

Court language interpreter oath ceremony scheduled for Feb. 11

February 2, 2015

Mississippi Supreme Court Chief Justice Bill Waller Jr. will administer the court interpreter's oath at 10 a.m. Feb. 11 to the first court language interpreter to be trained and certified under the state's own program. Galina Lobodina of Clinton, whose native language is Russian, will take the interpreter's oath during a ceremony at the Supreme Court Building at 450 High Street in Jackson.

Four recently registered court interpreters also will be recognized. Luis E. Diaz of Jackson, Herminia Leal of Gulfport, Blanca Love of Brandon and John D. Mora of Noxapater are registered Spanish language interpreters. The court will also recognize Hernan Silva Zetina of Memphis, who was recently accepted through reciprocity in Mississippi.

The Administrative Office of Courts developed the Mississippi Court Interpreter Credentialing Program to assist the courts in their endeavor to provide equal access to justice for limited English proficiency individuals. The AOC program provides judges in state courts with a list of language interpreters who have demonstrated proficiency in oral interpretation of court proceedings and sight translation of documents. The credentialing program provides two levels of proficiency: registered and certified. Becoming a certified interpreter represents the highest level of credentials issued by the state for court language interpreters.

"Access to justice is dependent upon having qualified interpreters, and the Mississippi Supreme Court's Administrative Office is very pleased to have our first certified interpreter to complete the credentialing process in our state's program," said Administrative Office of the Courts Deputy Director Ta'Shia S. Gordon.

Lobodina, 36, was born in Volzhsky, Russia. She graduated with honors from Volgograd State University with a specialist degree in teaching and interpreting and translating English. In 2004, she came to Jackson State University as an exchange professor to teach English as a second language to international students. She earned a master's degree in English from JSU in 2011. She currently works as an administrative assistant at the JSU Department of Chemistry and does freelance copy editing.

Lobodina said that Mississippi has a large Russian-speaking community. She is the state's only certified Russian language court interpreter. She looks forward to working to fill a need by Russian-speaking individuals with limited English proficiency.

Twelve interpreters are currently credentialed by the Administrative Office of Courts. Among the others, 10 speak Spanish, and one speaks Mandarin Chinese. Seven interpreters who were certified earlier were originally trained and credentialed in other states, then accepted through reciprocity in Mississippi. Four live in Tennessee.

Lobodina, Diaz, Leal, Love and Mora are the first who have been trained through the Administrative Office of Courts' own language interpreter program. AOC held its first training workshop in November 2011.

Upcoming Ethics and Skill Building Seminar dates are:

- June 17-18 in Long Beach at the University of Southern Mississippi Gulf Park Campus;
- October 7-8 in Tupelo at the Community Development Foundation Center.

For additional information about the court language interpreter program, contact Ta'Shia Gordon at 601-576-4632.

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