, where detainees represent 42 countries and speak 17 languages, the need for linguists is critical," according to *USA Today* ("Guantanamo case follows rush to hire translators," October 1, 2003). "People are literally being grabbed out of cabs to fill the need" said

**Kevin Hendzel**, a spokesman for the ATA who was quoted in the same article. "You are seeing the unfortunate consequences of this national problem," he said.

**Let's all keep up the good work of educating our clients – and the community at large – about the meaning and importance of T&I professionalism.**

There is, of course, positive fallout from the Guantanamo Bay case. As reported in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* ("Potomac Watch: Case shows U.S. vulnerability in Arabic shortage," October 31, 2003), experts, including Hendzel, said the Bush administration was seeking to at least double the number of Arabic speakers graduating from government-backed language training programs such as the Pentagon's language school at Monterey, the Foreign Service Institute, and training provided by firms contracting with the Pentagon. Clearly, "grabbing people out of cabs" just because they speak two languages is not an acceptable way to recruit T / I professionals.

We welcome the coverage in the national press and applaud the efforts of our members who are helping with this educational effort. Let's all keep up the good work of educating our clients – and the community at large – about the meaning and importance of translation and interpretation professionalism.

## CATI survey results *continued from page 6*

- "Finding assignments out-of-town."
- "How to do accounting for a small business...what are the pitfalls of payroll when you start hiring employees"
- "How to bid on a translation project or an interpreting assignment."
- "New products on the market for interpreters"
- "More info about other organizations like ATA."
- "How to help others to become a good interpreter-translator...."
- "...information on number of continuing education hours for each event."
- "Continuing education topics - medical interpreting, legal interpreting, etc. different than AHEC or AOC sponsored workshops, [on] English-to-Spanish specific topics."
- "...subject-matter-specific presentations."
- "While some conference speakers are very interesting for all audience participants, some speakers may be of interest only to some of the audience. My suggestion is to have a greater variety of subjects each of somewhat shorter duration."
- "More general sessions for people who work with languages other than Spanish. There should be a non-language-specific option in every time slot."
- "...include a true annual meeting of the membership, with reading of the minutes from the last gen-

eral meeting, an agenda, and by observing proper parliamentary procedures. The entire board should be seated on the podium, or at least introduced. Please find a proper balance between interpreting and translation topics. Currently, CATI seems to be leaning more toward interpreting sessions, but I could be mistaken on that."

### **CATI benefits**

Question 9 asked "What are the most important benefits that you want CATI to provide, how satisfied are you with CATI's ability to provide these benefits, and why?" Many write-in answers to this question focused on networking opportunities (which are especially important for translators and interpreters who work alone), professional development and education, job opportunities (including being listed in the Directory and online database), and the people who are

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**Many write-in answers ... focused on networking opportunities, professional development and education, job opportunities ... and the people who are active in the organization.**

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active in the organization. Some representative comments include:

#### **Networking opportunities**

- "Networking, and professional support. It does this by the newsletter and emails received periodically suggesting training, jobs, events."
- "Professional networking. - Development opportunities. - Insight in the translation and interpreting business. I'd like some more opportunities of networking in SC, but I'm highly satisfied otherwise."
- "Mutual support, feeling of community; advice for the translators. In the short time I have been a member of CATI, I have found support and advice when I

needed it. Since our jobs are often solitary, it is good to have a forum for information and fellowship."

- "Networking is the main benefit. Through CATI, I am connected to many highly qualified and ethical colleagues. Granted, there are people who are not highly qualified who join CATI as well, but that's okay. CATI can be a place for them to grow professionally. Another benefit is that we are connected to the ATA."

#### **Professional development and education**

- "Networking events, continuing education hour credits."
- "The most important benefit for me is the classes. The additional info that is disseminated about other agencies that also provide support and training for us is very good."
- "Professional resources; camaraderie; notification of continuing education opportunities and other gatherings."
- "Professional updating and hints and tools."
- "Current information and professional development opportunities."
- "The most important benefits from an association such as CATI are the maintenance and promotion of professional standards of members, informing them on subjects related to their work and encouraging exchange between individual members."

