

THE GUARDIAN

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NCRA Online Testing Met With Enthusiasm

In August, NCRA launched the long-awaited online skills testing platforms for candidates of the RPR, RMR, CRR, CRC, CBC, and CCP certifications. The program, which is a partnership between NCRA, Realtime Coach, and ProctorU, has been met with positive responses from many who have taken online tests.

Benefits of the new online testing program include a user-friendly and secure system, more testing opportunities annually, instantaneous results, greater affordability, and the convenience of testing in the location of the candidate's choosing, including at home or in the office.

"NCRA takes seriously the need to develop and administer objective and valid exams that meet the needs of its members," said Mike Nelson, CAE, NCRA CEO and Executive Director. "The new online platform for certification testing meets the needs of today's member."

"My testing experience was great," said NCRA member Jessica Croxford, RPR, a freelance reporter

from West Jordan, Utah, who recently took an online skills test. "It was a very easy and smooth process. I've been attempting the RPR for two years now, and being able to test without the stress of getting to the testing location and hauling a printer and all my equipment around was extremely helpful in doing so well on the test."

Additional security measures required by the online system include candidates signing a mandatory confidentiality form that indicates that the subject and words of the test will not be disclosed to other candidates, and proctors that are connected to candidates in real time, with live audio and video connections that include a view and live feed of the candidate's monitor through screen-sharing technology. Candidates are also required to use an external webcam to show that their workspace is secure by giving a 360-degree pan of the entire room and desk or workspace.

"It has been rewarding to see that the new online skills platform has been well received by members

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other."

-Abraham Lincoln

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

NCRA ONLINE TESTING MET WITH ENTHUSIASM CONTINUED	2
STUDENTS OF THE MONTH	2
WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CCR?	2
WORD TRIPPER	3
SEPTEMBER EVALUATIONS PASSED	3
JOB OPENINGS	4
THE LOOMING COURT REPORTER SHORTAGE	5
NOVEMBER CALENDAR	6



STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

Michelle Kowalsky

Michelle has been an excellent student and never fails to work hard. One of her instructors said that she is “absolutely professional in everything she does. She will be an employee that employers will be fighting over.”

Keep up the hard work,
Michelle!

Question of the Week from the JCR Weekly

Last week’s question: If you have an advanced certification (RMR, RDR, CRR), how many years after your RPR did you get it?

24.5% -- 0-2 years

22.9% -- 3-5 years

32.7% -- 6-10 years

19.6% -- 11+ years

Christine VanDam

Christine is an SH200 student and has been progressing nicely in speed. She is very dedicated to her education and will make a fabulous reporter.

You are doing great,
Christine! Believe in
yourself!

for its flexibility and convenience. I strongly encourage every test taker to read through the information on our website before registering for the test as all the successful candidates have done, and to also take advantage of the free practice test with a proctor,” said Irene Cahill, NCRA Director of Professional Development Technology.

“I am so excited about the online testing. We didn’t have brick-and-mortar testing in my area, so it is a huge convenience to be able to do it online,” said Sherene Hunt, RPR, CRR, a freelance reporter from Victoria, B.C., Canada. “I thought the instructions were great and easy to follow — the CRR went very smoothly.”

Under the new online system, NCRA will allow candidates to take up to three skills tests per quarter in 2016, and up to four tests per quarter in 2017. For information about the schedule for the remainder of 2015, visit NCRA’s online skills testing schedule.



What’s Happening At CCR?

Lisa Morton conducted a minute-by-minute challenge this summer to help push our students through the summer. The challenge was to progress up the speedbuilding ladder and to meet goals that the students created for themselves that semester. The winner of the contest was Christine VanDam. She was awarded the Infinity Traditional Student writer. *Congratulations on all of your hard work!*



Word Tripper

Breach, breech – As a noun, “breach” is a failure to do what’s required or promised; a break in friendly relations between people or groups; a hole or opening in something created by force. As a verb, it means to fail to do what’s required or promised; to force an opening or break an agreement. “Breech,” a noun, refers to the hind end of something. For example, a breech birth occurs when an infant’s bottom comes out first during delivery. “Breech” is also the part of a firearm (e.g., a rifle or cannon) found at the rear end of its barrel.

