

The Deposition Reporter

DEPOSITION
REPORTERS ASSOCIATION
OF CALIFORNIA

Summer 2026

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President's Message

Cindy Vega, CSR 6640, RDR, CCRR 95

Dear DRA Members,

As we approach the summer months, I hope you are taking some time to enjoy the season and maintain a healthy work-life balance. Achieving that balance is so important. I know we all get caught up in our careers, so please remember to take some time for yourselves as well.

I am already two months into my second year proudly serving as your DRA president. The entire Board of Directors was sworn in at our convention in Ventura this past April. Please join me in welcoming our two newest board members, Steph Cole, District 5 Director, and Andrew Ha, Secretary. They have already brought new energy and fresh perspectives to the Board.

We had a truly outstanding convention featuring exceptional speakers and valuable educational content. Our keynote speaker, Matt Murphy, attorney and legal analyst for ABC News, delivered an engaging presentation. Our Friday night "Glow Up" cocktail party was especially fun and well attended, with members dressed in vibrant neon colors that perfectly captured the spirit of the event. If you joined us, I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did.

I will be attending the NCRA Convention in Bellevue, Washington in July, and I hope to see many of you there. I will be presenting a seminar, as will three of our past presidents: Stephanie Leslie, Mary Pierce, and Cheryl Haab Scott. If you attend, please stop by and say hello. We would love to connect with you.

Looking ahead, we have our Student Picnic coming up in October, with details to be announced soon. We are also planning several remote seminars and will be offering the CCRR examination later this year.



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Behind the scenes, DRA board members continue to stay engaged with issues affecting the court reporting profession in California, including education, legislation, technology, and career outreach. Please know that serving our members and supporting our profession remain our highest priority.

One challenge we continue to face is encouraging more reporters to work in person. Attorneys need reporters out in the field, and the demand remains strong. Another important need is finding mentors for our newly certified CSRs. If you are interested in serving as a mentor, please contact DRA. Our newest reporters would greatly benefit from your experience, knowledge, and guidance.

I had the opportunity to attend a career fair in March in Oceanside, my hometown. There was a lot of energy and interest from the high school students, and it was a wonderful experience sharing what we do with that "little machine." If you are interested in presenting at a career fair in your area, please let us know. We have excellent resources available.

As always, if you are interested in learning more about DRA or becoming involved in any capacity, please reach out to me. We welcome your feedback, ideas, and participation.

I hope to see many of you at an upcoming event!

Thank you for your ongoing membership and support of DRA.



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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - JUNE 2026

Mary Pierce, Legislative Chair

FVAP vs. Superior Courts of California (four named counties)

On June 3, 2026, the long-awaited hearing before the California Supreme Court was conducted in Los Angeles, with the Petitioner, Family Violence Appellate Project (FVAP) asking the Supreme Court to rule on the ban against use of electronic recording in the courts, other than for limited civil cases, misdemeanors or infractions, unconstitutional.

The Respondent was the Superior Courts of Contra Costa, Santa Clara, Los Angeles and San Diego Counties, although I would not call the Respondents' arguments a defense against the Petitioner's request. There was little daylight between the position taken by FVAP and the Superior Court's representative counsels. So I was personally extremely grateful that CCRA and SEIU teamed up to hire Scott Kronland, from Altshuler Berzon, a highly respected public interest attorney from San Francisco, to write an amicus curiae brief on their behalf, asking to be heard at the hearing. And although it took a long time to get a decision on his brief and request to be heard, the Supreme Court did grant the request and permitted Mr. Kronland to speak in opposition to the Petitioner's position at the hearing.

But the granting of that request wasn't necessarily a reason to celebrate too wildly because Mr. Kronland was not alone in his filing of an amicus curiae brief. There were 14 other such briefs filed, all in support of Petitioner's request, from several other groups similar to the FVAP in their representation of low income litigants, but also from the Los Angeles Bar Association, another group headed by Erwin Chemerinsky, a constitutional law expert, and none other than the California Attorney General's office. So this was a very steep hill for Mr. Kronland to climb.