#### **Job opportunities and the Directory**

- "Information about jobs in the area, which CATI does distribute in a timely manner."
- "I love the job postings. The Di-

## CATI survey results *continued from page 8*

rectory listings provide me with good work. Thanks"

- "Directory and potential client referrals."
- "The Directory has been a major source of work from the NC community who buys annual copies."
- "The best thing CATI provides is the Directory, because you can look up an experienced interpreter/translator for the many languages listed."

- "Recently I have received several emails and phone calls because of our online directory. This is a very valuable service the organization provides. Thank you!"

### The people

- "The CATI secretary handles everything so well. She is the contact for us when we have problems.... That is a benefit!!!!"
- "The lovely and caring people working for our instruction."

### Suggestions for CATI

Some people offered suggestions for ways in which CATI could better meet their needs:

- "Maybe CATI could be more instrumental in helping newcomers network with more experienced translators and interpreters."
- "I would like to see more articles, workshops or seminars about the impact of technology in translation and interpreting. How to use that technology and implement it in your practice. This topic is not being addressed at all in any of the articles."
- "More workshops, continuing education courses, etc. CATI is providing more and more of

those, so I am satisfied with my membership."

- "Collegiality, chance to "talk shop." I feel we could do this better if we had regular meetings."
- "I would like CATI to protect my

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**"I would like CATI to protect my interests as a professional freelance translator. For example, client education is crucial. Many clients do not understand the importance of using a professionally qualified translator who also has solid expertise in their specific area of specialization."**

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interests as a professional freelance translator. For example, client education is crucial. Many clients do not understand the importance of using a professionally qualified translator who also has solid expertise in their specific area of specialization. Many clients simply take the lowest bidder, with little regard to expertise. Overall, I think that CATI is doing an excellent job."

- "Maybe more marketing so prospective clients take our profession more seriously. Granted that we have no control when anyone with a Spanish name can print a card and say 'I am a translator' to make some quick bucks. I feel this would at least separate us 'the ones that are taking this seriously' somewhat from the crowd."
- "Please continue to bring speakers like Mr. Degueldre to the annual conference. I always enjoy reading what Ann Sherwin has to share with us. Thank you for all your hard work!"
- "Each area where there is a cluster of members should have at least two activities a year. The ideal would be at least one social and one educational event per year. And these need to be publicized outside our membership –

for instance in the N&O business calendar. Even if it doesn't increase attendance, it would let the business community know that we exist and that they don't have to ask neighbors and FL teachers to fill their T&I needs."

- "While all CATI activities are interesting, I would suggest more of these in the daytime, especially in winter when it gets dark earlier."

### Statements of member satisfaction

Many people expressed their satisfaction with the organization:

- "I've just joined CATI and as a new member, I'm very pleased by the attention and encouragement I've received from CATI."
- "I joined CATI to meet other people in my profession, to get my name out there and to learn as much as I can from other experienced interpreters and translators. I am happy to say that I have gotten what I set out to get from CATI. Everyone is very kind and helpful."
- "I especially enjoy having the CATI Directory because I can always find other interpreters who live in my area and who may have information about areas that I may have questions about or need additional information."
- "I appreciate CATI for providing membership in a substantial, viable, increasingly visible and ultimately influential professional organization. The annual conferences and occasional additional workshops provide valuable opportunities for professional development, skill-building, and networking. I feel CATI is doing an

*continued on page 10*

## CATI survey results *continued from page 9*

increasingly better job of providing these benefits."

- "I am very happy to be a member of CATI. This organization has made me a better translator than ever."
- "I welcome the increased community exposure from efforts such as Mike Collins' newspaper interviews. Encouragement of such efforts to increase public awareness and public education will hopefully result in business awareness of the ever-increasing need for language services."
- "The Conferences have been a confidence booster as well as valuable continuing education and information."
- "I think that Shelley is the greatest and serves as a pivotal point to keep us all informed and is very prompt about returning e-mails and directing us to the proper source for answers."
- "Outstanding communication via email from CATI."
- "Congratulations to the CATI Board and the webmaster and the *CATI Quarterly* editor for obviously trying to improve the organization and increase member benefits."
- "The CATI Board works hard to provide interesting events for members. With the new ATA accreditation requirement for continuing education, I would like CATI to give added priority to educational meetings and events so that this requirement can be met locally."
- "...a strong Board, a professional looking Website, a wonderful newsletter have helped to gradually change CATI's image. Often times I have heard people tell Jackie Metivier how wonderful

CATI is now that she is the President. And I truly agree: Jackie is doing a wonderful job. So, my suggestion for CATI is: continue to attract professional, hard working people who are truly committed to the profession."

