

CCRA *Connect*

S U M M E R 2 0 1 8 E D I T I O N



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MISSION STATEMENT

CCRA continuously leads our industry through legislative advocacy, educational opportunity, and professional inclusion. We actively protect and unify the freelance, CART/Captioning, official, and student communities.

CCRA CONNECT COPY DEADLINES

The deadline for ad and article copy for CCRA Connect is the first of the month prior to the scheduled publication date. Articles, ad copy, changes of address, complaints of nondelivery, and subscription requests should be directed to CCRA, 65 Enterprise, Aliso Viejo, CA 95656 or call (949) 715-4682. Advertising inquiries should also be directed to the Association office. Photographs accompanying articles should be RGB color JPEG files at least 600 pixels x 800 pixels with a resolution no less than 200 dpi.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



We did it! The Legislature has approved \$10 million to fund family law court reporters in our state. We await the Governor's signature. During my first Presidency back in 2008, CCRA was

fighting yet another ER bill that would have allowed electronic recording in family law courts. It was at that time that CCRA first proposed bill language to the legislature that would require court reporters in family law proceedings. Since then, essentially over the last ten years, our lobbyists have worked hard to educate the legislature, who now see the value in the "gold standard" of court reporting for the sensitive cases heard in our family law courts. This is a big win for family law litigants who so desperately need a record, and CCRA is proud to be their champion!

CCRA is working hard alongside the CRB to pass AB2084, which would require state court reporting firms to register with the CRB. This bill, of great import to freelancers and firm owners, will level the playing field so that all firms operating in California abide by the same rules and regulations.

Our CART/Captioning Committee has been working hard and having fun at various fundraising events! Most recently the committee hosted a Paint and Sip event in Sierra Madre (I think we have some budding artists among us!) and partnered with the Hearing

Loss Association of America at the Walk4Hearing in Long Beach. Both events were a blast and helped our committee raise funds to ensure that our hard of hearing community is provided CART services. Keep an eye out for our next event and join us!

Last but not least, please join us this October at CCRA's 108th convention! Registration is now open, so get your room early and sign up for the early bird special. This year we will be at the beautiful Omni Rancho Las Palmas Resort in Palm Desert October 5th through 8th. While learning skills to help you excel in your career, take advantage of the networking opportunities this convention provides! Nowhere else can you meet officials from around the state, freelancers with their plethora of knowledge about our job, CART/Captioners who fulfill the much-needed ADA-required service to our citizens in the hard of hearing community, and the future of court reporting – our students. Come enjoy the company of your peers while you hone your skills, re-energize, and refresh your love for this profession! I can't wait to see you there!

LACCRA SEMINAR SERIES 2018

LOG ONTO WWW.LACCRA.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER OR CALL 949-715-5481

Steno Briefs in Everyday Writing

SATURDAY, JULY 21, 2018

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 2018

Case Catalyst & StenoCat - Fine Tuning Your Realtime

SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 2018

NCRA Online Testing and Realtime Coach

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2018

E-Filing with Brian Clune, John Garnett of YesLaw and Diana Van Dyke

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2018

For additional information, please visit: laccra.org/upcoming-events

REGISTRATION FEES:

LACCRA MEMBERS \$125 • NONMEMBERS \$150 • STUDENTS \$25



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Meet You in the Desert!

By Rachel Barkume, CCRA President-Elect,
2018 Convention Chair

Your 2018 CCRA Convention Committee has been hard at work developing a rewarding, fun-filled, informative convention for this October in Palm Desert. We are thrilled to be visiting the Omni Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa. It is truly a desert oasis.

We've been sure to take your suggestions to heart in determining the best lineup we can provide for our members statewide and nationally! We will have all of the annual favorites, such as CAT software training, the Mock CSR for our CA students, skills testing to launch your career to the next level, and, of course, lots of networking!

Did you catch our e-mail that Early Bird Registration is now open? Remember, in California, we take care of you during your working vacation! The \$415 Early Bird Member Registration price covers two breakfasts, two luncheons, and five receptions. No extra cost to attend any networking event! CCRA is always striving to make our annual convention the most cost-effective convention to attend. We give you the content and the affordability.

Join us this October 5-8, 2018, in Palm Desert at the Omni! The full convention schedule will be released very soon, and we are confident you're going to love it. Thank you for supporting CCRA and investing in our future together. Come learn and play with us!