I listened to the entire hearing and was disheartened to hear the drum continually being beaten about how there is a court reporter shortage and it is something that cannot possibly be reversed or cured, regardless of the drastic improvement in passing rates, the nine-fold increase in the numbers of new licensees in California in the last couple of years, and schools that continue to have waiting lists for students to enroll there.

Mr. Kronland represented SEIU/CCRA exceptionally well, and all of us really, but it seems like somewhat of a stacked deck. But if Petitioner's motion is granted, I am hopeful that he will have mitigated the potential damage, or breadth thereof, the granting of FVAP's petition will do. A ruling will likely take six weeks, give or take.

AB 2783 - Reciprocity for RPR holders

This is a bill sponsored by the California Assembly Judiciary Committee and proposes reciprocity for the skills test portion of the California CSR exam for anyone who has a current, valid RPR certificate. The bill has already passed out of the Assembly Judiciary and Appropriations Committee, with no

opposing votes. It is now making its way through the same process in the State Senate.

There are very good arguments on both sides of this discussion, which has led to differing opinions among current licensees, as was very apparent in the floor discussion of the bill at the DRA convention in June.

The CalDRA Board of Directors subsequently had lengthy discussions about the bill, but was unable to come to a consensus opinion among its members. Therefore, DRA will not be taking a position on the bill either in support or opposition to the bill. We encourage you to read the bill for yourself (<https://LegiScan.com>) and attend hearings, if you'd like, where you are often afforded an opportunity to voice your opinion at the tail end of any particular hearing on a bill. You can also monitor the bill's progress on that same page and even elect to receive updates when new developments occur.

DRA will update our member as any significant developments on this bill take place.

AB 2290 (Lackey) – A Bill To Make Electronic Original Transcript Delivery Acceptable

The original proposal (and seemingly sole intent) of this bill is to provide that the noticing party, at their sole discretion, could elect to receive only an electronic final original in place of the traditional hard copy, bound and sealed, and then shipped to the taking attorney or party to maintain custody pending its potential use at trial. DRA saw that as problematic in many different ways, and really only beneficial to the coalition of national firms that proposed it. But seeing that some version of this law was going to go forward, we accepted the invitation to engage in offering amendments. Our legislative committee met and collaborated extensively with Ed Howard, our lobbyist, as well as CCRA and their team of lobbyists, to try to propose some amendments that would provide more transparency, while still maintaining the security of the original transcript so that if it is to be filed with the court, it can be deemed a reliable record. After a solid collaboration, the two state associations offered some joint amendments and some more unilaterally. At the time of this being written, we had completed that process and are awaiting the posting of the bill's analysis and upcoming hearings.

You can rest assured that DRA will stay deeply engaged in this process to do all that we can to ensure the trustworthiness and security of the verbatim transcripts produced by licensed CSRs in California.

DEPO DIPLOMAT - ARE YOU UNKNOWINGLY EXPOSING YOURSELF TO DISCIPLINE DUE TO A READ-AND-SIGN ISSUE?

by Mary Pierce

I've been licensed since 1983, and the entire span of my career in the deposition field since becoming licensed, the agency for whom I have taken any given deposition has always handled the read-and-sign process, from notification to sealing and delivery of the original transcript, as well as the final disposition letter. And I suspect it has always been that way for all of you, too.

So would it surprise you to learn that pursuant to CCP 2025.520 (a) through (e), the onus is placed on the deposition officer to perform every step of that process?

Even through the 24 years that I ran my agency, I never gave this much thought. I was aware that the CCP put the responsibility on the reporter, but I never before saw the danger in not seeking to alter the language of that code section to reflect the way the process is actually handled. It was just the way things were and always had been. But then a DRA member in her first year of licensure sent an inquiry to the Depo Diplomat.

To sum up the situation briefly, the case in which she took the deposition at issue was now in trial, and the deponent in question happens to be the plaintiff, who claims that the transcript of her deposition has content she never said and is missing testimony that she did give. The court reporter stands by her transcript. But the problem is that no read-and-sign was ever offered. The case is venued in the Superior Court of the State of California, so an opportunity to read and sign was mandatory, unless waived by the witness. And it was not.

