
Vice-President South 2023-2024 Report (Samah Elzahaby, C. Trans., EN-AR)

Dear ATIA members,

This is my 7th year as a member of ATIA. I have been privileged to achieve certification as an EN-AR Translator, alongside the Associate designation as an AR-EN Translator, Community Interpreter, Medical Interpreter, and Legal/Court Interpreter. It has been an honor to serve the association in multiple capacities, including as a Member-at-Large, Associate Members' Representative, and a member of various committees—such as the Grants, Bursaries & Community Services Committee, the Title Protection & Public Relations Committee, and the Interpreters Committee. Last year, I was truly honored to be elected Vice President for Southern Alberta, assuming this two-year role with commitment and enthusiasm.

The 2023-2024 year has been exceptionally rewarding at ATIA, marked by vast learning and meaningful accomplishments. I began the year by meeting with two distinguished Alberta Ministers. At a public event in Calgary, I met with the Honorable Minister of Justice, Mickey Amery. Shortly thereafter, ATIA's President and I were invited to the office of Honorable Minister of Immigration and Multiculturalism, Mohamed Yaseen, in Calgary to discuss the significance of Title Protection and the vital need to regulate the profession of Translators, Interpreters, and Terminologists, with the aim of safeguarding the interests of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) communities.

In the subsequent months, I was privileged to teach a group of 20 internationally-trained physicians on community and medical interpreting at the Association of International Medical Graduate Doctors (AIMGA). During this period, I introduced ATIA to the trainees and to AIMGA's directors and coordinators. This connection led to an invitation for ATIA's President, Tania Therein, and the Chair of the Interpreters Committee, Shervin Ashraf, to deliver a presentation at AIMGA's head office, detailing the application steps for medical interpreter certification at ATIA.

Mid-year, I concentrated on outreach efforts targeting nonprofit organizations with limited resources for translation and interpretation services. This endeavor, part of my work on the Grants, Bursaries & Community Services Committee, aimed to support large communities of newcomers and individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and Languages of Lesser Diffusion (LLD). Notable organizations approached included women's shelters like Masaken and Sakina, the Calgary Youth Justice Centre, and the Mosaic Primary Care Network. The latter two organizations expressed strong interest in leveraging ATIA's free services initiative as a temporary support for their LEP clients.

Furthermore, ATIA's interpreters were invited to contribute to two prominent surveys on interpretation services in Alberta and Canada. One was conducted by MNP, an independent consulting agency engaged by the Alberta Government to evaluate and recommend updates to policies governing interpretation services in Alberta's courts. The second survey, led by McGill University, assessed the ongoing professional development needs of Canadian jurilinguists to guide the creation of a tailored Canadian Professional Development program.

By late summer, I became actively involved in establishing the inaugural National Union for Translators and Interpreters in Canada, Unifor—Interpreters and Translators Unit. This collaborative platform serves as a forum to address pressing issues related to working conditions for translators and interpreters across Canada and the broader goal of enhancing service quality for LEP communities nationwide. It has proven invaluable for exchanging expertise and networking with like-minded professionals across Canada.

In addition, I participated in the discussions that reviewed the required hours for On-Dossier Certification of Court Interpreters, resulting in updated requirements now posted on our website. I eagerly anticipate contributing to the forthcoming revisions for community and medical interpreters' certification hours in the next phase of my term as VP for Southern Alberta.

It was a privilege to represent ATIA at Edmonton Catholic Services, where I delivered a presentation on the profession of translation and interpretation, certification pathways, and membership levels. The presentation was well received by over 100 attendees and included a thorough Q&A session addressing the English proficiency test, the Code of Ethics, associate levels, and certification exams.

In the coming year, I look forward to continuing my journey alongside esteemed colleagues, dynamic staff, and welcoming new faces to our Board and Executive Council. Our collective goals include advancing On-Dossier Certification for Medical and Community Interpreters, advocating for title protection and regulatory measures, increasing membership, upholding professional standards, expanding professional development opportunities, and giving back to our community. Additionally, we are committed to supporting our associate members through enhanced training, funded community services initiatives, and expanded grants and bursaries, fostering a win-win dynamic for all stakeholders involved.

Sincerely,

Samah Elzahaby