SAVE THE DATE



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108TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

OCTOBER 5-8, 2018

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GO TO WWW.CAL-CCRA.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION



You Won't Want to Miss This Convention

By Sandy Walden

The California Court Reporters Association invites you to join us for CCRA's 108th Annual Convention at the beautiful Omni Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa, Columbus Day weekend, October 5-8, 2018.

A relaxing oasis with a backdrop of mountains and palm trees, Omni Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa offers an ideal escape in the Coachella Valley. Revel in timeless comforts, classic conveniences, and modern technologies that have made this resort – just minutes from Palm Springs – a desired destination for a sun-drenched getaway.

Located in Rancho Mirage, California, The Omni RLP is convenient to Palm Desert's El Paseo with a shopping experience similar to Beverly Hills' Rodeo Drive, and fine dining at a stunning number of establishments. Set on 240 lush acres, the resort has three pools. Splashtopia

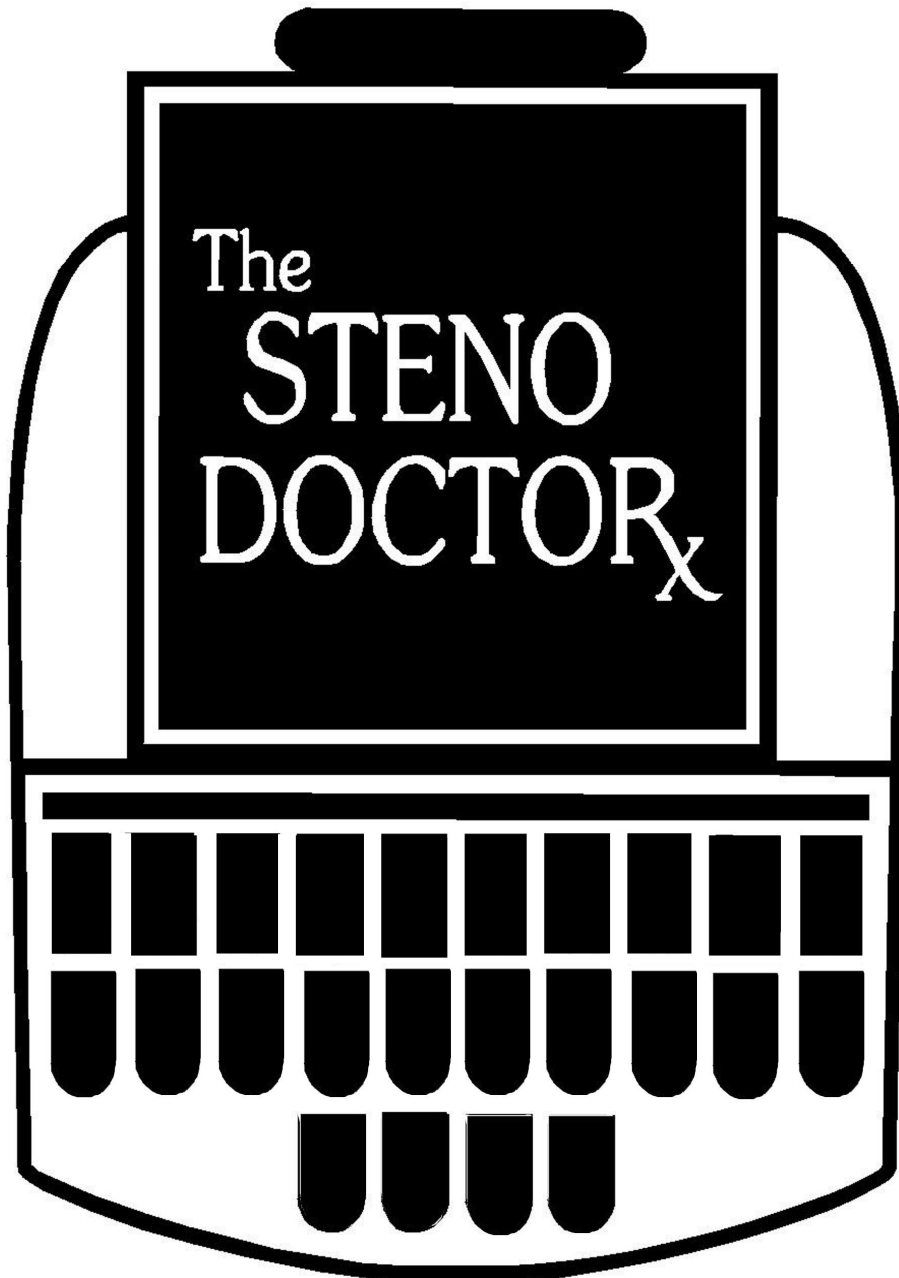
is a great kid attraction. The 2-acre water playground features a 450-foot lazy river, two 100-foot water slides, cliff-side Jacuzzi, sandy beach.