This particular deposition was through an agency that has their own worksheet that the reporters that work for them use, and that worksheet has a box to be filled in by the reporter as to whom the errata sheet is to be sent. Unfortunately, the reporter, who'd only been working for about two months at the time she took this assignment, left the box blank.

If this situation had occurred at my agency, we would have inquired of the reporter as to whom the code letter and errata sheet were to be sent. Again, it's a mandatory read-and-sign opportunity, and waiving of review by a plaintiff is pretty rare, in my experience. But the agency made no inquiry, offered no read-and-sign, and now they're at trial, and a heated debate over the transcript and its accuracy has erupted.

At least one party -- and even the agency -- pressured the reporter to appear at the trial and testify about her transcript, even though she had already submitted a

declaration confirming her transcript was accurate and provided a timestamped version to demonstrate that there were no anomalies of time progression that might support the claim that additions or deletions to the actual testimony had occurred.

The CRB's position is that the failure by the reporter to provide direction to the agency may leave her exposed to discipline should a complaint be filed. She was so newly licensed, I would be surprised if she even knew that the CCP makes it her responsibility to conduct the review process. And I suspect she is not alone. I intend to propose legislation in the next legislative cycle to put the onus where it should be - on the agency with whom the deposition was booked and under whose umbrella it was conducted and produced. In the meantime, you would be advised to make sure that you always give clear and complete directions to the agency producing the transcript and even have a paragraph in your subcontractor agreement that sets out the elements of your relationship with any agency for whom you perform work.

Here is some sample language that you may use as a starting point for potential language in any subcontractor agreement you execute:

The CSR agrees to provide clear instruction to the agency as to whether read-and-sign is to be made available/offered, to whom the code letter is to be sent (i.e., to the witness directly at their residence or other provided address or if it is to be sent care of their counsel), and if the review is to be conducted within any time period different than the 30 days provided by both state and federal statutes. Once that information is provided, the agency will assume all responsibility for the review procedure, including notification, facilitation, receiving any signature and/or changes, incorporating those documents into the original transcript, then binding, sealing and shipping the original to the noticing attorney. The agency further agrees to inquire of the CSR if no clear information is provided when the job is turned in.

Distinguished Service Award

By Trina Cox



Mary became a CSR in 1983, earning License No. 6143, and began working as a staff reporter and a freelancer. In 2002 she established her own agency, Pantera Court Reporters. She recently merged her agency with Regal Court Reporting, owned by our past president Stephanie Leslie and her husband, Isaiah. Pantera Court Reporters is now under the Regal umbrella, continuing its legacy of being a CSR-owned agency.

Mary has been a longstanding member of CalDRA, having served in multiple positions on the Board of Directors, including as our esteemed president from 2020 to 2022. She is currently our legislative chair, which is such an important part of our organization. She had big shoes to fill following Toni Pulone's passing, but she is now becoming a walking encyclopedia of the Codes and rules we, as reporters, are held to. When you have a question and send an email to the DRA "Depo Diplomat," Mary will be the person researching the Code and providing you with an answer.

Last year Mary served on a committee tasked by the Court Reporters Board of California to update the Best Practice Pointers for the CRB website. This important task ensures that the BPPs keep up with the rapidly-changing technology and laws governing court reporters, as well as helping prepare students and new reporters to enter the working world and handle the various situations they will face.

Mary has also served our community at the national level, becoming a member of the former NCRA STRONG committee, a group of court reporters formed to research and educate the legal community, including fellow reporters, on the pitfalls and dangers of using Artificial Intelligence, such as Automatic Speech Recognition, and digital recording in the legal arena. When that committee was discontinued by NCRA, she and her fellow committee members

continued this important task under the independent banner of "Jeopardizing Justice," Mary being a founding member. Today this group of dedicated reporters are continuing their mission to fight for our profession and educate the legal community, to the benefit of us all. She was recently instrumental in securing a highly valuable speaking engagement before the American Board of Trial Advocates, also known as ABOTA, which is a national association of trial lawyers and judges. This opportunity opened the door to share the message of protecting and preserving the record to hundreds of attorneys and judges.

