

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

DELAWARE'S COURT INTERPRETER PROGRAM WINNER

OF THE 2013 JOHN NEUFELD AWARD

The Court Interpreter Program of Delaware's Administrative Office of the Courts is the 2013 winner of the John Neufeld Award. Created in memory of John Neufeld, Chief of Education and Training for the New Jersey judiciary and Education Program Coordinator for the Mid-Atlantic Association for Court Management, the John Neufeld award recognizes the achievements of an individual, a group of individuals, or a court system that have developed or implemented a significant or innovative court program in the Mid-Atlantic region.

This award recognizes Delaware's statewide language access program and the strong leadership role that Delaware has taken on the issue of language access at the national level. Among other recent initiatives, the Administrative Office of the Courts' Court Interpreter Program implemented a procedure to track and quantify the current demands for language services and forecast future needs and projected costs; established evening case calendars for Limited English Proficient (LEP) litigants in the Justice of the Peace Court; instituted a web-based calendar allowing courts to view and schedule available interpreters; and provided ongoing training on the role and function of interpreters to members of the judiciary and legal community. At the national level, Delaware has been recognized for its leadership role in the language access area through its activities following the 2012 National Summit on Language Access in the Courts and the work of its State Court Administrator, Patricia Griffin, who served on the advisory committee for the 2012 National Summit on Language Access in the Courts, and serves as chair of the Language Access Advisory Committee of the Conference of State Court Administrators.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without the dedication and passion to the cause of language access exhibited by Patricia Griffin, State Court Administrator, Maria Perez-Chambers, Court Interpreter Program Coordinator, and Franny M. Haney, Manager, Judicial Branch Education. The work continues as Delaware seeks new ways to improve the breadth and depth of services offered to LEP individuals through continued translation of critical documents, expansion of the limited legal assistance program to Family Court litigants who speak Spanish, and enhanced tools for staff at first points of contact with court litigants.

The award will be presented at the Mid-Atlantic Association for Court Management Annual Conference on October 1, 2013 in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

**Maria Perez-Chambers
Court Interpreter Program Coordinator
Administrative Office of the Courts
302.255.0166
maria.perez-chambers@state.de.us**