There is plenty to do at this wonderful resort. Take time for yourself and replenish your body and soul at the 20,000-square-foot spa with a special CCRA discounted rate. The 27 holes of championship golf will challenge amateurs and pros alike with palm tree-lined fairways and incredible mountain vistas.

Pamper yourself while learning the latest in technology as it relates to the Court Reporting profession and see the industry's premier vendors in the exhibit hall. Enjoy the many networking sessions.

Ninety-five percent of last year's convention participants said they would recommend the CCRA convention to others. Make sure you don't miss this wonderful event! We look forward to meeting you there!

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Call for Nominations

Join the CCRA Board of Directors

Each year, our membership elects new leaders to guide CCRA and the court reporting profession. We need strong, creative leaders we can rely on to set the direction of our industry. These leaders require vision, creativity, and the ability to anticipate and adapt to change. They must be decisive and strong enough to make necessary changes while still retaining the ability to be flexible.

If you ever wanted to be a part of the change, now is your time to act!

Are you someone, or do you know someone, who is devoted to the mission of CCRA, the stability of the reporting profession, and who is willing to shape our profession as it evolves? If so, we want you on our board of directors!

The Nominating Committee of CCRA is looking for freelance, official reporters, and CART/Captioners to serve as officers and members of the Board of Directors for 2018-2019.

Click visit <https://www.cal-ccra.org/bod-nominations#/> to access the nomination form. Submit your nomination by Friday, July 20, 2018.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

In the California Budget, the Legislature has approved \$10 million to fund family law court reporters in our state. By approving this allocation, the legislature has declared that family law proceedings should have an accurate record and that court reporters are the record keepers in the State of California. We await the Governor's signature.

- › **AB 2084** (Kalra) Freelance – requiring out of state corporations to abide by CA regulations. Has passed through the Assembly. Now in the Senate Appropriations Committee.
- › **AB 2531** (Gallagher) CART Providers: hearing impaired – Has passed through the Assembly. Now in the Senate Appropriations Committee.
- › **AB 2757** (Reyes) Transcript Rate Increase – Has passed through the Assembly. Now in the Senate Appropriations Committee.
- › **AB 2354** (Rubio) Court Reporters in Family Law – Has passed through the Assembly. Now in the Senate Judiciary Committee.
- › **SCR 95** (Jackson) Court Reporters Resolution – Chapter 17 – Filed with Secretary of State on March 6, 2018.
- › **AB2664** (Holden) CSR in civil – Has passed through the Assembly. Now being discussed by the Senate.



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CALLING ALL STUDENTS!

CCRA Mock CSR

To help you prepare for the upcoming CSR Exam this July, CCRA will once again be offering the Mock CSR Skills Exam. And, to be sure ALL students are included, we will hold the exam in both Northern & Southern California locations!

Program Information

The day will be highlighted by a special Q&A panel with working reporters from all aspects of our profession. Come with your questions and get inspired! Hear our own Bob Sullivan read and do his best to demystify all that goes into that incredibly important window to an amazing career – the CSR Test!

You will take the mock exam, which will mimic the actual CSR testing process, from lining up, getting your seat number, and gaining that much-needed insight which will pay off when you do experience the real thing.

Schedule

8:00 am	Registration Opens Continental Breakfast & Networking
9:00 am – 10:00 am	Mock CSR Skills Exam
10:00 am – 11:00 am	Q & A panel with working reporters

Test Locations

Southern California

Saturday, June 23, 2018
Downey Adult School
12340 Woodruff Avenue
Downey, CA 90241

Northern California

Saturday, July 7, 2018
Humphrey's University
6650 Inglewood Avenue
Stockton, CA 95207

Registration

\$29 for CCRA Student Member
\$49 Student Non-Member*

* Includes CCRA membership for one year with registration.

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Another Successful Walk4Hearing

By Saba McKinley

CCRA participated in the Hearing Loss Association of America's annual Walk4Hearing on Saturday, June, 9, 2018 in Long Beach. I had such pride in my heart as I shared this day with family, friends from church, people I know from working so closely with HLAA as a captioner for two chapters, and CCRA's overall involvement.