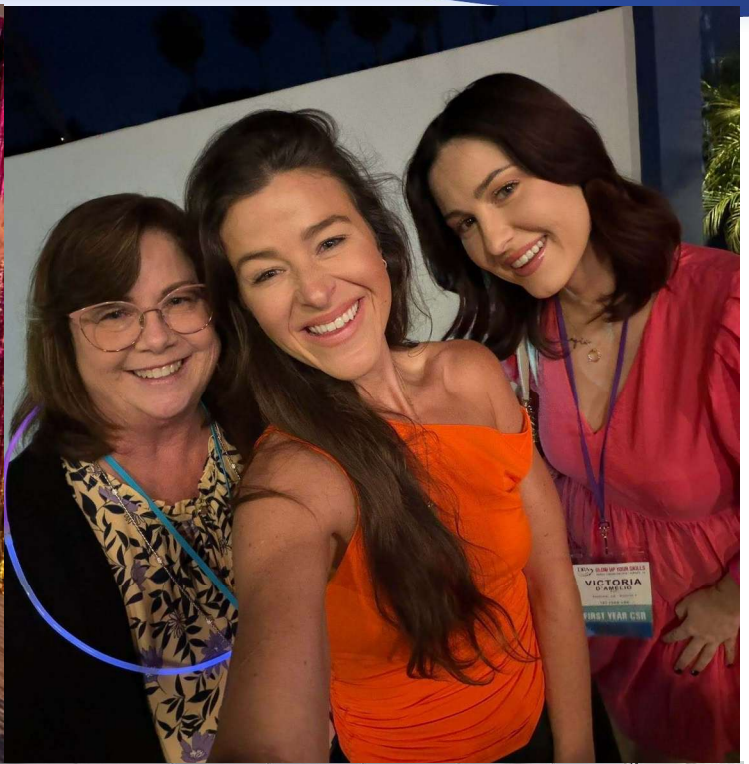
Our friend Mary is quite the wordsmith, having authored and co-authored two articles published in the Daily Journal aimed at educating attorneys of the risk of using the inferior method of digital recording in litigation, as well as how to ensure they are using a qualified court reporter for their litigation. If you haven't read these articles yet, you are really missing out, as they present great talking points that reporters can use when we ourselves have an opportunity to educate the attorneys that we work with.

Mary is one busy lady between reporting depositions, swimming, gardening, baking, and traveling with her partner Cindy, but she always makes time for our students who need internship hours, new reporters who have questions as they begin their careers, or even very experienced reporters who have a conundrum while working on a transcript or run into a bizarre situation at a depo. (Okay, it's me. I'm that experienced court reporter asking her for help).

On a personal level, Mary is someone other reporters can count on. Her care and concern for her friends and fellow reporters – and many of us are fortunate enough to be both – has been proven time and again. If you have an emergency, Mary may offer to jump in to cover your job for you. If you need professional advice, she will answer you between writing the Q and A. If your life takes a sudden left turn while you still have transcripts to finish (again, me!), she may offer to take over your backlog and complete your transcripts for you. And if you are VERY lucky, you may even be the recipient of one of her legendary pies. Mary THINKS she's going to slow down in her career these days, but she continues to be a force to be reckoned with, an outstanding reporter, as well as a dedicated mentor. I don't think she knows how to function in "low gear." She also is known to have a vast vocabulary and a very quick wit. Every time we chat I learn a new word or two from Mary. Often she will throw out a quote from a book I've never heard of, reminding me that Mary is what is known as "wicked smart." Every one of us in this room should strive one day to be as good of a court reporter, an advocate for our profession, and a person as my friend Mary Pierce is.

CalDRA's 2026 Annual Convention









Reporter Spotlight - Andrew Ha



ANDREW HA,
CSR No. 14537

How long have you been reporting?

Nearly 3 years. First job was October 13, 2023.

Where did you grow up?

Torrance, CA

Tell us about your family.