- "I think CATI is doing a good job. The conferences have a lot of good material with good speakers. Both the conferences and the *Quarterly* are informative. Also, CATI is small enough so that you can network and feel a part of the group."
- "I think this survey is a very positive idea and a good way to invite participation and ideas from members who may be somewhat reserved. Well done! Now I'm really enthusiastic about reading the next newsletter and discovering the results. Many thanks to all concerned."
- "I feel that by this very survey the leadership is attempting to involve all of us and that is a very positive point. Good idea!"

### Statement of dissatisfaction with the survey

One respondent was disappointed that he or she had not been asked to be critical, but had only been asked to offer positive comments or suggestions for change. That respondent found a way to express his feelings nonetheless:

- "I don't like that you ask only for "positive" comments. This defeats the purpose of a questionnaire. You should ask for comments, without prompting a certain type of response. comments will be constructive, even if occasionally they might be critical. If you want an honest feedback and not just some phony lip service, you should accept an honest feedback. How else could problems be detected and issues be solved?"

### Consultant's recommendations for the Conference

Hold a CATI Board Meeting that is open to conference attendees on the evening before or day after the conference.

At the conference, have several 1-hour or 1.5-hour break-out sessions, sometimes called parallel sessions, where attendees can learn about subjects of more limited interest, for example:

- Basic computing for interpreters and translators – how to download, view, or send different types of files – held in a computer lab
- Online searching and web-based tools for translators and interpreters – held in a computer lab
- Using MS Word – held in a computer lab
- Getting work
- Bidding on work
- Tax considerations for freelancers (offered by a CPA or tax preparer who is looking to increase his / her clientele)
- English grammar and punctuation review (taught by an ESL teacher)

If more training is needed than can be accomplished in the short break-out sessions, offer extended workshops on the afternoon before or day after the conference. Topics might include those listed above, but several topics could be combined or covered in more depth.

### Consultant's recommendations for the CATI administration and organization

CATI members say they want and need CATI to do more marketing about the value of using professional translators. Many ap-

## Focus on members

A column about CATI members and their activities



**Javier Castillo, Jr.**, President of Castillo Interpreting, Inc., recently attended a Spanish and Portuguese Language Interpreter Workshop in Washington D.C sponsored by the U.S. Dept of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The three-day workshop entitled "Bridging Gaps of International Understanding Through Communication" for Spanish and Portuguese interpreters was geared toward interpreting for the State Department's International Visitor Program.

He has been working as a contract interpreter for the U.S. Department of State since March 2002. The workshop gave an in-depth look at the International Visitor Program and how the U.S. Government selects foreign visitors to participate in cultural and informational exchange programs. He attended the workshop's many skill-building sessions for interpreters, including: Interpreting Cultural and Social Customs, Interpreter as a Vital Link, and Art and Skill of the Interpreter.

**Michael Long Nguyen**, a Vietnamese interpreter and translator in Charlotte, was elected Vice President of the Carolina Asian American Chamber of Commerce in November 2003. CACC was organized four years ago with the mission to support and provide networking among Asian Business Owners in the Carolinas. Its activities include a monthly meeting, the Asian Festival in May, a golf tournament, and an Asian picnic in September.

**Ann Sherwin** wrote an article for the *APG Quarterly*, the journal of the Association of Professional Genealogists, entitled "Clearing Language Barriers: Selecting and Working with a Professional Translator." It was published in the December 2003 issue.