My biggest surprise was being joined on the Walk by Lynn Bright and her daughter Catherine. I've known Lynn since her daughter was in high school. Our paths crossed when I was a board member for CCRA in 2013. I was the chairperson of the CART/Captioning committee. It was important to me to learn as much as I could regarding CART captioning and the needs of people with hearing loss. As I did my research, I learned that Lynn had won a court battle to obtain CART services for her daughter. Her court case set a precedent in the state of California. Lynn and I have been good friends since we met.

I was so surprised and overjoyed when, as I turned around after a tap on the shoulder, there was Lynn at the

Walk. She said she and her daughter were participating. We talked the full length of the 3.1 miles. It was great catching up with her.

I told her that CCRA was a sponsor and had a table at the Walk and that the president of CCRA was here, Carolyn Dasher. She said, "Make sure you introduce me to her!" The introduction was made, a great conversation was had, and we snapped some photos. I think this is the beginning of a great working relationship!

The collaboration of consumers, who self-advocate, the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), and CCRA, will help to foster new legislation for people with hearing loss and increase awareness of what CART captioning is and why it is so important to millions of Americans.

My heart was full as I reflected on my vision of captioning inclusion as part of CCRA. Watching people interact with Carolyn and Regina at our sponsorship table was a reminder to me of what's good in our world, the joy of helping one another.

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Let's Talk About Rate Sheets

By Aimee Edwards-Altadonna

Freelancers, I thought that might get your attention. Now, to be clear, I don't want to talk about rates or anything that may fall into the antitrust arena, but I do want to talk about how to have cogent and effective conversations with firms as you accept work or decline work. The market today is fast-paced and ever-changing, and the only constant I see in California is the vast, endless need for well-trained, professional reporters.

Reporters are in the driver's seat now more than ever, and now is the time to make sure you are negotiating rates that take into account the climate and payment commensurate with your worth. That being said, it is important to look at the rates offered to you by a firm in whole. You can't judge a firm by page rates alone. There is so much more that needs to be looked at to truly get a full picture of the job you're being offered.

Does this firm pay a per diem or hourly rate on top of page rates? Many firms up and down California (and even the out-of-state firms) are doing this more frequently. Make sure you're asking for and getting fairly compensated for your time. These per diems or hourly rates help to offset travel costs and shorter jobs that don't end up being all you hoped they would be. When a firm offers up per diems and/or an hourly rate on top of an acceptable page rate, that moves a firm up on my list as a firm I want to work with.

Also, make sure you are being reimbursed for parking and exhibit shipping. I know this seems like a no-brainer, but there are firms out there that aren't paying reporters for these costs. Parking is a direct pass-through back to the client and is seen as a normal and customary fee. Firms are making money off exhibits, but the reporter doesn't make anything on them. Ask for and expect to be reimbursed for exhibit shipping and parking.

Let's talk about payment turnaround times. It used to be common to wait to be paid for your work until the firm was paid – and that could be for the whole job or just the copies. This is no longer the norm. It is still

offered out there, but many firms are paying reporters in a timely fashion. One week, two weeks, and in full for all copies right up front is becoming expected and more commonly paid. Payment in full within 30 days is also pretty standard. Payment within 30 days of turn in and in full is on my personal rate sheet. Seek out those firms that pay quickly. Personally, the firms that pay in full within two weeks shoot to the top of my list. Waiting for cash to flow again after pushing out an expedite and paying your scopists and proofers is not something you have to accept anymore. You do not have to bear the burden of financing someone else's litigation costs. Get your cashflow back in your pocket faster by negotiating more favorable payment turnaround times.

What about turnaround times for delivering the transcript? Are you working for firms that have slowly gone from 10 business days to 10 calendar days, 8 business days, or 7 business days? Quit it! This is another added burden and cost passed on to the working reporter. Now is the time to push back a bit and get those 10 business day turnarounds back to the usual and customary. There is so much work going uncovered, and at least part of it is because reporters are tied down by shorter and sometimes impossible turnaround times considering the workload most of us are taking on to get jobs filled and help the firms we love. We are human and need to have time to have a life outside of court reporting. A 10-12 business day turnaround would allow for reporters to take more jobs and give breathing room. I am not saying this will change overnight, but a girl can dream, and this girl dreams of just a little more time to get it all done while getting out there and taking more jobs. It's a win-win-win for all.

