

THE GUARDIAN

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ON THE JOB: COURT REPORTER

By Adelma Gregory-Bunnell



Tina Ritchie, of Rising Sun, has been a court reporter for Cecil County for 21 years. In her senior yearbook, she said that she wanted to be a court stenographer. When she started, there were three court reporters and two courtrooms. Now there are three reporters and five courtrooms. Court reporters transcribe civil and criminal cases, including jury trials, sentencing and motion hearings, and more.

How did you get your start? In high school I never cared for math or science, but I steered toward the business classes and I excelled in shorthand. One of our assignments in Mrs. Hitching’s business class was to find a profession and do a report. My dad thought that court reporting was fascinating, so I looked into it and it played to a lot of my strengths and you could make good money doing it.

How did you train for the job? I went to a court reporter school in Cherry Hill, N.J. My father worked in New Jersey, so my dad and I commuted together every day. It takes two to four years, but I was lucky enough to get out in a one-and-a-half years. I was ready to finish.

What essential skills are required? You need to be able to do 225 words a minute to get out of school. They have Merit writers that do 270 words. I go from 120, which is nice and slow, to 270, which is really fast. You have to have a strong understanding of English grammar rules, punctuation, proofreading, good time management skills, you can’t stress easy. And a good poker face because you hear some interesting things in court that you can’t roll your eyes or be surprised at what you hear. Sometimes that is the hardest part of my day.

Describe a typical day. I get together with my coworker and we go over the docket and prioritize things. If it is a big trial, we each rotate a day so you are not transcribing 800 pages. It depends on the case, but generally we have everything out in two weeks. But for appeals it is 60 days and adoptions are expedited, so they are done in 20 days. It really depends on the situation. Each court room has CourtSmart, which is a digital recording. If someone wants a transcription of it, we can do that too.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“What the mind can conceive, it can achieve.”

-Napoleon Hill

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STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

Kolby Garrison

Kolby just transferred to our school this Fall. She has already shown great progress. She has a wonderful and cheerful attitude. She never ceases to put a smile on her instructor's face during her read-backs because of her enthusiasm. May luck and success always be with you!

Katelyn Berch

Katelyn started with CCR in February of this year. She's faithful about her homework and has the progress to show for it! She has consistently climbed that "speed ladder" this term. Katelyn is eager to learn and is constantly trying to improve. Keep up the great work, Katelyn!

Kayde Rieken

Kayde started with us in February of 2013. She is a very strong student. She is dedicated to her school work, and it shows with her percentages on SEs and SAPs. She is continuously progressing in the program. We are confident that she will make a great court reporter. Your hard work and dedication is truly admirable!



(continued from pg. 1)

What's the best part of the job? I love that it is something new every day. I like working in a small community and I like having a close working relationship with the bar and the judges. I like having a challenge of something new every day.

What's the biggest challenge? Accents and medical terminology, street slang. Sometimes the atmosphere in the courtroom gets a little tense with people cutting one another off. I would still say the biggest challenge is accents.

What advice would you offer someone looking to go into this field? I don't think it is a dying field. The technology is out there. Some people think the keyboard is the hardest part, but it is not. It is getting your speed up, that is the hardest part. People seem to hit their top speed and can't get over it.

Re-printed from www.cecildaily.com

CAPTURING A PIECE OF HISTORY

By Lisa Selby-Brood

I'm a history buff. My favorite things to watch are The History Channel and PBS, and I could give you a pretty good rundown on World War I and World War II. Participating in the Veterans History Project seemed like the perfect opportunity.

The first few veterans' interviews I transcribed were on cassette tape, which tells you how long I've been transcribing. In many ways, the challenges are the same as those you run into every day with your normal work. Sometimes you can't hear clearly. Sometimes the interviewer doesn't ask the greatest questions. And most of the time you have a fair share of research to do so it's like a typical day at the office.

