



2025 TAHIT

17th Annual Language Access Symposium

From Policy To Practice:
The Executive Order And The
Future Of Language Access



www.tahit.org

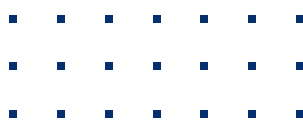
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TAHIT

Our Mission



To promote language access within healthcare by facilitating training, education, and communication between government, providers, interpreters, translators, and individual stakeholders.

We pursue our mission with a commitment to improving health equity, clinical outcomes, and patient safety for people with limited English proficiency.



Mission and History

History

The Texas Association of Healthcare Interpreters and Translators (TAHIT) is a 501(c)(6) non-profit association founded in 2005 by language access pioneers Esther Diaz and Patricia Yacavone. Discussions held at the AATIA-HITA Regional Conference on Translation and Interpretation Topics in Austin on July 30-31, 2004 prompted the creation of TAHIT.

Founding members discussed forming a new organization focused on the needs of healthcare interpreters and translators in Texas. Interestingly, a similar impromptu discussion among judiciary interpreters was being held in the next meeting room that resulted in the formation of the Texas Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (TAJIT).

Participants went back and forth between the two rooms, sharing ideas. As a result, after much deliberation, the sister organizations were baptized with similar names. Tricia Yacovone came well-prepared for this meeting. She staffed a table at the conference to drum up support for a medical interpreter's association, which she called "TAMI." She came with a poster bearing that name, as well as a logo designed by her own son. Furthermore, she led the impromptu discussion described above, in which the name of the organization was established as TAHIT and a mission statement was drafted.

Soon after that first meeting, Tricia Yacovone and Esther Diaz began the paperwork for TAHIT's incorporation and non-profit status recognition. TAHIT's official organizational meeting was held on April 16, 2005, at Driscoll Children's Hospital in Corpus Christi, Texas.



We are TAHIT! ARE YOU?

THE BENEFITS OF JOINING

- Access to TAHIT Members Only Page
- Discount to the annual symposium registration
- Right to vote in the TAHIT election
- Right to participate on committees
- Ability to run for board positions
- TAHIT Membership gift when attending symposium
- Meet-and-greet and networking opportunities
- Access to CEU webinars and events
- Many other benefits!



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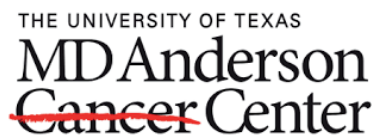
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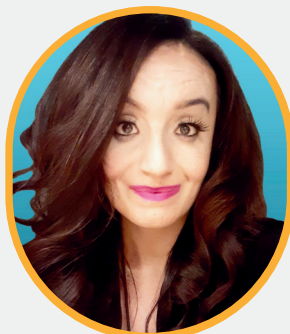
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Board Bios

TAHIT BOARD MEMBERS



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TAHIT 2025

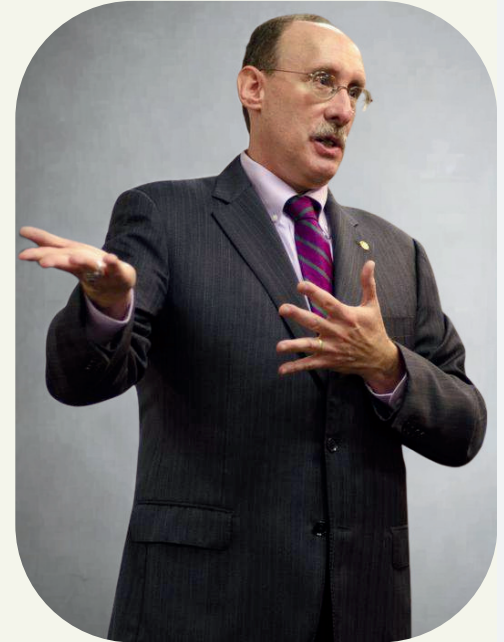
SPEAKERS



LANGUAGE ACCESS 2025: MYTHS AND REALITIES

Bruce Adelson, former DOJ Senior Trial Attorney and CEO of Federal Compliance Consulting, brings legal insight into federal language access laws and what's ahead for interpreters and providers.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



**DR. BRUCE
ADELSON**

Bruce is a former U.S. Department of Justice Senior Trial Attorney and nationally recognized expert on Title VI and ADA compliance. He has advised major healthcare systems, courts, and law enforcement agencies. He currently serves as an Instructor of Family Medicine at Georgetown University and an Adjunct Professor of Law at the University of Pittsburgh. His legal and teaching work centers around implicit bias, civil rights, and cultural awareness. Bruce has authored 13 books and holds a JD from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law.



