

SIGNED LANGUAGE INTERPRETING PROGRAM

WELCOME TO THE 2025 EDITION OF OUR NEWSLETTER!

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FALL 2025

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

SIGNED LANGUAGE INTERPRETING PROGRAM

TRANSITIONS AND NEW BEGINNINGS FOR 2025

If you haven't heard, we are now located in the University Advisement and Enrichment Center basement. This is a temporary home for us until the new Humanities building is completed. If you have been on campus since September, you have seen the current demolition of the old Humanities building. The building to take its place promises to be a welcoming space and we look forward to moving into our new home in 3-4 years.

Some changes and additions to our faculty include a new director, Dawn Myers; a new full time lecturer, Monica Sower; new part time instructor Celso Martinez; and a new adjunct faculty member, Dana Murrah. As our team changes and grows, our dedication to our students and commitment to the Deaf and Hard of hearing community remains steadfast.

We want to congratulate the graduating class of 2025 and wish them well while we welcome the 2025 cohort of new majors.



CCIE REACCREDITATION

Great news! We are re-accredited!

Beginning in 2022 and continuing through 2024 the Signed Language Interpreting Program underwent its ten-year reaccreditation through the Commission on Collegiate Interpreter Education (CCIE). We conducted a self-study over 18 months, which was followed by a site visit from board members of CCIE. The self-study provided us with an opportunity to review and update our curriculum and pedagogical approaches and to evaluate the roles each of the faculty and staff has in the preparation of new interpreters.

The site visit included meetings with students, alumni, faculty, our practicum supervisors, and our community stakeholders. Pictured below is the community stakeholder forum. We are proud to report that the site visit was successful, the committee did not find any deficiencies, and they have re-accredited our program for ten years. We want to thank everyone who participated in the process; we could not have done it without the community support!



COMMISSION on COLLEGIATE
INTERPRETER EDUCATION

INTRODUCING THE 2025 NEW MAJORS



Bottom row from left: Brenyn Dils, Kylie Velasquez, Emily Schiller, Hephzibah Bouriaque, La Ban Hendricks, Kaleb Clark, MacKenna Perez, Karennny Gandara
Middle row from left: Veronica Duran, Sophia Hernandez, Ellie Carman, Lauren Nelson
Top row from left: Erin Potts, Rodney Lowery, Stephen Fackrell, Brandon Stanger-Hall

We are thrilled to introduce the 2025 cohort of Signed Language Interpreting majors. Many of this year's new majors discovered their love for interpreting and ASL right here at UNM while others have had a lifetime of experience with the Deaf community. However, all of them are connected by a shared excitement and commitment to dive deeper into our program's course work and a shared goal to become certified interpreters.

We welcome our new majors and look forward to participating in their educational journey.

2025 Phyllis Perrin Wilcox Scholarship Recipient

Each year one of our wonderful students is selected to receive the Phyllis Perrin Wilcox Scholarship. The 2025 recipient is Mark Sanchez.

Mark is from Espanola, New Mexico and came to UNM in 2020 to pursue a degree in Film. After taking an Introduction to Signed Language class during his sophomore year, he decided to minor in ASL. Upon learning more, Mark became intrigued by Deaf culture and the unique expressive quality and beauty of ASL. So, in 2024 after much encouragement from his professors he decided to pursue a second major in Signed Language Interpreting. He will graduate this May with a dual degree in Signed Language Interpreting and Film. After graduation, he hopes to work in various interpreting settings, and has even been entertaining the idea of interpreting on film sets. In his spare time, he enjoys movies, longboarding, photography, and spending time with friends and family.



CONGRATULATIONS MARK!

PLEASE CONSIDER GIVING TO THE PPW
SCHOLARSHIP. PLEASE VISIT THE LINK HERE:

PHYLLIS PERRIN WILCOX SCHOLARSHIP



2025 Research and Publication Award Recipient

Along with the Phyllis Wilcox Scholarship we also award one student with the Research and Publication Award. This award acknowledges a commitment to research within the Deaf community. We are pleased to announce that the 2025 recipient is Kayleigh Russell.