What isn't typical is the stories you hear. Most of the histories I have done have been World War II, which is my favorite war to study. What surprised me was that the interviews were all so different. One man was interviewed by his young granddaughter. One was done quite professionally, and the audio was excellent.

Some are short, maybe 10 pages. One of the interviews I transcribed was almost 50 pages. This man was in the Battle of the Bulge. I could have just sat and listened to him talk all day.

I can't stress how important it is to get these

stories transcribed. Yes, there are benefits to getting involved in this program. Court reporters can earn PDCs toward their overall continuing education total, and students who transcribe can earn a free membership with NCRA. In addition, this type of work will certainly be good literacy practice for people planning to take a certification exam.

However, the program is important on a broader level. I gained a real understanding and respect for our work as Guardians of the Record and Keepers of the Spoken Word. If the Library of Congress had not asked for these interviews and stories, the stories of so many people who were involved in the U.S. would be lost. And without people like us to take the audio and turn it into a written record, it would be difficult for scholars to study and learn from those stories.

Here is what I hope: First, if every court reporter would transcribe just one history, we could make a real difference in the amount of historical documentation that is available. Second—and I think everyone who has transcribed for the Veterans History Project would agree—once you've done one, you will want to do another.

I urge you if you have not already done so, please transcribe just one oral history. I am sure you will want to do more.

Re-printed from the November/December JCR.

Word Trippers By: Barbara McNichol

Metal, mettle – “Metal” is a substance that conducts electricity and heat, can be melted and shaped, and has a unique luster when freshly fractured. “Mettle” means courage or fortitude; a strong disposition or temperament. It reflects an ability to continue despite difficulties, displaying a strength of spirit or stamina.




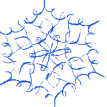
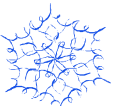

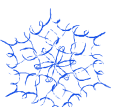


“She proved her *mettle* when she finally completed her first *metal* sculpture after two frustrating years.” – Susie Lewis

“The gorilla displayed his *mettle* as he bent the *metal* bars of his cage.” –Victor Christo-

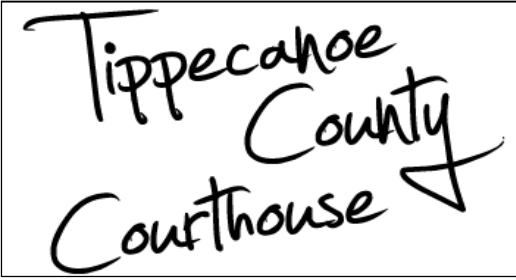
OCTOBER EVALUATIONS PASSED

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

Students who have passed an exit speed have been bolded.

18 SAPs	Kathleen Steadman	Joelle Maxfield	Danielle Griffin	Shelley Duhon
Katelyn Berch	Kolby Garrison	Jonathan Abrams	Cadena	Shery Skeen
10 SAPs	Lucetta Robertson	Kassandra Walter	Deb Gaston	Shivone Latortue
Monica Robinson	Sara Czartolomna	Kathleen Stempeck	Deborah Pascal	Taylor Atchison
8 SAPs	Sarah Hamilton	Kayde Rieken	Debrina Jones	Thomas Herman
Angela Viray	Susan Steeves	Kelly Garland	Elizabeth Meek	Tracie Blocker
Christine Angel	3 SAPs	Kimberly Prebster	Erin Gaffney	Yvonne Wilson
7 SAPs	Abigail Lancaster	Kirstine Mowery	Gayle Kees	
Brionca Tate	Brittany Bleidt	Kristine Edland	Holly Mckay	
Christil McAllister	Elise Townes	Melissa Claborn	Holly Reese	
Jamie Dorgan	Madison Pacana	Michelle Jones	Jessica Rhykus	
6 SAPs	Megan Reeves	Nicole Simchak	Kelsey Michael	
Denise Chase	Monica Eskenasy	Pamela Filewood	Kristin Gertz	
Summer Vaughan	2 SAPs	Shari Conrad	Maria Rangel	
Valerie Melkus	Amy Powers	1 SAP	Marion VanHorn	
5 SAPs	Amy Strickler	Abby Crouse	Mary Orloff	
Michelle Kowalsky	Claire Baldi	Abby Moylan	Melanie Segalla	
Sindee Baum	Erica Zielinski	Alisa Church	Myra Brock	
Tami Taylor	Esperanza Parada	Allison Allen	Priscilla Romans	
4 SAPs	Jenna Yokoyama	Brooke Baril	Beraducci	
Carol Casstevens	Jessica Vanatta	Camille Montgomery	Rebecca Wasser	
Holly Harris	Jodi McCall	Claudia Meyers	Samantha Schieck	
		Dani Mathes		