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TAHIT 2025 SPEAKERS



**DR. TATIANA
CESTARI**



**CRISTINA
ROSARIO**

“READING THE ROOM”... AND ADDRESSING IT!

Join Tatiana González-Cestari, PhD, and Cristina Rosario of Equiti Health for an interactive session on how interpreters can recognize and respond to sensitive situations in healthcare settings.

Dr. Tatiana González-Cestari, PhD, CHI-Spanish, Director of Language Service Advocacy at Marti by Equiti, is a pharmacist, researcher, and remote interpreter with over two decades of experience. She holds a PhD in Pharmacology from Universidad Central de Venezuela and is co-author of *The Remote Interpreter*. She serves on the NCIHC Policy, Education and Research committee and actively mentors in the interpreting field.

Cristina Rosario, Quality Assurance Specialist at Equiti, holds a BA degree in Environmental Science from the University of Puerto Rico. She began her career in 2009 as an Over-the-Phone (OPI) Spanish Interpreter. In 2018, Cristina joined Martti as a Video Medical Spanish Interpreter and transitioned to her current role in the Interpreting Quality & Training department. She has trained, monitored, and coached remote healthcare interpreters across diverse language pairs.

Helping **Texas** Advance Language Access

At Martti, we believe every patient deserves care in their language.

That's why we partner with TAHIT — delivering integrated and on-demand medical interpretation in **250+** languages to support their mission of empowering interpreters, providers, and patients across Texas.

Learn more at **martti.io**



TAHIT 2025

SPEAKERS



CHWS & PROMOTORAS/ES DE SALUD: LANGUAGE ACCESS ADVOCATES & UNDERAPPRECIATED CO-DESIGNERS

Joshua Collier, CHW Instructor and interpreter, explores how Community Health Workers can shape language access solutions and partner with communities for equity in healthcare.

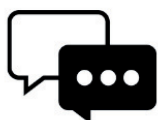


**JOSHUA E.
COLLIER**

Joshua E. Collier is a bilingual interpreter and translator based in Austin, Texas. He is also a Community Health Worker (CHW) and instructor, focused on non-medical drivers of health and community advocacy. He holds degrees in Spanish and Women's Studies from Southwestern University and co-founded the Tucson Language Justice Collective.

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Interpreting



Translation



Insights

At GLOBO, we're committed to enhancing health equity for the Deaf, hard of hearing, and limited-English speaking communities. By providing fast and reliable language services in over 430+ languages, we help ensure that providers and staff can effectively communicate with individuals and their families 24/7/365.

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**MEREDITH
STEGALL**



RAISING THE STANDARD: PROTECTING PATIENTS AND LANGUAGE ACCESS TEAMS THROUGH JOINT COMMISSION'S UPDATED GUIDANCE

Meredith explores how the new **Joint Commission Accreditation 360 National Performance Goals** elevate language access as a pillar of hospital safety and quality. We'll compare the updated standards to prior versions, **discuss scalable implementation strategies for health systems of all sizes**, and highlight ways to proactively **support interpreter and translator teams amid weakening federal enforcement**.

Meredith Stegall, Director of Solutions at Big Language, previously led Parkland Health's Language Services program, overseeing over 160 interpreters and 1.2 million annual interpretations. She established a cost-saving call center and has a background in Lean Six Sigma and healthcare leadership. Meredith holds a Master of Health Leadership and Management from the University of Texas at Dallas.



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TAHIT 2025

SPEAKERS



LANGUAGE ACCESS 360°: SYSTEMS, STRATEGY, AND THE ROAD AHEAD

Don't miss this powerful panel bringing together advocates, **legal experts, hospital leaders**, and industry voices to tackle the biggest challenges facing Language Access Services.

We'll dive into how to **protect meaningful access in uncertain times**, reframe **cost-effectiveness** as a driver of equity, and **explore what's next** for the interpreter profession—including how to inspire and support the next generation.