“It’s clearly a *breech* birth when the doctor sees the newborn’s bottom *breach* the birth canal.” – Dr. Ron Minson



EVALUATIONS PASSED

These students have all passed one or more SAP evaluations during the month of September.

<p><u>14 SAPs</u> Julia Haven</p> <p><u>11 SAPs</u> Debra Selsavage</p> <p><u>10 SAPs</u> Elise Townes</p> <p><u>9 SAPs</u> Barbara Ufer</p> <p><u>8 SAPs</u> Jamie Johnson Jessica Frizzell</p> <p><u>7 SAPs</u> Daisy Tamez Jamie Bleicher Kelsey Kerwell Kimberly Wilkerson Kristine Rebar</p> <p><u>6 SAPs</u> Ashleigh Huston Christine VanDam Kiana Luke Lexi Klasing Paulina Alanis</p> <p><u>5 SAPs</u> Alisa Church Jennifer Hall Kimberly Murphy</p>	<p>Madeline Lauer Megan Reeves Taifa Stephenson Tyler Adkins</p> <p><u>4 SAPs</u> Amy Powers Ashley Guillermo Carol Casstevens Holly Harris Jalene Hutseal Kirstie Anderson Michael Roberts Natalie Sandi Nicole Miller Rachel Quinn Thomas Herman</p> <p><u>3 SAPs</u> Abby Crouse Alexandra Wiater Amanda Vernon Angela Viraly Ashley Wilson Christine Obermeyer Debrina Jones Geneva Wildcat Julie Domanico Kristen Stegeman</p>	<p>Leslie Macias Melanie Segalla Onni Beene Sarah Hamilton Sheila Sinclair Sherrona Williams Shery Skeen Shivone Latortue Taisha Herr</p> <p><u>2 SAPs</u> Adam Marcus Ashley Kramer Claire Baldi Darby Valle Dawn Molina Jennifer MacDonald Jessica Vanatta Jessica Wills Karina Hannah Kathy Stempeck Kathleen Steadman Katie Jaraczewski Kirstine Mowery Kolby Garrison Lisa Major Monica Robinson Nadine Golden</p>	<p>Stephanie Inman Stephanie McGinnis Suleika Olivo Susanne Gorman Tracie Blocker Valerie Melkus Veronica Stewart Yolanda Pena</p> <p><u>1 SAP</u> Benn Brooks Brandi Smith Brett Schatzle Camille Montgomery Cassidy Johnson Christil McAllister Christine Angel Danielle Cadena Deborah Pascal Erin Claybrook Haley Both Holly Goodwin Holly McKay Holly Reese Jamie Dorgan Jennifer Wesner Jessica Rhykus John Boutsis</p>	<p>Josey Loney Katelyn Berch Kelly Garland Kelsey Michael Kristin Gertz Lisa Jay Lucetta Robertson Martha Obstalecki Michelle Kowalsky Robin Willey Sindee Baum Sue Harrison Summer Vaughan</p>
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JOB OPENINGS



Position: Freelance court reporter

Location: Washington, DC

Benefits:

- \$25k base salary up to one year and a reduced page rate
- 19 paid vacation days for the first year of employment
- 7 company holidays
- * Healthcare benefits including medical, vision, and dental
- * Reimbursement for wellness, gym, and fitness memberships, up to \$100 a quarter
- Disability coverage
- 401k
- Personalized training and mentoring program with a small, highly-trained team of proofers and reporters .

Position: Court reporter (uncertified)

Location: Several districts throughout Colorado



Minimum Qualifications: *To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each of the above essential functions satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, ability, physical and environmental conditions required of the employee on the job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.*

Minimum Education and Experience: *Graduation from an accredited school of reporting or associate degree in reporting and six months in verbatim shorthand reporting and transcribing. All employees hired into this classification must obtain their Registered Professional Reporter (RPR) certification through the National Court Reporters Association (NCRA) within two years of date of hire.*

The Looming Court Reporter Shortage

By Matthew Hector

Earlier this year, budget constraints forced many counties to lay off court reporters, among other support staff. While those who were laid off have returned to work, the Illinois court system faces a deeper problem - there simply aren't enough court reporters. Many are expected to retire in the coming years, and those vacancies may go unfilled because there are not enough certified court reporters to fill them.

