

“For the Record”

The Canadian Centre for Verbatim Studies

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Volume III Issue III

Congratulations C CVS Graduates!

The Canadian Centre for Verbatim Studies (CCVS), Canada’s only private career college dedicated to the training of court reporters, held its first graduation ceremony on October 21st at 6 p.m.

“I couldn’t be more proud,” says CCVS founder Kimberley Stewart. “It is a reward as much for our school as it is for our graduates. We’ve worked hard to get the school up and running, and to see our graduates working in the field is just very gratifying.”

The ceremony took place in the offices of ASAP Reporting Services in the prestigious Bay Adelaide Centre. ASAP Reporting is considered one of the leading court reporting agencies in the world. Guest speakers included CCVS Board member Teresa Forbes, Laura Bai-



CCVS Graduates (l to r): Rene Cheng, Elisa De Angelis, Cynthia Yan, Christal Chan, Jason Wall, and Victoria Janda

ley from the Ontario Association of Career Colleges (OACC) and Victoria Janda, one of the graduating students, who reflected on her time at CCVS.

CCVS welcomed its first students in January of 2008. The school was founded by Kimberley Stewart to meet the desperate need in an industry which requires a new generation of work-ready court reporters.

“The mandate of our school is to meet the demand for new, qualified court reporters,” says Stewart.

“This graduating class represents a great first step, but we still have a long way to go to address the need and better protect the integrity of the record.” ■

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See page 4 for the CCVS Graduation Address by Victoria Janda

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Kimberley Stewart - CCVS President

Message from the President

The 2010-2011 fall and winter seasons at CCVS marked a tremendous period of growth. It was a proud moment for me to introduce seven CCVS graduates during our inaugural graduation ceremony. They have already worked on compelling cases in a variety of environments from legal hearings to court proceedings to U.S. presidential speeches. This is the dream-come-true of our efforts at CCVS. While many students are still working toward graduation speed, we have continued to observe exceptionally talented writers complete the program and go on to work.

Our growth in student enrolment is also a testament to the growing awareness of the career potential in the reporting field. Both September 2010 and January 2011 were record-breaking in terms of student enrollment for these intake periods. We are pleased that the improvements to our courses will help our students to acquire even more specialized training. Having personally witnessed students transition into professional reporters, I was able to assess how their education prepared them for work, which has ultimately resulted in improvements in the courses we deliver. CCVS is so grateful for the contribution that our graduates have provided in helping us make our program even better for future cohorts.

In this edition of *For the Record*, I invite all to share in our students' accomplishments and learning endeavors. I hope our ability to support them in attaining their career goal continues to improve and motivate them towards greater success. ■

New Staff Addition: Kimberley John - Registrar

In October 2010 CCVS was happy to welcome its new Registrar, Kimberley M. John. Kimberley comes to CCVS with 10 years of progressive experience in the fields of career development and Enhanced Language Training (ELT) program administration.

An honours level graduate of the University of Guelph (majoring in Sociology with a minor in Family & Child Studies) Kimberley has also earned Career and Work Counsellor Diploma (Hon.) from George Brown College. It is the unique pairing of Kimberley's theoretical and experiential background which enables her to address both the concrete and affective needs of prospective and current CCVS students.



New Staff Addition: Sarah Elliott - English Instructor



CCVS is also pleased to welcome Sarah Jane Elliott to our staff. Sarah is a part of our English team in addition to being a Canadian author of Speculative Fiction, and biologist. She currently holds an Honours Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of Toronto, specializing in Zoology and Behaviour. Sarah holds a Bachelor of Education Degree from York University's Diversity and Social Justice Teaching Program, specializing in teaching Science, and is a member of the Ontario College of Teachers.

In 2001 Sarah was one of the winners of the Isaac Asimov Award for Undergraduate Excellence in Science Fiction and Fantasy Writing (now the Dell Magazines Award for Undergraduate Excellence in Science Fiction and Fantasy Writing), earning an Honourable Mention for her short story, "To Soothe the Savage Beast". She has published fiction and non-fiction for use in an educational setting. When not writing, Sarah is also a teacher at the Royal Ontario Museum.

The New Wave in Technology

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In May 2010 Stenograph launched its new student writer: *The Wave*. CCVS sat down with Judy Wolf, Product Manager, to find out more about this exciting new product.

CCVS: What prompted the decision to discontinue the élan Cybra® and develop the Wave®?