My dad loved to exercise, climb mountains, run marathons, play golf. He was chill and affable, a bit stoic but playful. We always said that he didn't look Korean; he looked like a movie star. My sister got his looks; I got mine from my mom. My mom loves to arrange flowers, play musical instruments, line dance, sing. She's organized and always goes the extra mile. Any amount of musical talent I have, I got from her. She's equal parts artistic and technical. My sister loves to draw, watch movies and tv. She's empathetic and hardworking. We go to the movie theater together almost every week. I got my respect for women from her.

How did you first get involved with DRA?

Probably the DRA picnic early in my schooling. I remember doing really well at the egg balancing race.

What do you like to do when you're not reporting?

I like to sing, cook, watch movies and tv, play story driven video games, play boardgames with friends, and hang out with fellow reporters.

What has been the highlight of your career?

First highlight is taking over my family's mortgage until we could stabilize after my dad passed away about a month after I got my license. We didn't have to worry about losing the house thanks to court reporting. Second highlight is taking my sister and cousin to Japan for three weeks. I was able to pay for all hotels, train rides, Disneyland, Universal Studios, and more.

If you could do it all over again, would you choose court reporting as a career?

Absolutely. I wish I could have gotten in sooner. 10 years sooner.

What is one professional accomplishment you'd still like to achieve?

I'd still like to study psychology formally. Also, I'd like a singing voice acting role. Let me be a Disney villain!

What's your cocktail order?

Some novel form of lemonade. I had the most devilishly amazing lemonade from a top floor fancy hotel restaurant in DTLA. They said they just made it from Pericone Farms lemonade mix. It was fizzy and tart.

Do you still practice on your machine?

Admittedly, not much.

What advice would you give to a struggling court reporting student?

Every time you feel like you've hit a wall, change something. Think about anything and everything you might be dreading to do, such as talk to your teacher or do more finger drills, and then go do that thing. Court reporting training is brain training, which means you are changing the structure of your brain. If you fall into a habit, your brain stops changing and starts reinforcing. You can also be practicing too much. Rest is just as important. If you're getting too much rest, then practice more. If you're doing too much practice, rest more. Confuse your brain.

If you couldn't be a court reporter anymore, what career would you choose?

Psychologist or voice actor.

If you could only eat one food for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Salmon.

Why is DRA membership important to you?

Court reporting school is scary. The state exam is scary. The real world is scary. You never quite feel you're ready for each step, but you've got to take each step anyways. What's scarier is doing all of that alone. Court reporting can be terribly isolating if you let it. All the answers to this career are found within the community. Why? Because they've had to answer the same questions. Receive and give in return.

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Who we are:

Behmke Reporting and Video Services, Inc. was established in 1989, and is owned and operated by California Shorthand Reporter, Paula Behmke, along with her daughter, Francey Behmke Garish.



We are based in San Francisco, and have been providing reliable and quality certified court reporting services for over 37 years.

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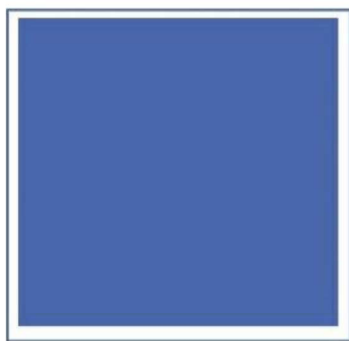
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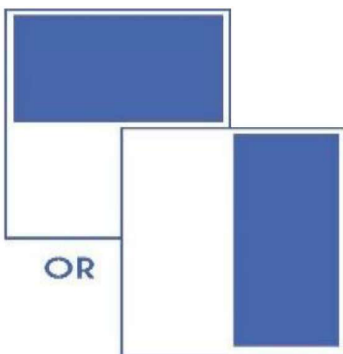
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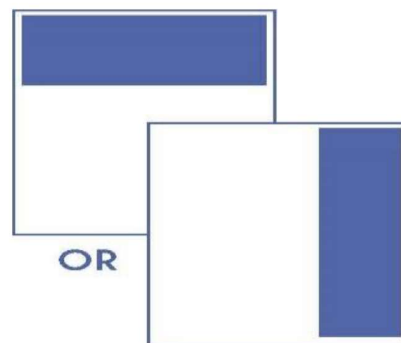
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