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FEATURED

Language interpreter course offered

By CONNIE CONNOLLY cconnolly@chespub.com Apr 10, 2018



DR. LORELLY SOLANO

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CAROLA GREEN
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EASTON — If you've ever dreamed of becoming an interpreter, a 40-hour professional program will be offered this summer by the Talbot Language and Cultural Competence Committee (TLCCC).

The training will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. June 11 to 15 at Chesapeake College, and is offered by the regional community college in Wye Mills and Cross Cultural Communications (CCC), an international leader in professional training.

CCC trainer Carola E. Green will be the instructor for the five-day course. Originally from Guatemala, Green has more than 20 years of experience in professional interpreting as well as in teaching and training interpreters.

The community interpreter course is a comprehensive, 40-hour certificate program that meets the minimum requirements for professional community interpreting.

Dr. Lorelly Solano, Hispanic outreach coordinator at Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center (CMRC) in Easton, has been working with TLCCC to design training for bilingual interpreters as well as cultural competence training for local businesses, organizations and agencies.

"We will be bringing in the best of the best to train community interpreters," Solano said. "I think this course is going to be popular — people are loving the convenience of having it here on the Eastern Shore."

The course offers "very rigorous, formal training," Solano said.

The nationally recognized certificate can open doors for interpretation in the hospitality industry, government, educational system, social services and nonprofit organizations, according to the program brochure.

“The target audience for the course are “fully bilingual people who would be ready to start working right away or bilingual staff members who sometimes interpret in a public agency,” Solano said. “The mission is to reduce the language gap in the community,” so anyone can apply if they meet the prerequisite qualifications.

The community interpreter course is an interactive, skills-based program that covers topics such as ethics, and conduct, basic skills (from pre-session to post-session, positioning, terminology, modes of interpreting, steps for sign translation, intervention strategies, cultural mediation and other vital skills and protocols.

Four certificate levels are available: qualified interpreter, professionally trained interpreter, hospitality interpreter and certificate of attendance.

“The Eastern Shore training will bring together the most talented individuals who are making a difference for Limited English Proficient (LEP) people in our region,” the program brochure stated.

“Helping people is at the heart of the Talbot Language and Cultural Competence project,” Solano said. “Filling the gap for bilingual communication” is needed in Talbot County.

“For this reason, the project is also working at creating new career opportunities for bilingual people,” Solano said. “Last year, TLCCC started this process with a one-day workshop on community interpreting, conducted by Marjory Bancroft, director and founder of Cross-Cultural Communications.”

The \$750 course fee covers the cost of instruction, materials, administration and grading of a 90-minute final assessment, certificate and complimentary breakfasts. Scholarships will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Participants will be responsible for taking the Language Proficiency Test “ideally, prior to the course,” Solano said. The test is administered by Language Testing International (LTI) at Chesapeake College.

To be recognized as an interpreter, a participant will need to demonstrate proficiency in his or her non-native language, which could include sign language, and prove the successful acquisition of technical knowledge during the training through a final assessment.

Exemption from the pre-course language proficiency test is possible if a participant holds a four-year undergraduate degree or a graduate degree from an accredited university where the participant's non-native language was the language of instruction. Two-year associate degrees do not meet the exemption requirement.

To waive the language proficiency test, documentation will be required. Exemptions will be granted by CCC on a case-by-case basis.

LTI can deliver the test in two modalities: an automated phone call in which participants interact with an avatar in a computerized speaking test at a cost \$70, or a live phone interview with a human tester for \$139. The latter option requires advanced payment and strict punctuality. Payments may be made by check, money order, or cash.

Both modalities are available for these languages: Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Pashto, Persian Farsi, Portuguese-Brazilian, Portuguese-European, Russian, and Spanish.

For those who wish to be tested in Cajun or Creole, the fee is \$139.



“A lot of people say they lived in another country, but would like to take the language proficiency test to reassure themselves of their proficiency first without obligating themselves to take the course,” Solano said. These people should call Elaine Wilson at Chesapeake College about taking the test

before applying for the course.

Participants can choose to take the proficiency test by the Friday before the start of the course, but receiving the certificate will be delayed, Solano said.

The test administrator is Language Testing International, considered the expert in assessing language, Solano said.

Participants must commit to attend the whole program and take two assessments in order to earn the community interpreter certificate.

Participants must score 75 percent or higher on the final assessment, given on the final day of the program, and score intermediate high or above on the Language Proficiency Test. Exempt participants automatically score “superior.”

The course is offered on a first-come, first-served basis, and the deadline for registering for the course is May 11.

If an employer is paying for the course, applicants may submit their application without payment and certify that the employer will pay.

“Cultural diversity is considered an asset for vibrant communities,” Solano said. “Urban experts have a high regard for communities where diverse cultural and socioeconomic groups coexist in harmony and embrace their differences.”

For more course information and a registration packet, contact Elaine Wilson, director of adult education and family literacy at Chesapeake College at 410-827-5835 or at ewilson@chesapeake.edu.

For more information about the training or a registration packet, contact Dr. Lorelly Solano at 443-786-1120 or lorelly@chesmrc.org.

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