

NCRA

2014–2015
ANNUAL
REPORT



Who we ARE & What we DO

NCRA promotes excellence among those who capture and convert the spoken word to text and is committed to supporting every member in achieving the highest level of professional expertise.

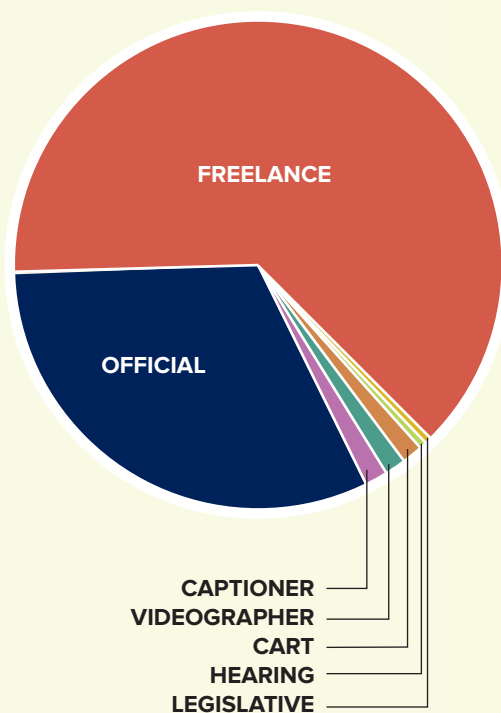
NCRA's 15,000 members are court reporters, captioners, and legal videographers throughout the United States and abroad. Together, NCRA's Board of Directors, volunteers, and members:

- promote the profession as a valuable service to the legal profession and members of the public
- share information on what is successful in the field
- monitor and lobby for legislative and regulatory issues that affect NCRA members
- promote the importance of certification of its members and help them remain up-to-date on the issues and technology changes affecting their professions



Membership by type

Freelance	62%
Official	31%
Captioner	2.3%
Videographer	2.2%
CART	2.0%
Hearing	0.3%
Legislative	0.2%



What we've accomplished

In 2013, NCRA adopted a new strategic plan to take the Association through 2018. This plan revolves around six general areas of strategic importance to the Association and its individual members: Advocacy, Awareness and Outreach, Education, Member Value, Professional Development, and Resources. Volunteers and members have continued to focus on these key priorities throughout 2014-15, with successes in several areas.

How have we made a difference in the profession?

NCRA works to build wider recognition and appreciation of stenographic court reporting, captioning, and related professions. In 2014-2015, several media outlets took notice of the profession:

- Through the Take Note campaign, the court reporting and captioning professions were featured on the number-one rated morning show *Fox and Friends*, in October 2014 on the network's "On the Job Hunt" segment.
- In November, CNBC aired a story in its career segment showcasing court reporting as a career. A similar segment ran as part of CNBC's *Nightly Business Report*.
- Additional articles highlighting the positive aspects of court reporting as a profession ran in California's *Daily Breeze* and *San Gabriel's Valley Tribune*, as well as the *Chicago Sun-Times* and its affiliates.
- NCRA's third Court Reporting & Captioning Week brought the media's attention to the professions through many focused news reports all over the country. In addition, Court Reporting & Captioning Week received proclamations from 15 states as well as the U.S. House of Representatives.
- A surprise interest in the NCAA stenographer by Nigel Hayes and several of his Wisconsin Badgers teammates during the 2015 NCAA basketball tournament resulted in several unexpected stories about the profession.

Take Note, the award-winning campaign NCRA launched to bring awareness about the profession in late 2014, not only brought attention to the professions through high-level media coverage, but also offered financial support to a number of court reporting schools

to aid in promoting their programs and captured information about potential students. In addition, a Text for Tuition contest pitted high school students against a court reporter at Orleans Technical College in Philadelphia, Pa. The contest winner earned a \$1,000 scholarship to court reporting school through the program.

NCRA also promoted the benefits of court reporting and captioning to a number of groups that use members' services, including at the Association of Late Deafened Adults convention, the ABA Techshow, the American School Counselors Association conference, the National Association for Court Management conference, and the Center for Legal and Court Technology conference.

Staying at the top of my profession

NCRA introduced a revolutionary way to take NCRA skills tests that is unique in the testing industry. Partnering with ProctorU and Realtime Coach, members are able to take the skills portions of all steno-based certifications through a convenient online platform. In the past, candidates would have to travel to test sites, set up equipment, and wait six to eight weeks for results. Now candidates can test more often and in the comfort of their own home or office. Also, with more tests available, candidates are able to schedule times that are more convenient throughout the year as well as receive a much faster result. Candidates now receive official results within three to seven days of taking the test.