Melina Kolbeck, Senior Director of Language Access Services, Children's Health System of Dallas has over 23 years of experience in language services. As a bilingual consultant, award-winning leader, and advocate for equity in healthcare, she has led innovations in interpreter delivery systems, documentation, and technologies to improve access for LEP patients. She co-chaired her hospital's Health Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Commission and holds a degree in Communication Science from ITESM, Monterrey, Mexico.

Bruce Adelson, a former U.S. Department of Justice Senior Trial Attorney and nationally recognized expert on Title VI and ADA compliance. He has advised major healthcare systems, courts, and law enforcement agencies.

Ludmila Golovine, Founder of MasterWord, has grown her company into a global Top 50 language service provider. Fluent in Russian, French, and English, she is a leader in interpreter training, community service, and innovation in language access. She holds degrees from the University of Houston and serves on several boards and advocacy initiatives related to diversity, equity, and mindfulness.

Amber Mitchell has over 27 years of experience as a community interpreter and educator. She holds a Master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling and has worked in clinical, educational, and administrative interpreting roles. Amber is a former D&I leader at Texas Health Resources and has managed a 24/7 video relay call center.

ALL STAR PANEL SPEAKERS



**MELINA
KOLBECK**
CHILDREN'S HEALTH



**BRUCE
ADELSON**
FC CONSULTING



**LUDMILA
GOLOVINE**
MASTERWORD



**AMBER
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Fluency's mission is to improve the work of language service providers with secure, easy to use tools that guarantee the efficient scheduling and deployment of interpreters. Our industry leading interpreter scheduling management platform captures the many permutations of interpreter time, while seamlessly documenting all service requests, fulfillment and compliance necessary for tracking a remote workforce.

Industries We Serve

- Medical
- Education
- Government/ Legal
- Non-Profit





TAHIT 2025 SPEAKERS



**JORGE
UNGO**



**AMANDA
DAVID**



Reaching New Heights: Setting a Bold Standard for Interpreting Skills Assessment with the English-to-English Exam

Jorge U. Ungo, RYT® 200, and Amanda M. David, MA, BEI:III, from CCHI, introduce a groundbreaking approach to assessing interpreters in less common languages. Experience mock exam exercises and learn how the EtoE exam is setting new benchmarks in healthcare interpreting.

Jorge Ungo is a language access advocate, yoga instructor, and real estate investor with over two decades of healthcare experience. He combines a passion for wellness and cultural preservation with a deep commitment to uplifting marginalized communities and promoting equity and justice.

Amanda David, M.A. Interpreter, Division of Hospital Medicine, Dell Medical School holds numerous certifications including CoreCHI-Performance and RID CI/CT. She is an expert in Deaf and hard-of-hearing access, interpreter education, and healthcare interpreting. Amanda contributes to several national organizations, including the National Council on Interpreting in Healthcare and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.



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TAHIT 2025

SPEAKERS



ENHANCED ENFORCEMENT: PREVENTING LINGUISTIC DISCRIMINATION IN HEALTHCARE

Kevin Thakkar, Co-founder of AALB, examines why linguistic discrimination persists and offers practical solutions to strengthen language access enforcement.



Americans
Against
Language
Barriers



**KEVIN
THAKKAR, MPH**

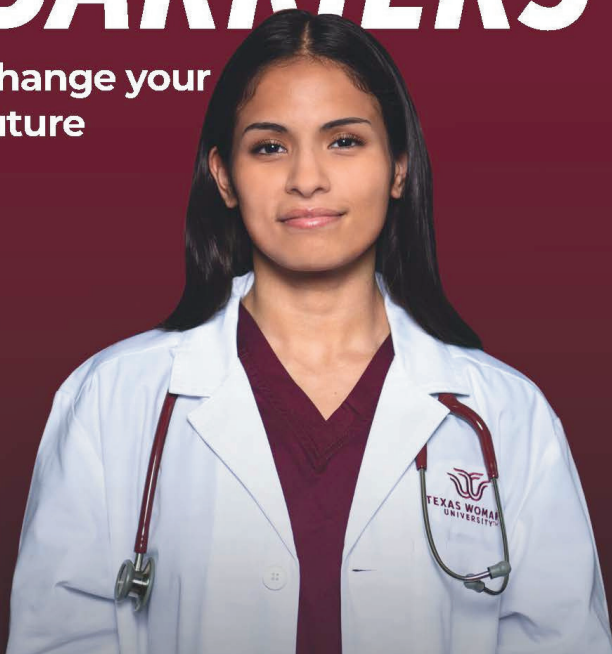
Kevin Thakkar, co-founder of African Association of Language Brokers (AALB) is a professional Gujarati interpreter and leader in interpreter training. He co-founded AALB to provide services to free clinics and underserved communities. He holds an MPH in Health Policy and Management from Emory University and balances operations leadership with hands-on training.



