

Volume 1  
Issue 1  
Fall 2006

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**Finding Culturesmart**

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**Upcoming Training**

New York: Elmhurst Hospital Center ("The Essential Piece")

Oct. 27-Dec. 1, 2006

Boston: Newton-Wellesley Hospital ("The Essential Piece")

Jan. 6-Mar. 10, 2007

Boston area:  
Bilingual Spanish-speaking staff of pediatric hospitals.  
Date in 2007 and location TBA

## Culturesmart Rolls Out 'The Essential Piece' Curriculum

After two years of work involving more than 12 expert consultants, Culturesmart in summer 2006 introduced a new edition of its medical interpreter training curriculum, re-named *The Essential Piece*. The revised manual reflects changes in the medical interpreting profession and makes training even more relevant to interpreters' ever-evolving needs.

The new manual builds on Culturesmart's six years of experience training more than 1,000 interpreters who speak over 21 languages. Changes were made based on customer and training participant feedback and focus groups.

Revisions to *The Essential Piece*, Culturesmart's fourth version of its training curriculum, include a new order of delivery and additional training modules that allow customization of the program for specific audiences.

The *Essential Piece* training manual is the core of Culturesmart's restructured program for cost-effective

on-site delivery at health care facilities throughout the United States.

The new name, *The Essential Piece*, is not just a title: it reflects important principles and realities of medical interpreter training. Trained, qualified, and screened medical interpreters play critical yet underrated roles in assuring quality health care for patients with limited English. Culturesmart's program helps institu-

tions transform bilingual staff into trained, qualified interpreting personnel capable of providing health care organizations with the greatest return on minimal investments.

Culturesmart's medical interpreter training program also includes the textbook

*The Human Body*, an illustrated anatomy book by Charles Clayman, MD.

Newsletter readers who would like to preview *The Essential Piece* are invited to contact Culturesmart or visit with Culturesmart founder Greg Figaro at an

upcoming conference. Culturesmart will be attending and exhibiting at two fall 2006 conferences: *Quality Health Care for Culturally Diverse Populations* in Seattle, WA, and the *Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association (MMIA)* in Cambridge, MA. Please see page 4 for details.



**Public "Essential Piece" Training at Elmhurst Hospital Center and Newton-Wellesley Hospital**

Culturesmart will offer *The Essential Piece*™ training to the general public in two fall programs: All interested interpreters are welcome to apply.

Elmhurst Hospital Center  
New York City  
October 27—December 1, 2006  
9:00am to 5:00pm

Newton-Wellesley Hospital  
Newton, MA  
January 6—March 10, 2007  
9:00am to 2:00pm, Saturdays

Early bird registration discounts apply. Visit [www.culturesmart.org](http://www.culturesmart.org) for informa-

## The Essential Piece + Train the Trainer = A Full Package

Health care organizations that want to develop in-house capacities for training medical interpreters have a new option: Culturesmart's new collaborative licensing program.

Under the program, new trainers first receive instruction under our *The Essential Piece* (see above) medical interpreter training program. They then take part in a rigorous train-the-trainer course that prepares them

to teach *TEP* themselves.

The licensing program offers clients the opportunity to deliver consistent medical interpreter training to employees across multiple locations while reducing staff time spent developing training materials and curriculum.

New trainers receive support that includes:

- \*a special trainers' step-by-step guide,
- \*a list of materials and resources for deliver-

ing *TEP*,

- \*regular phone conferences and meetings for ongoing contact, and
- \*a training evaluation process conducted by Culturesmart.

Culturesmart can also customize *TEP* to meet organizations' specific training objectives.

## Greetings from Greg, by Greg Figaro, President and Founder, Culturesmart

Dear colleagues and friends:

Welcome to the first issue of *The Interpreter!* When I realized this summer how much Culturesmart has been doing during 2006, I decided to begin publishing a regular newsletter for our clients, interpreters, and colleagues.

My goal is for *The Interpreter* to help our readers become better equipped for serving their low English proficiency patients. We will tell you about Culturesmart's training programs for interpreters and provide tips for ensuring the best possible interactions between patients, providers, and interpreters.