There is so much more to a rate negotiation than just the page rates. You really have to look at the whole rate sheet that is offered to you. Have your own personal rate sheet ready to send back or to send first as a starting place when you're offered a job. I know when I take a job at my rate sheet, I am happy and have myself

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covered for pretty much every contingency. But I also negotiate with each firm's specific line items on my rate sheet if it is a sticking point for them. Maybe they can agree to 90% of the sheet but need you to compromise a little on the minimum transcript fee. (These should be paid per transcript, not per job. And you should have a minimum for your copy orders too.) I am happy to meet in the middle on certain elements of a rate sheet. Maybe this firm really needs things back in 9 business days but they pay in full in 14 days and have great work – okay. Sold. I can work with that.

Lastly, don't become so set on your rates being THE RATES that you let good work slip by. Build a solid relationship with the firms you want to work with and give yourself a raise while remaining professional as you run your own business as a business. Slowly phase out those firms that you're not happy working with and form new relationships with firms that offer work at the rate you feel is commensurate with your skill. If you're unhappy with rates you agreed to with a firm in the past and dread working with them for that reason, shoot them a quick email with your new rates that says something like, "I have updated my rates as attached. Please acknowledge via email and make note for future reference. I look forward to working with you again soon." Start a dialogue and maybe your least favorite firm will become your new favorite firm!



CCRA's Paint and Sip Fundraiser Was a Huge Success!

Reporters along with their friends and family had a wonderful time painting a field of flowers on May 19th at this fun event. Our CART/Captioning Committee hosts these fun fundraisers as a way to build a fund to provide CART services for the hard of hearing community. Paint and Sips are a great way to spend the afternoon with fellow reporters, friends and family. Kelly Moreau from Kelly Gets Artsy guided the group in their painting, turning our empty canvases into our own private masterpieces! CCRA hosted a Paint and Sip at a restaurant during the convention last year in Newport Beach. On May 19th, President Carolyn Dasher hosted a Paint and Sip at her home near Pasadena. Contact CCRA today if you have a location for a Paint and Sip in your area!



Learning to Leave Me Alone

By Jennifer, Freelancer by Day, Night,
and Even on the Weekends

Mother's Day – the day we mothers should be honored, cherished, and catered to.

The Real Mother's Day – it's no different than last Thursday...or Tuesday...or any day, really. Because we moms are needed around the clock; right?

My daughter never asks me what I want as a gift for the occasion. She's always been fantastic at coming up with great ideas – almost always something homemade – and she knows it's never been about the gift, but about how we spend the day. So, when this one rolled around, we chatted about spending the day together, enjoying each other's company, and not focusing on the everyday tasks that seem to always be sitting on our shoulders, waiting for our attention.

In the life of a court reporter, especially a freelancer, we are often inundated with round-the-clock text messages, emails, and phone calls asking us to cover a job, turn in a transcript, etc., and it will eventually take a toll on you, if you let it. For some reason, in my quest to become an excellent reporter, an award-winning single mom (is there such a thing?), and a board member of my state trade association, I stopped disconnecting from my responsibilities to spend time connecting with my loves in life.

But the truth is you can't connect with the things you love in life if your damn cell phone is vibrating, beeping, ringing, or singing while you're trying to enjoy them. So

I made an executive decision – I turned the phone OFF. I'm not kidding. I turned the phone off completely. Not on silent, mind you – OFF – and for eight whole hours that day.

And guess what happened. Nothing. Not a single thing happened during those eight glorious hours that I felt compelled to apologize for having turned the phone off. There was no email announcing I had 30 minutes to collect my prize money from Ed McMahon. I didn't receive any frantic voicemails from anyone stranded by the side of the road. I didn't have any text messages that had required my immediate attention.

It was weird at first. Out of habit, I caught myself glancing at it just sitting on the end table, wondering if I should have just put it on silent so I could still check the screen for notifications from time to time. But then as the day wore on, that anxiety about not being immediately and constantly connected to those outside my presence turned into a glorious feeling of freedom. I was free to give 100% of my attention to what was right in front of me all those nights I was editing like a madwoman, trying to get an expedite turned in, spending an hour on a conference call, or checking and answering emails until late at night: my daughter. She deserved the undivided attention. It was long overdue. And I deserved to disconnect. It was long overdue.

This year for Mother's Day, I gave myself an amazing gift: I learned how to leave me alone.

I highly recommend it. The power button is usually located on the right.

Taming the Work Bag Beast

By Mike Hensley

Any freelancer might tell you that one of the struggles they deal with most is handling their equipment bag. It's our mobile office. It's our life on the go. Sometimes it can be the miracle that saves the day, and other times it can be the thing that makes you cry when you have to take the stairs instead of the escalator. I'd like to share with you some methods and tricks I've used in order to tame the beast that I carry with me every day.