In describing the selection process, Ann wrote, "The language service industry in the United States is unregulated. As in genealogy, professional credentials are available but we don't *have* to have them before we can hang out our shingle and start charging for our services. The widespread notion that knowing two languages makes one a translator is almost as foolish as the notion that having ancestors makes one a genealogist. So once you have a list of prospective translators, how do you narrow the field and make your choice?"

Ann recommended first looking for a translator with verifiable translation credentials and then looking for experience in the subject area (in this case, genealogy and historical documents), good writing ability, and attention to detail. She also recommended looking for a native speaker of the *target* language, especially if the translation is to be published.

**Eta Trabing** taught two courses for community/medical interpreters for the UNC hospitals on January 13-14 and January 15-16. Eta also got the contract for teaching two classes for the NC Administrative Office of the Courts. One class will be in Charlotte on February 25-26, and the other in Raleigh on March

10-11. These are to prepare potential court interpreters for the State Certification Exam in August/September of 2004.

**Tatiana Thompson**, who recently passed the State Certification for Court Interpreters, told the *CATI Quarterly* that the most important factors that contributed to her success included following the advice of the experts on T/I like Eta Trabing, Agustin de la Mora, and other successful colleagues, studying beyond the goals established in the test, working in the Court System, taking workshops in T/I skills, and a planned relaxing trip to Raleigh (the day before the test).

Tatiana started to pursue a freelancing translating and interpreting career in January 2002. She had taken Berkana's 101 and 102 translation courses, plus AHEC I, II, and III, and had acquired a good-sized library. She invested in a contract that served as the basis for obtaining jobs with three local institutions, and through well-spent money on memberships (CATI, ATA), she obtained five more contracts with T/I companies.

Tatiana told *CATI Quarterly* that she always answers her e-mails and telephone messages. Her clients know that if they do not receive a call back within 15 minutes she will not be able to give them the service needed. She also hires the professional services of two excellent colleagues, María Rodríguez and Eva Jiménez, to help meet her obligations. She plans to continue training and learning, and her next goal is ATA certification.

If you would like to let your colleagues know about some of your recent or upcoming activities, please send an e-mail to G. David Heath, *CATI Quarterly* editor, at [infoexact@mindspring.com](mailto:infoexact@mindspring.com).

## Upcoming events

### 2004 Joint Conference and ATA Certification exam

The CATI 2004 Joint Conference will be held on Saturday, April 3, 2004 from 8 am to 4 pm at the Durham Technical Community College. This Joint Conference is being organized by the Carolina Association of Translators and Interpreters (CATI); the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP), North Carolina Chapter; the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF); and the Foreign Language Instructors in Community Colleges (FLICC). The conference will offer presentations of interest to foreign language teachers, translators, and interpreters.

The keynote speaker at the conference will be **Walt Wolfram, William C. Friday Distinguished Professor** in the Linguistics Department at North Carolina State University. Over the past three decades, Professor Wolfram has pioneered research on a broad range of vernacular dialects, including African-American English, Puerto Rican English, Appalachian English, Ozark English, Southern English, American Indian English, Vietnamese English, and currently, Outer Banks and Lumbee English. He published in 1969 the first descriptive linguistic book on African-American Vernacular English and helped launch the national awareness about the role of vernacular dialects in American society and in education. For more information on Professor Wolfram, visit the NC State University Linguistics Department website at [www.ncsu.edu/linguistics/bios/wolfram.htm](http://www.ncsu.edu/linguistics/bios/wolfram.htm).

On Sunday, April 4, CATI is hosting a sitting for those ATA members registered to take the American Translators Association's Certification exam.

Registration for the conference is

\$20 for CATI members and \$25 for non-members and late registration (after March 3, 2004). For more information on the conference and a registration form, please go to the CATI website at [www.catiweb.org](http://www.catiweb.org).

### Hispanic Educational Summit

On behalf of CATI, **Jackie Metivier**, CATI President, invites all the English/Spanish CATI members to come and volunteer as Spanish interpreters at the NC Society of Hispanic Professionals (NCSHP) annual Hispanic Educational Summit on Friday, February 27. It will be held in the McKinnon Center at North Carolina State University in Raleigh.