"Being able to test without the stress of getting to the testing location and hauling a printer and all my equipment around was extremely helpful in doing so well on the test," said Jessica Croxford, RPR, from Midvale, Utah.



“One of the high priority items for NCRA's Board of Directors has been to assure that ... decisions are based on good business practices. It is imperative that we achieve this goal in order for NCRA to provide value and services to our fabulous members. NCRA's dedicated and hard-working staff has ensured that our work during 2014-2015 has set us on a path for success now and into the future.”

Stephen A. Zinone, RPR
NCRA President
Pittsford, N.Y.



“ The [Firm Owners] event proved to be a positive experience,” said Elaine Crandall, RPR, a firm owner in Miami, Fla. “I always like to at least walk away with one or two things I can change or incorporate into my business platform. I found attending this event lived up to that expectation. And, of course, the opportunity to network with firm owners and vendors from around the country and even outside of the [United States] was also of great value, not to mention enjoyable.”

Throughout 2015, NCRA through the Take Note campaign worked with schools to refine instructional practices and increase graduation rates. The Instructional Best Practices Survey, conducted under the Vision for Educational Excellence Task Force, was an important step in that direction. Over the coming years, NCRA will continue to refine its school support and certification programs to ensure that newly recruited steno students have the best possible chance of successfully completing their education and becoming working reporters.

My voice is heard

A major focus for NCRA in 2014-15 was its advocacy efforts. NCRA staff and volunteers sought to connect with legislators and bureaucrats on a federal and state basis on behalf of its members and court reporting programs.

One of the priorities for NCRA's government relations team was monitoring the changes to captioning that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) developed during the year. In January, NCRA submitted comments regarding the rewriting of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to the House Energy and Commerce Committee. NCRA also worked closely with the FCC and the FCC's Disability Advisory Committee to ensure that the concerns of broadcast captioners are heard as the captioning quality best practices are fully and properly implemented. A committee formed by NCRA developed captioning quality standards, which were submitted to the FCC. Ultimately, the FCC decided to adopt qualitative standards similar to NCRA's suggestions.

In addition, NCRA continues to educate legislators and lobby for funding for the Training for Realtime Writers grant program. This program, originally started in the early 2000s, provides approximately \$1 million a year to two to four court reporting and captioning programs around the country to recruit more students, improve training techniques, buy new technology for their students, and overall, train more individuals capable of providing realtime

Current members with certifications

RPR	9,137
RMR	2,507
RDR	477
CBC*	322
CCP*	361
CRR	2,504
CMRS	135
CLVS	318
CRI	285
CPE	105
MCRI	2

*In January 2016, all members who held CBC and CCP credentials were automatically switched over to CRC (Certified Realtime Captioner).

to meet all existing and forthcoming captioning requirements through the Telecommunications Act, the Communications and Video Accessibility Act, and the Americans With Disabilities Act.

NCRA attended 47 House meetings and 26 Senate meetings in 2015. In addition, NCRA staff lent assistance to states, including Virginia, Indiana, and West Virginia, for issues touching on court reporting or captioning.



I'm not in this alone

Networking is often listed as the most valuable component of NCRA membership. NCRA is the only national organization that brings together court reporters from around the world. When a member joins NCRA, he or she becomes connected instantaneously to a vibrant network of court reporters, captioners, and legal videographers. This past year, NCRA worked to pull together resources to help strengthen these bonds between members through an even more robust convention in New York City, improvements to NCRA's online referral tool, and new facilitated online content.

A number of events geared toward providing customized learning for members included:

- In February 2015, the NCRA Firm Owners Executive Conference at the JW Marriott Desert Springs in Palm Desert, Calif., offered industry insights and business know-how to firm owners.
- In late July and early August, more than 1,300 court reporters, captioners, and others came together at the New York Hilton Midtown in Manhattan for the 2015 NCRA Convention & Expo. The New York event, for the first time, included NCRA's CLVS certification program. It was also the first time NCRA's new Certified Realtime Captioner Workshop was offered.
- Throughout the year, NCRA hosted several live webinars. The live webinars are later archived as on-demand e-seminars through NCRA's e-seminar library. The convenience and flexibility of the growing catalog of live webinars and e-seminars means that members can earn CEUs while still having the flexibility to attend to business.
- TechCon 2015, held in Denver, Colo., offered the Realtime Systems Administrator certificate and the Certified Legal Video Specialist certification, along with Legal Tech Labs on topics ranging from hooking up to realtime to drone use in legal video.