Kayleigh graduated from the Signed Language Interpreting Program in May 2025 and is now in the M.A. Linguistics program here at UNM. She is dedicated to serving the New Mexico community with her skills as an interpreter, and we are so happy to have her join the ranks of New Mexico interpreters.

We are proud of her many accomplishments and we cannot wait to see what her future holds!



CONGRATULATIONS KAYLEIGH!

NEW FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME FACULTY

MEET FULL-TIME INSTRUCTOR

MONICA SOWER

Monica graduated from the Signed Language Interpreting program in 2007 has been a practicing interpreter in the Albuquerque Metro area and across the state. She started teaching part-time at UNM in 2019 and is thrilled to now be a full-time lecturer in our program. Monica's teaching focus has been on the introductory courses, giving students a glimpse into what it means to be an interpreter and ally for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. As a working interpreter she hopes to use her knowledge and experience from the field to inspire future interpreters. When not working, Monica spends time with her husband and two children.



MEET PART-TIME INSTRUCTOR CELSO MARTINEZ

We are also excited to announce the addition of Celso Martinez as a part-time instructor.

Celso grew up in New Mexico and later moved east to attend Gallaudet University, where he earned both his Bachelor's and Master's in American Sign Language. He strongly believes in the importance of language access and in building meaningful connections between the Deaf community and the hearing world. He is currently back in his beloved home state to work at NMSD (New Mexico School for the Deaf) in the Outreach Program as an ASL Mentor and to teach ASL at UNM. In his free time he loves exploring new places. Feel free to talk to him about anime, manga, and Monster Jam! He wants to leave you with this: Someday, somewhere you can learn ASL and help each other make a difference in the world.



Staff Highlights: Behind the Scenes!

We are pleased to introduce our Administrative Staff for 2025:

Our staff includes our Administrative Assistant Marcella Garcia and two work study students, Jamie Williams and Jodi Willie, both Juniors in our program.

The Admin Office, located in UAEC B33 is here to help you with your program needs. The staff works closely with faculty to help with program advertising, coordinating events, and student data collection/storage. Marcella has been in the office since July 2024, and she has been involved with all program related things. She has assisted with the move from Humanities to the UAEC, Restricted Forms, events on campus, new major interviews, and more. Needless to say, she is experienced with the ins and outs of the program and is here to help! She has recently started graduate school online at Syracuse University for a Master's in Library and Information Science. In her spare time, Marcella likes reading, hanging out with friends and family, hiking, and giving her cat, Mo, a lot of attention.

In addition to working in our office, our work study students are also dedicated Signed Language Interpreting majors. They have taken on several projects like merchandise development, assisting with creating instructional materials, and helping with cute traditions like decorating our new major bulletin board. We are very happy to have them on our team.

Jamie and Jodi were both accepted into the program in 2024 and have been involved in many program events and classes. Jamie enjoys painting, learning more about interpreting, and watching movies. Jodi enjoys playing pool, trying new food in in Albuquerque, and eventually she wants to learn how to do magic tricks.

If you have any questions about the program or just in general, our office can be contacted by email at sign@unm.edu or by phone at (505)-277-0928



Marcella Garcia



Jamie Williams



Jodi Willie

New Staff Interpreter: Meet Liana Wingerd!



Liana Wingerd, a 2019 graduate of the SLI program is our new staff interpreter who also works closely with the Linguistics Department to provide interpreting services when needed. After graduation, Liana was awarded a full-time internship with UNM's SLI program and was able to find time to do some freelance work on the side. After receiving her NIC certification in 2022, she began freelancing interpreting full-time in New Mexico. Now, she is delighted to return to her roots as the staff interpreter here at UNM. In her free time, Liana enjoys going on walks with her dog, reading, and trying out new brunch and coffee spots with her friends and family.

