



## Interpreter's Corner

Our second episode of the Interpreter's Corner podcast is up. This month's episode is an interview Chantal Portillo, one of our newest Spanish Staff interpreters.

[Check it out!](#)



## Upcoming Dates

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our calendar of events is changing frequently. You will receive updates about changes to the calendar via email as we are able, but the best place to find a current schedule of events is on our online calendar.

[CLAS Online Calendar](#)

## Looking Forward

Uncertainty is something that we are all forced to deal with right now, and at Court Language Access Services things are no different. Technology is evolving, schedules are changing, and things are beginning to reopen. This uncertainty has led to some questions about the certification cycle for the remainder of the year:

- Is the Oral Exam still happening this summer?
- Will there be another Orientation session in the fall?
- Will there be another Written Exam this fall?

While we wish we had concrete answers for all of these questions, the truth is that we just don't know because it is too soon to tell. Our suggestion—act as if. For example, if you are planning on taking the Oral Exam this summer then continue to study as if it is happening on the scheduled date of August 29th. If you are planning on taking the Written Exam this fall, keep studying as if we will be offering the exam come fall. It is always better to be prepared and then have more time, than to not be prepared and then panic. We will notify you as soon as possible when decisions are made that have a direct impact on you. For the time being, remember “act as if.” Take care of yourself, stay safe and healthy!

## Spotlight On

Each month we are going to feature a member of CLAS staff to give you some encouragement and an idea of what it is like to work as an interpreter in court, or as a member of CLAS staff. This month, we are featuring José Torres, who is one of our Spanish interpreters on staff.

**CLAS:** Did you do any other kind of interpreting before becoming a court interpreter? If so, what kind and for how long?

**José:** Before I became a court interpreter, I mainly interpreted in academic settings: school districts events, college presentations. Also, I got to do conference interpreting covering environmental law, human rights, pharmaceuticals, and agriculture.

**CLAS:** How did you prepare to be a court interpreter?

**José:** Court observation was very helpful to get acquainted with the vocabulary, and the protocols particular to the courts. Perhaps what helped me the most (and still does) was the systematic creation and study of vocabulary. I recommend using flashcard apps on your smart device and computer.

**CLAS:** What are some of the biggest challenges you face while interpreting in the courtroom?

**José:** Not being able to hear well in some large courtrooms where acoustics is less than optimal. Also, vicarious trauma is something you need to deal with when interpreting cases where violence is at their core.

**CLAS:** What do you like most about being a court interpreter?

**José:** Providing my language skills, needed in the community. Learning from my colleagues from different cultures, and backgrounds.

**CLAS:** Any words of advice for prospective interpreters?

**José:** Welcome to a challenging, rewarding, and in-demand career!