In addition, NCRA's TRAIN (Taking Realtime Awareness and Innovation Nationwide) Task Force helped reporters seeking realtime skills to find networks of other reporters, both skilled and unskilled, to work toward that goal. The Task Force also provided a number of articles in the *JCR* and the *JCR Weekly* to help members become more skilled in realtime, as well as gathered resources for the NCRA.org/TRAIN resource center.

Trends

The results of the fifth annual Economic Benchmark Survey showed continued growth in the industry at large.

The *JCR* surveyed freelancers during 2015 for the first time in several years. According to the survey, many reporters use realtime, with some offering broadcast and CART captioning in addition to deposition and other legal services.

A new resource, the *NCRA RPR Study Guide*, was published as the new definitive resource for the RPR Exam. The comprehensive guide has been well-received by court reporters studying for national certifications as well as by those studying for state certification tests.

NCRA's Technology Committee provided articles to keep working reporters, captioners, and legal video specialists up to date on the latest trends and innovations in the profession throughout the year. Covering topics from Windows 10 to USB hubs, the articles were published through the *JCR Weekly* and the *JCR*.

As a value-added benefit, Amplify partnered with the Association to offer member-only savings through Staples and FedEx. "I placed my first order for office supplies recently," said Michele Balmer, RPR, a firm owner from Yuma, Ariz. "The price for the box of paper was about \$10 less and the box of envelopes was about \$12 less than on the Staples regular website! So it's definitely worth checking into."



“I love students and mentoring, and I want to ensure students' voices are heard and to help get them out of school and into the workplace.”

Doreen Sutton, RPR
NCRA Secretary-Treasurer
Scottsdale, Ariz.

Using my dues money wisely

The Association remains intent on a strategy to foster long-term success for NCRA members and help them realize their individual potential.

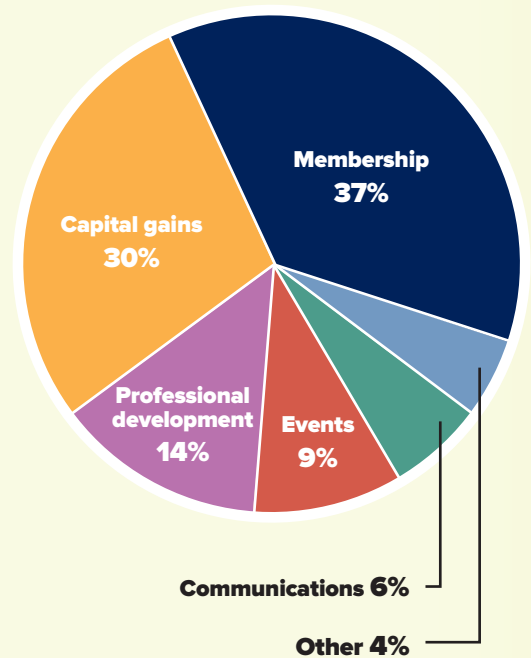
The fiscal year runs from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30, and every year the Association goes through an independent audit. As part of the audit, the auditors review the Association's internal controls and noted for this past fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2015, there were no material weaknesses in internal controls.

The fiscal year ended with a positive change in net assets, specifically a surplus of \$1.8 million and with approximately \$7.5 million in total assets. Total revenue and support equaled approximately \$8.8 million, and expenses were \$7 million. In 2015, NCRA sold its headquarters in Vienna, Va., which resulted in an extraordinary gain from the sale of the building.

Currently, the Association receives its funding of \$8.8 million from a variety of resources. Membership accounts for approximately 37 percent and is by far the largest and most important category. NCRA's success on many facets begins and ends with members. This is then followed by the amount raised as part of our Education and Certification efforts, which is 14 percent of total revenue. The next largest source of revenue, at 9 percent, NCRA receives from its landmark meetings, the Convention & Expo and Firm Owners Executive Conference.

Expenses in the most recent budget approximate \$6.6 million. NCRA will continue to manage its finances in a fiscally responsible manner to support its members in advancing the profession.