Welcome back to the Signed Language Interpreting team, Liana!

Also, she would like you all to meet her dog Dori! She describes Dori as a lovable dog who acts like an old lady in a puppy body. She loves walks and hanging out with other dogs.



Intern Highlights: What's New?

Each year in spring, various agencies and community stakeholders visit the Practicum class to discuss interpreting opportunities in New Mexico with our students. From that, several agencies then advertise their apprentice and internship opportunities to our soon-to-be graduates. Those agencies hiring our graduates as interns routinely include The New Mexico School for the Deaf, The New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons, RGC Access, and The Rochester Institute of Technology.

Below are this year's 2025-2026 interns!

Hi, my name is Evelynna Johnson. I graduated from the UNM Signed Language Interpreting Program in May 2025. After graduation I began working as an intern with RGC-Access! I am now working as a full-time freelance community interpreter here in Albuquerque! Through my internship I have been participating in workshops, improving my interpreting skills, and I am working towards certification while connecting and continuing to build relationships with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community!



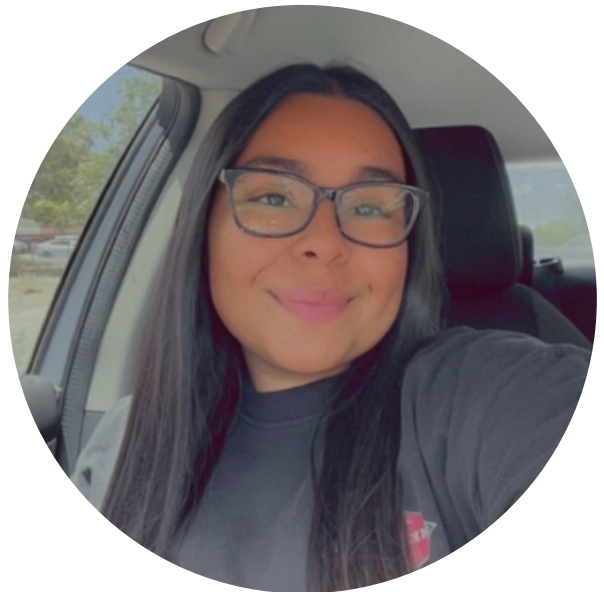
My name is Adri Anne Madsen, and I am currently completing an apprenticeship with the New Mexico Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. I work with various staff members, but most regularly with Jessica Eubank. Our focus includes understanding how the Commission advocates for and supports individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing, gaining insight into staff roles, and conducting an in-depth study of the Demand-Control Schema. There was not a whole lot for us to do over the summer, but now things sure are picking up!

Intern Highlights: What's New?



Hello my name is Jaricah (Jay) Gonzales and I am a part of the apprentice program at New Mexico Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Jessica Eubank is the coordinator for our interpreting & observation assignments. We are learning about what the Commission does as a state agency, while doing an in depth reading on the Demand-Control Schema. Jessica, our mentor, helps us lay out interpreting goals that we revisit & discuss every few weeks.

My name is Liliana Rey and I am currently an apprentice with the New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing. I work closely with Jessica Eubank. We are currently discussing the Demand and Control Schema and how it applies to us as interpreters.



Intern Highlights: What's New?



Hello my name is Demarie Espinosa! My internship with RGC-Access as a community interpreter has increased my receptive and expressive skills as well as learning new and important concepts in interpreting. My mentorship with Rebecca DeSantis is preparing me for my future and to pass the NIC.



We are so proud of all of our interns and can't wait to see what they do next!



Student Activities and Events

We had a great and busy year full of service learning and events for the students to participate in!



Deaf Art History
led by Sara Roybal
and hosted at the
Language
Learning Center!

Sign and Dine:
showcasing different
deaf creators,
students, and
instructors. Food
included of course!



Student Activities and Events



Interpreting Research Panels



New Majors Party 2025



Vision Day 2025



Earth Day Scavenger Hunt

Thanks for reading along!