JOB OPENING



Tippecanoe County, Lafayette, IN.

SALARY: \$37,966.00 annually

STARTING: To be arranged

ESSENTIAL DUTIES:

Attends and makes audio recordings and notes of court proceedings, including operating recording equipment, taking notes, and labeling recorded audio, and archiving audio. Prepares exhibits for storage, including inventorying items, writing information on storage envelope, packaging and filing in evidence room. Types transcripts of recordings as requested. Performs various clerical duties as assigned or as needed, including writing/typing documents, such as orders, preparing orders for Judge's review after hearing, forms, jury instructions and correspondence, filing pleadings, making chronological case summary entries, entering data on computer, and researching laws. Coordinates video conferences for the court. Assists in maintaining court calendar, including scheduling/rescheduling court hearings, notifying appropriate parties, and entering cases on computer. Maintains communication with various departments, agencies and individuals, such as attorneys, Department of Corrections, and law enforcement personnel. Periodically assists in answering telephone and greeting office visitors, providing information and assistance, taking messages, or directing/transferring to appropriate individual or department. Periodically performs duties of Bailiff/Jury Administrator in his/her absence, such as scheduling hearings during Monday and Friday motion hour, reviewing and scheduling mental health cases, preparing and processing department claims/vouchers, coordinating transport of jail inmates to court with Sheriff's office, and arranging/scheduling judges pro tem as needed. Maintains special judge files for presiding judge and correspond with Court Reporters regarding schedules and orders. Maintains orders and correspondence with special judges for Superior Court 2 cases. Performs related duties as assigned.

JOB REQUIREMENTS:

High school diploma or GED. Working knowledge of standard office and court policies, procedures, legal requirements and terminology, and ability to apply such knowledge to a variety of interrelated processes, tasks and operations. Working knowledge of department computer software, including word processing, spreadsheet and judicial management. Working knowledge of standard English grammar, spelling and punctuation, and ability to prepare correspondence and documents as assigned. Ability to type with speed and accuracy, and properly operate a variety of standard office equipment, including recording equipment, transcriber, computer, printer, telephone, fax machine, copier and calculator. Ability to operate visual/audio equipment in the courtroom including video conferences. Ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing with co-workers, other County departments, attorneys, Department of Corrections, and law enforcement personnel and the public, including being sensitive to professional ethics, gender, cultural diversities and disabilities. Ability to comply with all employer and department policies and work rules, including, but not limited to, attendance, safety, drug-free workplace and personal conduct. Ability to provide public access to or maintain confidentiality of department information and records according to State requirements. Ability to understand, memorize, retain, and carryout written and oral instructions, and present findings in oral or written form. Ability to work alone with minimum supervision and with others in a team environment. Ability to work on several tasks at the same time and work rapidly for long periods, often under time pressure. Ability to regularly work extended, weekend and/or evening hours.

Apply Online: <http://www.tippecanoe.in.gov/careers/>

STUDENT CORNER

Sara Czartolomna
October 14, 2014

Mr. Moody's "Four-Step Process" is essentially a guide to mindfully progressing through the varied speeds necessary for program completion at College of Court Reporting.