NCRA funding sources



TOTAL FUNDING: \$8.8 MILLION

NATIONAL COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION (PARENT COMPANY ONLY) STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES YEARS ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2015 AND 2014		
	2015	2014
UNRESTRICTED ACTIVITIES		
Revenue and Support:		
Membership Dues	\$ 3,290,080	\$ 3,386,625
Professional Development	1,233,079	1,417,421
Communications	569,240	620,985
Convention and Firm Owners Meetings	787,880	732,164
Investment Income	266,885	319,694
Publication Sales	111,036	110,533
Membership Directory and Catalog Advertisements	155,535	162,800
Government Relations	9,275	7,040
Affinity Programs	170,448	135,249
Other Revenue	376	1,890
Total Revenue	6,593,794	6,864,001
EXPENSES		
Program Services:		
Professional Development	1,462,145	1,583,167
Communications	1,387,718	1,413,912
Membership	265,177	427,372
Convention and Firm Owners Meetings	554,464	544,261
Meetings Department	111,151	243,864
Government Relations	167,358	199,331
Publications	93,196	129,788
Public Affairs and Strategic Alignment	41,971	75,438
Total Program Services	4,093,180	4,617,143
Supporting Services:		
Management and General	2,954,912	3,122,267
Total Supporting Services	2,954,912	3,122,267
Total Expenses	7,048,092	7,739,410
CHANGE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS	(454,298)	(875,409)
OTHER		
Unrealized Loss on Investments	(435,974)	(28,214)
Net Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Property and Equipment	2,694,896	(8,411)
NCRA Service Corporation Investment Loss	(126)	(354)
	2,258,796	(36,979)
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	1,804,498	(912,388)
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	3,587,677	4,500,065
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	\$ 5,392,175	\$ 3,587,677

NCRF was created in 1980 as the charitable, or philanthropic, arm of NCRA. Its mandate is for research and education in support of NCRA's mission and goals. NCRF is governed by a Board of Trustees that allows for both NCRA members and nonmembers to serve, and it is supported almost entirely by donations, which primarily come from NCRA members and others related to the field of stenographic court reporting.

NCRF helps ... students

NCRF is committed to supporting the future of the profession through its **Student Initiatives Program**, which, since its creation in 2008, has funded NCRA memberships for 272 students. The students transcribe two histories as part of NCRF's **Oral Histories Program**.

Also through Student Initiatives, NCRF annually awards the following scholarships to high-achieving students:

- Frank Sarli Memorial Scholarship
- Student Intern Scholarships (two)
- Robert H. Clark Scholarship

... new professionals

The **Corrinne Clark Professionalism Institute** officially launched at the 2015 NCRA Convention & Expo in New York. The Institute was developed to support student recruitment and development, as well as new reporters, by educating them about professionalism, branding, and building a successful career. As part of the Institute, NCRF develops informative materials, such as seminars and articles, for dissemination to court reporting students and new professionals throughout their careers.

In addition to the Corrinne Clark Professionalism Institute, NCRF supports new working reporters through its annual **New Professional Reporter Grant**, which is designed to help recipients launch their professional careers by helping to pay for school loans, new equipment, software, a professional wardrobe, or other expenses.

... the profession

NCRF provides funding to ensure that NCRA represents the profession in the global community at **Intersteno**. Intersteno is the International Federation for Information & Communication Processing, a global



community of professionals who use speed-writing techniques to quickly produce high-quality text.

NCRF's **Legal Education Program** was created to help court reporters educate law students, attorneys, and judges on "Making the Record" and the value of stenographic reporting technology. Teaching tools have been provided to hundreds of court reporters at no cost and include a sample PowerPoint presentation, a sample script, and handouts, which are designed to be customized for the specific audience.

... promote the profession

Through the transcription of the stories of America's war veterans, Holocaust survivors, and attorneys who provide pro bono services, NCRF's popular **Oral Histories Program** (OHP) increases public awareness of steno reporting while preserving important pieces of American and world history for posterity and research. NCRF has agreements with four organizations to transcribe their oral histories: the Library of Congress Veterans History Project (VHP); the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; the Center for Public Policy and Social Research at Central Connecticut State University; and the National Equal Justice Library at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

As of late September 2015, NCRA members have transcribed the histories of 3,798 veterans since 2003 and 56 histories from other program partners since 2008. In addition to the rewarding experience of sharing these vital histories, NCRF provides Professional Development Credits for each transcript at no cost to the reporter. NCRA members also have interviewed veterans in their area and hosted VHP Day events in their communities.



12030 Sunrise Valley Drive, Suite 400
Reston, VA 20191

NCRA.org | 800-272-6272