Stenograph: Professional reporters and court reporting students have always looked to Stenograph for the highest quality, most technically advanced solutions for their writing needs. With the rapid changes in the technology world, it's critical for Stenograph to be constantly seeking better solutions and developing new products. It's important to ensure that reporters have the right tools to produce the record with the most efficient means possible. It's also important to ensure that electronic parts within the machines do not become obsolete, making the service of the machines expensive or impossible. In the case of the Wave®, students will be writing on the most advanced student writer ever made. The Wave® boasts today's top technology such as large, vibrant color display; lightweight materials; and near-infinite keyboard and individual key adjustability. And the Wave's® built-in TrueStroke technology provides the most accurate and comfortable writing results ever possible. The Cybra is a great machine but the Wave®... well, it's the Wave of the future.

CCVS: How does the Wave® differ from the élan Cybra®? (key features)

Stenograph: There are two primary differences between the Wave® and the élan Cybra®. The first is the contact adjustments. In the élan

Cybra®, contacts are adjusted on each key using AccuDial technology. You lift the lid of the writer and turn a wheel which represents a letter on the keyboard to make it more or less sensitive. If you are dragging your L into outlines where it doesn't belong, you can lower the contact on that key. If you're missing the final S too frequently, raise that key slightly. The Wave® uses TrueStroke technology (see Q3). Besides contact adjustments, the other big difference is the large color LCD on the Wave®. Feedback from students and teachers on the Cybra told us that while it was great for writing realtime to a computer, when you aren't connected you feel like you are writing blind.

With the Wave® writer, you see your steno right on the display and can go back to look at previous notes and scroll for reading back.

CCVS: What is TrueStroke technology and why is it advantageous to have on a student writer?

Stenograph: For most people, just turning on the Diamante® or Wave® writer and enjoying the improved translation rate made possible by TrueStroke™ technology is all they want. But for those wanting to take fuller advantage of the benefits associated with TrueStroke, they can take a look at TrueStroke data and find how to even further enhance translation and minimize editing time.

TrueStroke technology is a sophisticated algorithm that tracks and records the direction of travel and velocity of each steno character in every steno outline. The Diamante® and Wave® use this information to generate the most accurate translation

possible. TrueStroke data becomes a dynamic editing tool when displayed in Case CATalyst; or as a learning and teaching tool in the stand-alone utility, TrueView. Not unlike paper notes from traditional steno machines, each stroke is depicted by a graphical display of all keys pressed during that stroke. But unlike paper, TrueStroke actually captures the entire movement of each key including its velocity to improve translation.

CCVS: When was the Wave launched, and what response has it received from students and instructors?

Stenograph: The Wave® writer was introduced around May of 2010. The reaction from teachers and students has been very positive. Teachers like that the Wave® has all of the benefits of paperless technology while also offering feedback that used to be exclusive to paper machines. Students are also excited about training on the same technology as the fabulously popular Diamante® writer. Who couldn't feel great about working on such a technical achievement that looks as good as it works? ■



*Special Thanks to Judy Wolf
& Karen Peck of Stenograph.*

CCVS Graduation Address by Victoria Janda



I am deeply grateful for the time I spent at CCVS. When I first decided that I wanted to become a court reporter, it was exciting, but also extremely overwhelming. Everything was new and foreign and way over my head. Trying to grasp the concept that the word “and” was now spelled SKW, the lack of a space bar, and especially the fact that I couldn’t even look at my screen are just a few examples. As daunting as all of this once seemed, I can honestly say that after the two years I spent at CCVS, I have never felt so prepared for anything in my life. The job is definitely not easy, but the skills that I acquired during my time at CCVS are with me every day and can never be taken away.

The staff and faculty were invaluable during the learning process, giving us all of the educational tools that we would need to exceed in our new careers, teaching us how to maintain a work life balance by organizing fun activities like field trips and scavenger hunts, and always assuring us that with enough practice and dedication, we would get to where we need to be. The lessons and advice that we received from veteran reporters, who took time out of their busy schedules to come and speak to us, helped us realize that this was possible, and gave us a better idea of what a day in the life would be like once we finally got out of the classroom.

The job is definitely not easy, but the skills that I acquired during my time at CCVS are with me every day and can never be taken away.

Having entered the unfamiliar world of court reporting alone, I can honestly say that I was not alone during the process. The friends I made in my fellow students were an incredible source of support during the learning process. I don’t know if any of us could have done it alone, and I am proud to be part of such a fantastic group. We were always there for each other to help, to support, to laugh, to cry, and most importantly, to swap shorts. There was always someone there to help when you couldn’t figure



out how to write “integrity” or “substantiate”, when your blue dongle just wouldn’t connect, when you needed to vent, when you needed to boast, and when you just needed a good laugh to get through the day. It was that camaraderie and solidarity that helped us all get to where we are today, and that is still helping us get through every day now that we are working

As much as the idea of going back to school and learning a completely new trade may seem intimidating at times, CCVS does an amazing job of preparing you for the real world of court reporting. It is a life change that will be one of the best decisions you will ever make. ■

Student Profile: Amy Harkness - Online Graduate

My name is Amy Harkness. I recently completed the online program at CCVS and have just started working as a reporter. An interest in learning to do closed-captioning initially led me to CCVS, and now I find myself with an interesting, challenging new career as a court reporter until I build the skill necessary to work as a captioner.