I was admittedly surprised, not unpleasantly, by the first step of Mr. Moody's "Four-Step Process," which is to listen to the entire Success As you Progress dictation. As pertains to the deeply ingrained idea of a successful stenographer or student, my understanding has been that one must write it the first time, no matter what. Notice I did not mention anything about writing it correctly. I suppose it is time to rid myself of that philosophy if I am going to do well in school and attain the goals I wish to attain. In all frankness, the approach I have used thus far is detrimental and has ultimately led to "practicing hesitation" without fail.

The next step is transcribing virtually everything one writes. Personally, the level of fear and frustration when I know I did not write well is sometimes overwhelming. There are times I would rather be mauled by wild animals or attend the RNC – no disrespect intended to the reader – than have to read inaccurate notes. Shadows, mistrokes, drags, and drops are the result of a vicious circle that begins with sloppy concentration and ends with sloppy writing and sloppy real-time.

The penultimate step is the submission of notes for grading. Taking into account the sheer distress of the process outlined in the second step, submission of aforementioned slovenly notes for public, i.e., *anyone else's*, view brings me no end of discomfiture. After putting much thought into the possible reasons for this visceral reaction and have come to the conclusion that no one enjoys having to scrutinize their flaws, much less have someone else do the same, even if it is done under the pretense of advancement and progress. Essentially, we're human and avoid criticism, particularly self-criticism.

Finally, the crucial fourth step is involving the instructor in your learning process, therefore enabling him and/or her to facilitate the student's realization of their goals. Drawing upon my limited experience with the SAPs I have produced up to this point, I have to admit it was an arduous task. I probably listened to a handful of dictations in each category – literary, jury charge, and testimony – to ascertain which one would give the impression of my capability and propitiousness.

In closure, I know and know well that enlightenment comes from close examination and analysis of one's imperfections, both real and perceived. Learning and progressing, rather than passing or failing, will become my new mantra as I embark on this new venture. I know it will not be undemanding or effortless but am also cognizant and know profoundly that nothing worthwhile ever is.



Starting this month, CCR is going to be featuring a student's essay that their teacher found to be exceptionally well-written in each issue of The Guardian. We want to congratulate each and every one of these students in advance for their essay!

For our December issue, we would like to introduce Sara Czartolomna. She has written a wonderful essay on the "Four-Step Process." Sara is a transfer student and enrolled with us this past fall. To help get to know her a little better, she has provided us with a few fun facts about herself: She is fluent in Polish, has been reading Time magazine and listening to NPR since age eight or nine, used to hitchhike frequently, and zoos make her very sad.



CCR would like to wish everyone a wonderful holiday season and a new year filled with peace and happiness!



COLLEGE OF COURT REPORTING

111 West Tenth Street, Suite 111
 Hobart, IN 46342
 Phone: 219-942-1459

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

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

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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!

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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	1 <i>Mock</i>	2 Esperanza-Parada Jenna Yokoyama	3	4	5 Matthew Van Pelt	6 Holly Goodwin
7 <i>Pearl Harbor Day</i>	8 <i>National Brownie Day</i> 180-220 4-voice Thomas Herman	9 Kolby Garrison Elowyne Smith-Marquez	10 Shelly Duhon	11 Marion Van Horn Benn Brooks	12 Joan Yeatts	13
14	15 <i>Bill of Rights Day</i> 10-page Patricia McCall Andrea Whyte	16 Nicole Simchak	17 Shery Skeen	18 <i>Faculty Meeting</i>	19	20 Alexis Klasing <i>Winter Break Begins</i>
21 Christil McAllister	22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day 	26 Chris Crosgrove	27 Brandi Smith
28	29 Cheryl Hoover Tim Moody Elise Townes Brittany Bleidt	30 Lynette Eggers	31 New Year's Eve Taisha Herr	1	2	3 <i>Winter Break Ends January 4th, 2015</i>