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TAHIT 2025 SPEAKERS



**AMBER
MITCHELL MS,
RID CI/CT**



HEALTH LITERACY AND THE ROLE OF THE INTERPRETER

Amber Mitchell, Assistant Professor & Practicum Coordinator at TCC, takes you into the world of health disparities among Deaf and Hard of Hearing populations. Learn how interpreters can play a key role in improving outcomes—simply by doing what they do best.

Amber Mitchell has over 27 years of experience as a community interpreter and educator. She holds a Master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling and has worked in clinical, educational, and administrative interpreting roles. Amber is a former D&I leader at Texas Health Resources and has managed a 24/7 video relay call center.

TAHIT 2025

SPEAKERS



BEYOND BIDS: USING THE RFP PROCESS TO ELEVATE THE LANGUAGE ACCESS INDUSTRY

Manuel Higginbotham, Director of Language Access at MD Anderson, shows how healthcare leaders can craft RFPs to raise interpreter standards and improve care.

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**MANUEL
HIGGINBOTHAM**

Manuel Higginbotham, CCHI™, LBBP, Director of Language Access Services, MD Anderson Cancer Center is a nationally recognized expert in healthcare language access with over 25 years of experience. He founded the Texas Star in Language Access Award and has trained over 4,000 interpreters. He has served as president of TAHIT and created the first for-credit interpreter training in a U.S. medical school. He works in English, Spanish, and Portuguese.



2025 TAHIT Star Award & 20th Anniversary Dinner



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SEPT. 12TH 6:30PM

InterContinental Houston by IHG
Magnolia Room & Terrace
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TAHIT STAR Award Finalists 2025



**Bill
Rivers**



**Judge Lina
Hidalgo**



**Sergio
Hernandez**



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TAHIT 17th Annual Language Access Symposium

From Policy to Practice: The Executive Order and the Future of Language Access.

September 12, 2025

AGENDA

7:30am	Event Registration Check-In and Continental Breakfast			
8:45am-9am	Welcome- Opening Remarks			
9am-10:15am 1.25 CEUs	Keynote Speaker – Bruce Adelson Language Access 2025: Myths and Realities			
10:15am-10:30am	Break and Networking			
10:30am-12pm 1.5 CEUs	Concurrent Presentations			
	Dr. Tatiana Cestari and Cristina Rosario “Reading the Room” ...And Addressing It.	Joshua Collier CHWs and Promotora/es de Salud: Language Access Advocates and Underappreciated Co-Designers.	Meredith Stegall Raising the Standards: Protecting Patients and LAS Teams through Joint Commission’s Updated Guidance.	
12:00pm-1:30pm	Lunch & Exhibitor Hall			
1:30pm-3:00pm Q&A 1.5 CEUs	Panel Discussion. Language Access 360 ° : Systems, Strategies, and The Road Ahead. · Moderator: Manuel Higginbotham · Panelists: Bruce Adelson, Mila Golovine, Melina Kolbeck, Amber Mitchell			
3:15pm-3:30pm	Break and Networking			
3:30pm-4:30pm 1 CEU	Concurrent presentations			
	Jorge Ungo and Amanda David Reaching New Heights: Setting a Bold Standard for Interpreting Skills Assessment with the English-to-English Exam	Kevin Thakkar Enhanced Enforcement: Preventing Linguistic Discrimination in Healthcare	Amber Mitchell Health Literacy and the Role of the Interpreter	Manuel Higginbotham Beyond Bids: Using the RFP Process to Elevate the Language Access Industry
4:30pm	Auditorium Closing Remarks (Raffle)			
6:30pm- Arrival 7pm-9pm	Texas Star Award Reception* Intercontinental Houston-Magnolia Room *Admission Ticket Required. Scan to purchase ->			

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