I worked full-time during the three years it took me to complete the program and get up to working speed. Like any student, the main challenge I faced was finding the time to practice and complete my academic coursework. Initially, I practiced mainly in the evening when I came home from work, with longer sessions and academic coursework on weekends. Further along in speed building, to increase my practice time, I started getting up 40 minutes earlier than usual during the week, so I would have at least an extra

half hour of practice time each day. Those short practice sessions really add up. If you do 20 minutes here and there throughout a Saturday, suddenly you've done two hours without even noticing it.

When I was feeling particularly frustrated, I would tell myself, "If I can't do this, it can't be done. But I know people are doing it—students just like me—therefore, it must be possible."

My advice to students is to vary your practice as much as possible. If your practice session is frustrating you, don't just quit. Practice time is so scarce—you have to do your best to maximize it. Invent new practice techniques that are fun, hold your interest and keep you at your steno machine: write along with some favourite music, download a children's audio book and slow down the speed so you can keep up, or create your own recordings—anything to avoid getting frustrated or bored.

When I was feeling particularly frustrated, I would tell myself, "If I can't do this, it can't be done. But I know people are doing it—students just like me—therefore, it must be possible." That little chat with myself often gave me the boost I needed to keep at it.

The shadowing I did during my internship was simply invaluable in preparing me for my first solo job. The tips, secrets and advice shared by the working reporters are my secret weapon. When I arrived at my first job, I felt completely prepared and confident. I enjoy working in a different place and learning about new things each day, and I particularly enjoy the court reporter's role of being a fly on the wall in many different situations! ■

Amy Harkness enrolled in the online program at CCVS in 2008, and upon recently completing the program has been hired by ASAP Reporting in Toronto, ON - www.asapreportingservices.com



Timeline to TTC Victory



August 2010 - The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) states that the 10-15,000 students enrolled in private career colleges across Toronto are not eligible for the new discounted monthly pass for post-secondary students. The pass, made available on August 24, 2010, allows students to ride the TTC for \$99/month (a \$22 savings on the regular adult pass). TTC Chair, Adam Giambrone, stated that the exclusion had to do with budgetary concerns and the complexities of keeping track of the numerous private career college programs, and that the TTC may consider looking to include private career college students as part of the budget for 2011.

September 2010 - The Ontario Association of Career Colleges encourages students to contact their city councilor and make them aware of the issue and request that it be included as an agenda item for the TTC Commission's September 30th meeting.

December 2010 - In early December, the TTC stood by the decision to exclude private career college students from participating in the discounted Metropass program stating that inclusion would cost the TTC \$2.5 million annually, without producing a significant boost in ridership. On December 15th, the newly appointed TTC commission voted to extend eligibility for the discounted \$99 Post-Secondary Student Metropass program to the 15,000 full-time students at private career colleges in Toronto as of February 1, 2011. This victory comes after months of hard work by PCC students, OACC staff and the association's Board of Directors.

February 2011 - Students attending private career colleges such as CCVS began using their discounted TTC Metropass! For information about how to obtain the TTC photo ID to purchase the student Metropass see: http://www3.ttc.ca/Fares_and_passes/Fare_information/Seniors_students_and_children/Getting_a_ttc_photo_identification.jsp

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Follow us on online!



CCVS Spring Open House
Tuesday March 29th 2011

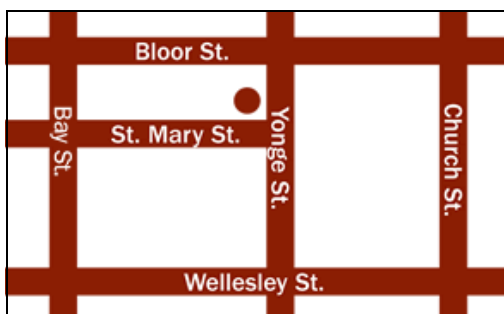
3:30 pm and 5:30 pm

Please call/email to reserve your seat

CCVS Online Store

The Wave will be available to CCVS students
starting May 2011.

<http://www.verbatimstudies.com/shop.html>



If you have a question about the programs offered at CCVS, please contact Kimberley John at 416-960-2287 / 1-877-337-2287 or kimjohn@verbatimstudies.com