Medical interpreting is a fairly new profession, as I found out from personal experience when I first interpreted as a business student at Northeastern University in Boston. There were few standards then and, like many first-time interpreters, I had absolutely no interpreter training. My ability to speak English, French, and Hai-

tian Creole was the sole reason that the hospital contacted me for the job.

That appointment in 1991 changed my life. I interpreted more at the same hospital and soon branched out to others. I eventually founded Culturesmart in 1995, simultaneously gathering practical interpreting experience and working with institutions on developing training programs for other interpreters.

Unfortunately, I no longer interpret myself, but my love of the profession has kept me with Culturesmart, where I continue to train interpreters and trainers, collaborate with interpreters of many languages, and work toward developing standards for our field.

One of the reasons that I enjoy

my job so much is that all of us who work in health care can have a profound effect on the lives of LEP patients with whom we work. Each of us has a key role in giving patients their English voices so that doctors, nurses, and other providers can help them to heal. It is no accident that I named our interpreter training manual *The Essential Piece!*

My hope is that this newsletter will give all of us a new forum for exploring ways that we can work together to continue improving how we serve millions of LEP patients in the U.S.



Greg with the Rosetta Stone.

## Spotlight: Judy Kanter, Interpreter and Culturesmart Trainer

The Culturesmart team works with many talented individuals who conduct training for medical interpreters and new trainers. Many of them are well known in the medical interpreting field.

One of Culturesmart's most active consultants is Judy Kanter, a Culturesmart trainer who works constantly to advance her qualifications.



In February 2006, Judy participated in the Spanish Pediatric Interpreter Training Program's training-of-trainers course at the Phoenix Children's Hospital in Arizona. We're very happy that Judy was selected because it means that Culturesmart will offer the program in

2007 as a 60-hour course for Spanish interpreters who work in pediatric settings.

Judy began her medical interpreting career in the 1970s, before the profession was widely recognized. She now works full-time. With experience living and working in Spanish-speaking countries, including Puerto Rico and Mexico, Judy knows how to interpret Spanish words as well as numerous cultural traditions of Spanish-speaking countries.

Judy's background also includes a master's degree in bilingual education from Boston University. Her dedication to multilingualism is so complete that all four of her children have used their language skills in their own work!

### Spanish Pediatric Interpreter Training

Judy Kanter and Culturesmart hope to conduct interpreter training for bilingual Spanish-speaking staff of children's hospitals in 2007. The training will be held in the Boston area.

Please contact Culturesmart or visit [Culturesmart.org](http://Culturesmart.org) for updates on training dates and location.

## Best Practices: Keeping a Respectful Distance

### How Can Interpreters Balance Friendliness and Professionalism?

For many interpreters, one of the hardest aspects of interpreting can be finding a tone that balances professionalism with friendliness and warmth. This can be particularly difficult in small communities where the interpreter and patient might be acquainted or personal relationships are valued highly.

Finding an appropriate balance may mean adopting new standards for appointments. Although some may sound a bit cold at first, they can help you maintain your authority as an interpreter and uphold your ethical responsibility to patients and providers. Don't forget: the interpreter's job is to facilitate patient-provider communication, not to be a social butterfly. Here are some ideas:

*Speak to all adults using formal/plural forms.* This helps to preserve your professional distance.

*Smile, shake hands, or bow.* Observe culturally appropriate physical courtesies when greeting patients.

*Wait in the hall.* Some hospitals have a rule asking interpreters not to wait in exam rooms with patients. This is a

good idea for many reasons. It can avoid unwanted intimate and inappropriate conversations, including patients asking you for advice.

*Avoid your personal life.* Some patients are curious about our lives. Answer what you're comfortable with but find a culturally appropriate way to deflect anything that's too personal.

*Enjoy yourself.* Of course you and your patients can still enjoy exchanging recipes or talking about books, particularly when you can draw providers into the conversation. Small talk can be an important aspect of patient-provider relationships.

### Reference This!

It's your first time interpreting in a new field. Whether the subject is eyes, ears, or a body system you don't know well, here are some tips on learning new vocabulary and creating your own reference materials.