Tammy Bumgarner, Director of Court Reporting Services for the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, says there are currently more than 40 vacancies statewide. Unlike the "budget anomaly" that caused the layoffs earlier this year, the current shortage is based on several factors. Bumgarner, whose office works under the direction of the Illinois Trial Court Chief Judges, estimates that 150 court reporters are currently eligible to retire out of 600 employees.

The average age of a court reporter in the Illinois court system is 51 years old, she says. Although the retirement age is currently 60, state employees may use the "rule of 85" and retire earlier. Under the rule, court reporters (and other state employees) can retire with fully vested pension benefits if the total of their age and years employed by the state is 85 or higher. This can lead to reporters retiring before they turn 60.

The upshot: Seventy-five percent of the state's licensed reporters could be eligible for retirement before the end of the decade. Bumgarner calculates that the circuit courts will have to replace over 400 court reporters over the next 10 years.

The move toward the electronic recording of court proceedings in some counties has helped ameliorate the problem. "Illinois is very forward-thinking with its electronic recording," she says. The practice provides a public record in cases that do not have a high probability of requiring a transcript. But courts still require a licensed court reporter to generate the official transcript, meaning that recording cannot completely replace reporting.

Non-licensed court specialists can monitor live recordings, with reporters rotating in when a transcript is requested. This practice has been successful in DuPage County, for example. Bumgarner feels that electronic recording is becoming less of an option and more of a necessity as reporters grow more scarce.

Bumgarner also notes that some circuit courts are "hurting more than others" when it comes to the shortage. For example, vacancies in Chicago-area courts are easier to fill because of the larger pool of candidates. Other circuits don't have that luxury. To make matters worse, the pool of reporters is not growing. The state has several court reporting schools, but some are closing due to low enrollment. One school in Peoria has fewer than 15 students in its court reporting program, Bumgarner says. She notes that a school in Hobart, Indiana has started offering online courses.

"Barring an influx into schools, there will be a shortage in 10 years," Bumgarner says. According to the Illinois Official Court Reporters website (www.illinoisofficialcourtreporters.com), 12 judicial circuits are currently seeking court reporters, with the Fifth Judicial Circuit seeking both full-time and per diem reporters.

In the meantime, the Illinois court system is left with a potentially serious problem. Counties can only roll out electronic recording systems if they have the funds to do so. If more people do not enroll in court reporting programs, the stream of potential candidates will continue to diminish. Even with electronic recording, this will be a problem. While privately hired reporters can fill some of the gaps, they are only present when hired by counsel or parties to a case. Bumgarner suggests that those interested in a career as a court reporter begin their research

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“Work for yourself...Work for the world!”

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.CCR.EDU



ANY SUGGESTIONS?

*Your CCR newsletter is always changing.
 Contact Jen at jen.lewis@ccr.edu with
 any ideas that you may have for the next
 one. It is much appreciated!*

November

Birthdays are in bold print! Happy birthday, CCR students and faculty!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Taylor Behnke 140-160 MULTIVOICE	3 Julie Domanico	4	5 Kelsey Kerwell	6	7
8	9 MIDTERM PREP SPEEDBUILDING 180-200 MULTIVOICE	10 Lanie Steinwart Sheila Sinclair	11 Ashley Kramer 	12 Daisy Tamez MIDTERM PREP SPEEDBUILDING	13	14 Kathleen Ferlus Alisa Church
15	16 D&E 	17 Angela Ryder	18	19 D&E 	20	21
22 Kristine Edland	23 Jennifer Hall 140-160 MULTIVOICE Thanksgiving Potluck	24	25 Michelle Kowalsky	26 	27 NO CLASSES 	28 Jennifer Guerrero Brian Nelson
29	30 10 PAGE MOCK TRIAL 					