



# 2016 NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATIONAL INTERPRETING A Changing Landscape



## A Changing Landscape

By Jo Brown & Angie O'Bleness

On June 23, 2016, more than 150 participants from 36 states attended the inaugural Conference of the National Association of Interpreters in Education at the University of Northern Colorado. The conference was co-sponsored by UNC's American Sign Language & Interpreting Studies program and the Colorado Department of Education. Eleven nationally and internationally recognized presenters challenged participants with cutting-edge research and hands-on application of skills and knowledge sets, with the goal of creating a unified voice calling for continued professionalization of the field of educational interpreting that will result in more rigorous requirements of academic and professional credentials and more highly qualified interpreting services to students.

The conference embarked with an opening reception which provided attendees an opportunity to network, reunite, and get ready for a weekend full of information. Leilani Johnson, Ed.D. delivered the keynote address, A

*Changing Landscape*, exploring the journey of interpreters who work in education and focusing on the exciting journey that lies ahead. This inspiring speech set the tone for the conference. After the reception, attendees, board members and presenters retreated to the UNC residence hall in eager expectation of an inspiring weekend.

Presenters at the conference included Frances Beurivage, Brenda Schick, Marty Taylor, Doug Bowen-Bailey, Patty Gordon, Hillary Hardin, Mary Morrison, Leilani Johnson, Laurie Bolster, Amy Seiberlich, Steve Green, Rachel Boll, and Tia Ivanko. Educational sessions included topics on discourse mapping, prosody, ASL to English voicing skills, fingerspelling to promote literacy, cognitive development of deaf children, emerging paradigms in approaches to the work for K-12 interpreters, and understanding IEP and 504 plans and the interpreter as a related service provider on the educational team. Saturday morning's plenary session, conducted by

### Angie & Jo's Conference Take Away



Angie: One point of the conference that I benefited from was the information taught by Marty

Taylor in her session related to "Prosody and its Significance to Effective Interpreting." Many of my colleagues agree this is an area reflected in the EIPA results and that many are struggling to develop considering its impact on one's ability to understand the overall message. A practical suggestion is understanding prosodic markers. There is variation as to which properties of spoken language are described as prosodic; they usually include intonation, rhythm, tempo, stress, lengthening, volume, and pausing. In signed languages, prosodic structure is expressed by changes in eye aperture, eye gaze, head movement, body leans,.....

Brenda Schick, focused on EIPA Guidelines of Professional Conduct for Educational Interpreters which brought about much discussion regarding ethical considerations in an educational setting and the need to continue to develop guidelines for the field.

The presenters represented the best of the best in the field of interpreting and each session proved to be thought provoking and informative. The presenters offered valuable instruction related to the needs of interpreters working in education and students they work with. Their expertise and passion for interpreting flowed through and intertwined with every participant. Each day was packed full of motivational and empowering information that strengthened and unified everyone in attendance.

There was an atmosphere of hope and unity that permeated throughout the weekend. Participant sentiments such as “we are in this together” were a common theme expressed throughout the entire event. The collective voices and outpouring of support marks a new era in the field and will result in transformation and advancement for the profession. This truly was and is an exciting time to be an interpreter in education.

One of the most memorable and emotional moments shared by all was the official launching of the NAIE organization. Many expressed sentiments such as “we have wanted an organization such as this for years,” or “Finally! It is our time!” With the clap of a gavel, Susan Brown, NAIE Board President, officially announced the founding of the NAIE. It was a landmark day in the history of interpreters in education, much like that of the Registry of Interpreters of the Deaf which was founded on June 16, 1969 at Ball State College. Our legacy began in a similar way on June 26, 2016 on the University of Northern Colorado campus where

participants from over 35 states stood united as K-12 interpreters who are passionate for language, student needs, and immense hope for the future!



### Thank you to NAIE Conference Volunteers

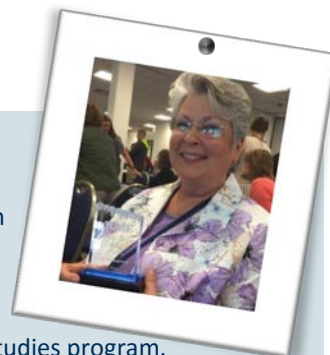
The behind the scenes at the conference cannot be overlooked and we want to acknowledge the UNC ASLEI OSEP scholar/volunteers that contributed their time, energy, and talents.

A hearty thank you goes out to each volunteer who willingly went above and beyond to make the conference a tremendous success.

A special thank you to the University of Northern Colorado’s Department of ASL & Interpreting Studies for their ongoing support of OSEP scholars which supports such valuable opportunities and the NAIE conference.

*.....lengthening and emphasis of signs, cheek puffing, nose wrinkling, and hand clasping, among other physical behaviors. Paying attention to these markers and prosodic patterns in our native and nonnative language will enhance the overall consistency of the interpreted message.*

*Jo: The session that inspired me the most was Leilani Johnson and Laurie Bolster’s Educational Interpreter as Related Services Personnel: Demand for a Paradigm Change. Throughout my career as a Lead Interpreter I have come to realize that creating change is not easy. I have been trying to cultivate change in my local school system for a while now. I think most participants who attended this session have also. Change brings about uncertainty which makes people feel uncomfortable. Some people judge those who inspire and transform change - viewing them as troublemakers or pretentious. Often change agents feel defeated and groundless and eventually surrender their efforts. For years now I have been soliciting support for my initiatives through various organizations which have all fallen short of my expectations...until now. Being in this session was very emotional for me as well as other participants. It made me feel as if we finally found the map to lead us out of the maze. Our questions were answered and it actually made sense! Now, with our own national organization, we have support from like-minded individuals who want and are willing to roll up their sleeves and continue the struggle needed to make change happen.*



### Leilani Johnson Leadership Award

Citing her role as a visionary, champion and leader within the field of educational interpreting for more than 20 years, the selection committee for the NAIE awarded its inaugural award honoring leadership in the field to Leilani Johnson, director of UNC’s ASL and Interpreting Studies program.

The award, named in Johnson’s honor, will be presented annually to an interpreter working in education that exemplifies the leadership qualities that Johnson has demonstrated during her career.





To commemorate the launching of the NAIE each participant filled out a leaf cutout of their personal hopes and wishes for the future of the profession. The leaves were then hung on the NAIE symbolic tree to document the voices of interpreters and stakeholders from 36 states. The tree of hopes and wishes will continue to grow with future conferences and NAIE gatherings.

### The Voice of the Participants

*"I dream we will successfully partner with the Deaf community to improve the education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing students incorporating the best of residential school, deaf education features, incorporating Deaf cultural values so all students become bilingual, bi-cultural, lifelong learners ready to lead us into the future."*

*"I dream to have Deaf models working with every Deaf child and every hearing interpreter."*

*"I would like to see our profession doing a better job of embracing and growing new/young interpreters through mentoring and professional development expectations."*

*"I wish for more involvement from the Deaf community and the value of their support!"*

*"My hope is that interpreters be viewed as a profession on its own and not be grouped with aids/support staff."*

*"My hope for the future of interpreting in education is that each practitioner forgives, heals, and embraces their individual and collective past, so they can approach the work from a whole, open-minded and open-hearted standpoint."*



Post your Conference photos and memories on the NAIE Facebook page!



**SAVE THE DATE...**  
June 2017  
NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
INTERPRETING IN EDUCATION  
University of Northern Colorado  
DATES TO BE ANNOUNCED IN OCTOBER