★ Find an anatomical chart of each organ or body system in an encyclopedia or online. Label each part with words in the languages that you will need to use.

★ We all have problem words that we never seem to remember. Write yours on Post-It notes and stick them in the front of your dictionary where you can move them around as you need them. Make a separate sheet for each body system.

★ Bring your dictionary and "cheat sheets" to appointments and use them. It's better to check words than make a mistake!

Did you know that at least 11 million adults and children in the U.S. have been diagnosed with **diabetes mellitus**? Or that another 6 million probably have diabetes without knowing it?

Interpreting for diabetic patients raises special interpreting challenges because the disease is chronic and incurable, and requires careful, individualized management. **Diabetics** have trouble converting digested food into energy the body can use. Normally, the **pancreas**, a gland behind the stomach, makes **insulin**, a hormone that helps move **glucose**, a sugar, from the blood into body tissues. Without that ability, the **blood sugar level** rises in diabetics.

There are several kinds of diabetes. **Type 1 diabetes** means the body produces little or no insulin, so the patient takes insulin injections. **Type 2 diabetes** occurs when the body either doesn't make enough insulin or cannot use insulin properly to convert glucose. Treatments vary. **Gestational diabetes** is usually limited to the duration of a pregnancy. **Pre-diabetes** occurs when blood glucose levels exceed normal levels, but aren't as high as in full diabetes.

Serious consequences of diabetes include loss of blood circulation, which can result in **retinopathy** (disease of the eye's retina) and poor wound healing, which can cause foot **ulcers**.

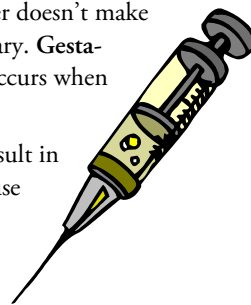
This is only a very basic introduction to diabetes. Learn more at:

Diabetes: <http://www.ohsuhealth.com/htaz/diabetes/> (includes a glossary)

American Diabetes Association: <http://www.diabetes.org/> (includes Spanish information)

National Institute of Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Disorders: <http://www.niddk.nih.gov/>

Merck Manual: <http://www.merck.com/mrksdared/mmanual/section2/chapter13/13a.jsp>



Not all diabetics inject insulin.

Med School for Interpreters: Diabetes

## All in a Day's Work: Culturesmart News

### Out and About: Upcoming Culturesmart Medical Interpreter Training Programs

- ♦ Culturesmart is offering a course for Chinese Mandarin, Spanish, and Korean interpreters that begin on October 27, 2006, at Elmhurst Hospital Center in Queens, NY. For more details, please visit: <http://www.culturesmart.org/tepnyc.php>
- ♦ *The Essential Piece* training at Newton-Wellesley Hospital begins on January 6, 2007. The course is being offered in Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Spanish. More details are available at [www.culturesmart.org/tep.php](http://www.culturesmart.org/tep.php)
- ♦ Culturesmart also began offering *The Essential Piece* training in early September to Spanish-speaking interpreters through the City of Hartford's Mayor's Health Community Initiative.
- ♦ We will also hold a 60-hour Spanish pediatric interpreter training program for Spanish-speaking staff of children's hospitals in early 2007.

For information about any of these training events, please contact Culturesmart at 617-890-1111 or visit [Culturesmart.org](http://www.culturesmart.org).

### Culturesmart at Conferences

Culturesmart, including president and founder Greg Figaro, will be attending two conferences during fall 2006. Please come talk with us!

Culturesmart will host a booth at the **Conference on Quality Health Care for Culturally Diverse Populations** in Seattle, Washington, during October 17-20, 2006.

For conference information, please visit <http://www.diversityrx.org/ccconf>

Culturesmart is also actively participating at the **Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association** conference on November 11-12, 2006, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. This year's theme is "The Past, Present, and Future of Medical Interpreting: Standards, Training, and Certification," so we're very excited to attend! Greg will present a "Business Basics for the Independent Interpreter" workshop on the afternoon of November 11. Culturesmart has always supported the work of the MMIA and will be a Gold Sponsor of the conference. Visit <http://mmia.org/education/Conf2006.asp> for details.