First off, you need a bag that can accommodate what you need to have with you. Sure, some bags can be really cute. However, they hold maybe a laptop along with a set of keys and nothing more. Personally, I went outside of normal thinking and invested in a bag that is designed to be the "ultimate workmate." My particular bag is a large, cube-shaped bag with pockets built into the top, front, and sides and has a large, open storage compartment.

Some of you may be thinking, "That's great, but I need compartments!" Have no fear, friend. An important philosophy I've adopted is that everything must have a space. How does one achieve this when compartments are not available? Packing cubes. There are several different styles and brands of packing cubes available on the market these days. They're flexible, durable, and a great way to create some boundaries.

Along with packing cubes, I also have found it most helpful to incorporate Velcro straps for cable management. Now, in a pinch, you could certainly use rubber bands or some similar type of elastic bands, but Velcro straps work very well for me. They were easy to find, and it was rather cheap to purchase a bulk amount of them. It's also helpful to trim down those Velcro straps so that you can quickly bundle and secure your cables.

In addition to packing cubes, there are many other options out there that can help you as long as you're willing to be creative. Have you considered using pill organizers? It's true. The pill organizers you can get from the pharmacy are a great way to store and organize small items like office supplies, ear buds, microphones, and more. What about that spare makeup bag or camera bag that sits in your closet collecting dust? That can also be helpful for reporter gear.

Once you have your cables bundled and your containers ready to store, you'll need to be able to quickly and efficiently access your equipment. It's time for the label maker. Have you often found yourself mumbling during setup for a job and asking your cables, "Which item do you plug into?" As much as I would hope they would respond, they don't. To solve that issue, make a quick label that reminds you what item the cable connects with and attach it right on the cable itself. This is also very helpful for any power adapters you might have to bring along with you. Remember to also put a label on any container you might carry so that you can easily identify what's inside.



When it comes to exhibits, freelancers need to be ready for anything. Invest in a sturdy folder to use for holding exhibits. The one I use is a plastic, accordion-style folder. I recommend plastic so that in case you're stuck in rain (or some other potential water hazard) and you have to carry exhibits on the outside of your bag, the exhibits will also stay safe. Another great idea for exhibits involves those awesome bags you get at conventions or conferences. You know the kind: a drawstring bag with straps/strings that let you wear the bag like a backpack. These bags are excellent to carry with you, because when they're empty, they take up virtually no space whatsoever. I find these to be really handy for those days when I have to lug around a binder

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of exhibits that is too large for my plastic folder.

Once you have all of your gear organized, it's important to be able to find your equipment efficiently and to be able to put it away efficiently. Practice packing and unpacking your bag a few times so that the process becomes smooth and effortless. Soon enough, you'll find that what used to take you loads of time will be done in a flash.

Lastly, remember to bring with you the equipment that helps you do your job the best. If there's something that you don't need to bring with you all the time, consider keeping it in a separate backpack or what I call a "Go Bag" that you can pick up and grab on the fly because it always stays packed and ready.

As a freelancer, I find that it helps to have all of my equipment with me and ready so that I can always offer additional services to my clients to meet their needs and impress them with my preparedness. With the ideas I've described, you too can have all of your toys available at a moment's notice so that you can be prepared for success.



One Year Down

By Lauren Biggins

Diving into the freelance world of court reporting as a brand new reporter can be a little bit intimidating and stressful. When you find out that you passed that ever so daunting CSR exam, you're on top of the world. No one can stop you, until you realize it's time to step foot into the working world. Instead of light boards and ten-minute dictation tests, it's time to face busy attorneys and nervous witnesses. I'm here to tell you, everything will be okay.

My name is Lauren Biggins, and I just finished my first year as a working reporter. To those just entering our wonderful profession, I have a few words of advice.

First and foremost, find a mentor. Make friends that are also court reporters. Find out when CCRA is having events, sign up, and introduce yourself to new people when you get there. I promise you there are so many experienced reporters who love giving new reporters advice. New CSRs are the future of this career that so many working reporters love and are fighting to protect. They want you to succeed just as much as you want to yourself.

Secondly, it's okay that you don't know everything on your first day. Just know that you passed the test, you have the license, and you are qualified to do that job. This was the most trying part of my first year. Don't be intimidated by new situations that may arise. Part of the beauty of freelancing is that every day is different. You meet new people every day, go to new places, and you never stop learning. So while your first day, first month, and even first year can seem impossible to conquer, you will get through it, and it will be the most rewarding year of your life.