This year, Jackie will not volunteer as an interpreter but as a presenter, and she will address the subject of "A Career in Translation and Interpretation." Please consider attending. It's a great way to demonstrate and practice your skills, and most of all, you will find it very rewarding.

There will be a preliminary meeting on Saturday, February 14, 2004 at 10:00 am at the NCSHP office, 201 Shannon Oaks Circle, Suite 200, Cary, NC 27511 to talk about the program schedule and interpreter needs. Please visit the NCSHP website for further information: [www.thencshp.org/](http://www.thencshp.org/)

### University of Arizona Interpretation Seminars

The University of Arizona National Center for Interpretation in Tucson, AZ, is offering intensive interpretation seminars. They will cover intensive skill development in all three modes of interpretation and topics that include ethics and protocol, legal procedure, medical interpretation, test-taking strategies, and vocabulary development. Seminars and dates are:

- Introduction to Interpreting (February 19-22, 2004)

- Advanced Interpretation (February 19-22, 2004)
- Legal Interpreting (March 26-28, 2004)
- FCICE Exam Prep Seminars (April-June, 2004)
- Agnese Haury Institute (July 12-30)

For full details, go to the University of Arizona website at [nci.arizona.edu](http://nci.arizona.edu).

### NYU Second International Translation Conference

A conference entitled "Global Security: Implications for Translation and Interpretation" will be held on June 3-5, 2004, at the Kimmel Center, New York University.

NYU states that global developments of the last decade have transformed the nature of the translation profession. Modern telecommunications technology, for example, has transformed this profession from one that once served primarily local markets to one that is truly global, permitting translators to work anywhere at any time. Today's new global realities have broadened the scope of the translation and interpreting professions.

This conference is intended to gather academics, practicing translators, and a wide range of translation and interpreting consumers from around the world to explore, from different perspectives, the issues confronting these two professions today.

For details, go to the conference website at [www.scps.nyu.edu/translationconf](http://www.scps.nyu.edu/translationconf)

### North Carolina Office of Minority Health Spanish Interpreter Training Schedule

For the complete 2003 schedule, please see the CATI website.

## CATI survey results *continued from page 10*

proaches are possible, but they all require significant outputs of time and energy from members.

Some suggestions are:

1. More letters and articles from members such as Mike Collins to the newspapers explaining the value of high-quality, professional translation and certification.
2. Send articles from the *CATI Quarterly* as "Press Releases" to the local newspapers (especially the smaller ones looking for content) asking them to reprint the articles.
3. Publicize the conference to non-CATI members (and

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**Members say they want and need CATI to do more marketing about the value of using professional translators. Many approaches are possible, but they all require significant outputs of time and energy from members.**

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charge non-members more to attend). This would help get the CATI name out, show the value of the organization, and

show that CATI members are people who are getting more education and training than the average translator or interpreter.

4. Perhaps, if there is sufficient interest and support, offer a mentoring program to new translators and interpreters so they can learn one-on-one from someone with more experience.

### In conclusion

Overall, CATI is doing a good job, because members said:

- "CATI is holding up a standard of excellence for our profession in the Carolinas."
- "CATI is well worth my membership dues."
- "It is a great organization...it just needs more member involvement."

*Naomi A. Kleid is President of InfoExact, Inc., a consulting company specializing in training, usability, technical communication, and translation from French to English. David Heath is Vice President of InfoExact. Visit us at [www.infoexact.com](http://www.infoexact.com).*

### Learn how to run an online survey

For people who want to learn how to create and run their own online surveys, Naomi is offering a hands-on course on online survey construction through the Carolina Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC).

The course is called: "Online Surveys: Designing, Deploying, Deciphering." On July 17, students will learn how to develop and enter an online survey into the free version of SurveyMonkey. Then the students will collect data for a month.

On August 14, the class will learn how to analyze the data that they collected.

People interested in taking this class should contact Naomi at

[nakleid@mindspring.com](mailto:nakleid@mindspring.com)

or the course administrator for the Carolina Chapter of the STC at

[www.stc-carolina.org/training/index.shtml](http://www.stc-carolina.org/training/index.shtml)



CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF  
TRANSLATORS & INTERPRETERS

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