

DEBBIE LESSER – M.S., CI/CT, QMHI, CoreCHI

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Nationally certified sign language interpreter with 25+ years of expertise in healthcare interpreting and ASL services. Director of Language Access Services for Georgia's largest health system, overseeing medical interpreting and translation operations across 500+ care locations. Former Adjunct Professor at Rochester Institute of Technology specializing in ethics and mental health interpreting. Credentialed Supervision Leader with IIRAS, mentoring interpreters in professional development and reflective practice.

Core Competencies: Healthcare & Mental Health Interpreting | Language Access Operations | Staff Development & Supervision | Virtual & In-Person Interpreting | ADA/HIPAA/TJC/CMS Compliance | Equitable Communication Access

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Director, Language Access Services | 2019–Present

Wellstar Health Systems – Marietta, GA

- Direct comprehensive language access services across Georgia's largest health system with 12 hospitals, 3,249 licensed beds, and 500+ care locations including health parks, urgent care centers, rehabilitation facilities, cancer centers, ambulatory practices, imaging centers, hospices, and retirement communities
- Oversee medical interpreting and translation operations supporting equitable communication access for diverse patient populations across multi-county healthcare network
- Ensure compliance with federal regulations and accreditation standards while managing complex interpreter staffing, scheduling, and quality assurance protocols

Adjunct Professor | 2021–Present

Rochester Institute of Technology – Rochester, NY

- Taught undergraduate-level courses in ethics and mental health interpreting within the American Sign Language Interpreter Education Program
- Mentored emerging interpreters in professional development and ethical decision-making

Director of Strategic Initiatives & ASL Interpreter | 2018

Interpretek – Rochester, NY

- Developed strategic initiatives to expand ASL services and implemented operational improvements

Director of ASL Services & Medical Interpreter | 2011–2017

InDemand Interpreting – Seattle, WA

- Built and managed comprehensive ASL interpreter department, established medical interpretation protocols, with a focus on quality assurance and specialized customer service

Owner & Interpreter | 1995–Present

The Interpreting Connection, LLC – Atlanta, GA

- Founded and operate successful interpreting services business providing specialized interpretation across diverse settings

Operations Manager & ASL Interpreter | 2009–2011

Sign Language Access – Clearwater, FL

- Managed daily operations, interpreter scheduling, and provided direct ASL interpretation services

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Master of Science in Healthcare Interpreting | 2019

Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY

Bachelor of Science in Psychology | 1989

Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

Professional Certifications

- **RID National Certified Interpreter (CI/CT) | 1999**
- **Qualified Mental Health Interpreter (QMHI) | 2019**
- **Core Certified Healthcare Interpreter (CoreCHI) | 2016**
- **Certificate Healthcare Interpreting (CHI) | 2014**

LEADERSHIP & PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Current Leadership Roles

- **Treasurer** – National Council on Interpreting in Health Care | 2022–Present
- **Credentialed Supervision Leader** – Interpreting Institute for Reflection-in-Action & Supervision (IIRAS) | 2020–Present
- **Peer Navigator** – Facing Hereditary Cancer Empowered (FORCE) | 2017–Present

Previous Leadership

- **President & Treasurer** – Georgia Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf | 1995–1999, 2016–2021
- **President** – Board of Directors, Dor Tamid Congregation | 2006–2009

Professional Memberships

- Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf | 1992–Present
- National Council on Interpreting in Health Care
- Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Video Relay Interpreter | Sorenson, Salt Lake City, UT & Rocklin, CA | 2007–2009

Childbirth Education Instructor | Northside Hospital, Atlanta, GA | 2002–2007

Founder & Consultant | Little Signers, Inc., Atlanta, GA | 2000–2004

Program Director & Consumer Advocate | The ARC, Baltimore, MD & Boston, MA | 1991–1995

Crisis Intervention Specialist | The Big Bend, Tallahassee, FL | 1987–1990

References available upon request