

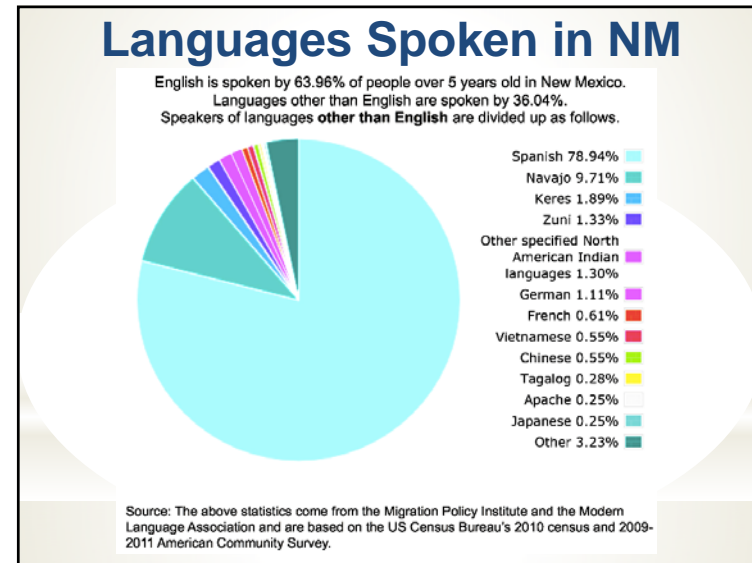
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## Bilingual Judiciary Employees Training and Certification Program

**New Mexico  
Judiciary**  
Administrative Office  
of the Courts

**Paula Couselo-Findikoglu**  
Senior Statewide Program Manager  
Language Access Services

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## Legal Basis for Language Access Outside the Courtroom

- ✓ Title II of ADA,
- ✓ Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964,
- ✓ NM Supreme Court Rules,
- ✓ "DOJ policy – *Equal access "at all points of contact."*

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## Resources Outside the Courtroom

- ✓ *I-speak* cards for language identification,
- ✓ On-demand remote interpreting,
- ✓ Multilingual signage,
- ✓ Trained bilingual staff – **Language Access Specialists.**

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### Language Access Specialist Supreme Court Rule Definition

“...a bilingual employee of the New Mexico Judiciary who is recognized in writing by the **Administrative Office of the Courts** as having successfully completed the **New Mexico Center for Language Access Language Access Specialist Certification program** and is in compliance with the related **continuing education requirements...**”

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### Compensation Increase for Bilingual Personnel

“A certified bilingual employee shall be given an increase of \$1.00 per hour in addition to an employee's regular hourly rate of pay. This increase shall be in addition to the employee's base pay.”

“The increased compensation required for a certified bilingual employee shall be funded within the Judicial Entity's appropriation (...).”

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### Language Access Specialist Certification



- ✓ 12-week online instructor-led program,
- ✓ Application process – *language skills and demand for services in the court,*
- ✓ Continuing Education Requirements – *webinars and symposium offered yearly,*
- ✓ Pay differential.


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### Language Access Specialist Training

- ✓ *Over 100 certified employees statewide;*
- ✓ Direct communication with LEP customers;
- ✓ Interpreting for LEP customer and other court staff – *outside the courtroom;*
- ✓ *Cultural competency, customer service, legal terminology, ethics and best practices.*

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## Making an Impact



*“... An elderly Navajo couple have been working Pro Se in a Guardianship case. They stated it’s not so intimidating to come to court to handle their family issues. I am thankful to be able to assist Navajo speaking parties and customers (...) I am confident the people are receiving the same level of service as English speaking customers.”* Charlene Henry Smith, LAS, 11th Judicial District Court

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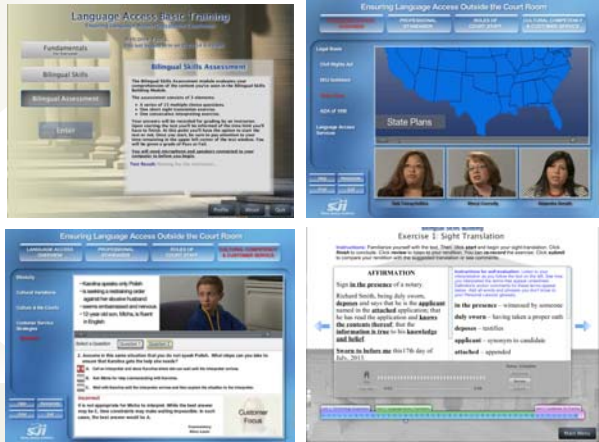
## Language Access Basic Training Suite

- ✓ Also supported by the Language Access Advisory Committee of the Council of State Court Administrators (COSCA),
- ✓ 3 Modules:
  - ✓ Fundamentals Module – *for everyone*,
  - ✓ Bilingual Skills-Building,
  - ✓ Bilingual Skills-Assessment –*Optional*.


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## Language Access Basic Training Suite – Sample Screens



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## Lessons Learned



- ✓ Setting priorities and having action plan;
- ✓ Being creative to overcome challenges – *collaboration, technology use*;
- ✓ Support from NM Supreme Court;
- ✓ As program grows, “pieces fall into place” and resources are put to use.