

2026 TAHIT

18th Annual Language Access Symposium

Language Access 2026: Federal Updates, AI & the Future of Patient Safety and Experience.

SCAN ME

www.tahit.org

TAHIT

The Texas Association of Healthcare Interpreters and Translators



Welcome from the President

Policies may shift. Protocols may change. Our commitment to the patient does not.

Welcome to the 18th Annual TAHIT Language Access Symposium. We convene at a consequential moment for our profession—one shaped by rapid advances in artificial intelligence, evolving federal policy, and changing standards for quality, safety, and language access. Yet amid that change, our responsibility remains clear: to ensure that every patient can understand, participate in, and trust the care they receive. Technology, regulation, and policy will continue to evolve, but professional judgment, cultural understanding, and ethical stewardship must remain at the center of meaningful language access. Our role is not simply to adapt to change, but to help shape it—thoughtfully, responsibly, and always with the patient at the center.

Mona Elshenawy

Mona Elshenawy, M.A., CHI-Spanish

President

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Mission & Backgroud

Our Mission

To empower interpreters and translators through education, advocacy, and collaboration, **uniting** healthcare systems and government stakeholders to advance equitable language access, patient safety, and quality care for all.

21 Years of Excellence

2005 – 2026

Our History

The Texas Association of Healthcare Interpreters and Translators (TAHIT) is a 501(c)(6) nonprofit professional association founded in 2005 by language access pioneers Esther Diaz and Patricia (Tricia) Yacavone.

TAHIT grew out of discussions at the AATIA-HITA Regional Conference on Translation and Interpretation Topics in Austin on July 30–31, 2004, where healthcare interpreters and translators recognized the need for an organization dedicated to the profession in Texas.

After the incorporation process began, TAHIT held its first official organizational meeting on April 16, 2005, at Driscoll Children's Hospital in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Our Vision

A healthcare future where language is never a barrier.

Every voice is heard. Every patient and family experiences safe, equitable, and compassionate care.



We are TAHIT!
Are You?

Membership Benefits

- Access to the TAHIT members-only page
- Discount on annual symposium registration
- Right to vote in TAHIT elections
- Opportunity to serve on committees and run for board positions
- TAHIT membership gift when attending the symposium
- Meet-and-greet and networking opportunities
- Access to CEU webinars and events
- And many other benefits!

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Christina Cordero



Session:

Language Access Is Patient Safety: Joint Commission Accreditation 360 Updates

Join Dr. Christina Cordero for an informative session on language access and the latest updates to the Joint Commission's accreditation and certification programs. Drawing on her expertise, Dr. Cordero will outline key requirements, share practical strategies for compliance, and discuss how to effectively provide language services to limited English proficient patients in healthcare settings.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Identify the key requirements addressing language access for the Joint Commission's accreditation and certification programs.
- Explore at least two strategies to comply with the requirements for providing language services to limited English proficient patients in healthcare settings.
- Strengthen your understanding of how to support safe, high-quality care through effective language access practices.

The Joint Commission®

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SPEAKER

Matthew Dickens

Accessibility and Disability Rights Coordinator



Session:

Ethics in Health Care: Interpreting for People with Disabilities

Join Matthew Dickens for an insightful session on the intersection of ethics, accessibility, and health care interpreting. Drawing on his experience in disability rights and accessibility, Matthew will explore how interpreters can communicate effectively, navigate common challenges, and support informed decision-making for people with disabilities in health care settings.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Explore ethical principles and disability rights in health care interpreting.
- Learn effective communication strategies for working with people with disabilities.
- Gain practical insights to support informed decision-making and improve access to quality health care.

Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities
Office of the Texas Governor

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SPEAKER

Joshua Collier, CHW/Instructor



Session:

Cross-Training as a CHW/ Interpreter: Core Competencies, Certification & Lived Experience

Join Joshua Collier, CHW/Instructor, for an informative session exploring the essential competencies for Community Health Workers (CHWs), the differences between certified and uncertified CHWs, and the available pathways to certification in Texas. Drawing on his experience as an educator and CHW, Mr. Collier will share practical insights and guidance for those looking to strengthen their impact in the field.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Name three core competencies and three skills important to be a successful CHW.
- Articulate one important difference between certified and uncertified CHWs.
- Describe two options for becoming a certified CHW in Texas and the steps to complete.

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SPEAKER

Manuel Higginbotham, CCHI, LBBP

Director of Language Access Services



Session:

Choosing the Right Path: Advanced Ethical Decision-Making for Healthcare Interpreters

Join Manuel Higginbotham for an informative session focused on advanced ethical decision-making in healthcare interpreting. Drawing on real-world clinical scenarios, Manuel will explore complex ethical dilemmas, apply relevant principles from the NCIHC Code of Ethics, and provide practical strategies to strengthen interpreters' judgment and professionalism in challenging situations.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Analyze complex ethical dilemmas and evaluate multiple possible courses of action.
- Apply principles of the NCIHC Code of Ethics to real-world clinical scenarios in healthcare interpreting.
- Strengthen ethical decision-making and professional judgment to navigate challenging situations with confidence.

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SPEAKER

Tatiana González-Cestari, PhD, CHI-Spanish



Session:
Remote Interpreting in Healthcare: Skills and Protocols

Join Dr. Tatiana González-Cestari for an engaging session on the essential knowledge and skills for effective remote interpreting in healthcare. Drawing on her expertise, Dr. González-Cestari will discuss key differences between face-to-face and remote interpreting, professional etiquette, and common challenges in remote settings, along with practical strategies to address them.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Understand the key differences between face-to-face and remote interpreting skills and protocols.
- Learn important fundamental elements of professional etiquette in remote interpreting.
- Identify common remote interpreting challenges and strategies for resolving them.

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SPEAKER

Brian Duran, MA, CHI- Spanish



Session:

Rhetoric in Interpreting for Pediatric Oncology: Seeing How We Say It and Why We Say It

Join Brian Duran for an engaging session on the role of rhetoric in interpreting within pediatric oncology settings. Drawing on key concepts from the Rhetoric of Health and Medicine, he will explore how language choices influence meaning, tone, and patient-provider communication, and how rhetorical strategies shape interpreter agency, decision-making, and outcomes in real-time medical interactions.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Understand the role of rhetoric in pediatric oncology interpreting, with a focus on how language choices influence meaning, tone, and patient-provider communication.
- Apply key concepts from the Rhetoric of Health and Medicine to assess interpreter agency and decision-making in real-time medical interactions.
- Evaluate how rhetorical strategies impact accuracy, clarity, and patient-centered care in oncology settings.

children's health®

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SPEAKER

Ludmila Golovine



Session:

Delivering AI Interpreting Responsibly

Join Ludmila Golovine for an insightful session on how to deliver AI interpreting responsibly. Drawing on industry frameworks and real-world experience, she will explore the opportunities and limitations of AI interpreting solutions and provide practical guidance for safe, compliant, and effective use within language access organizations.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

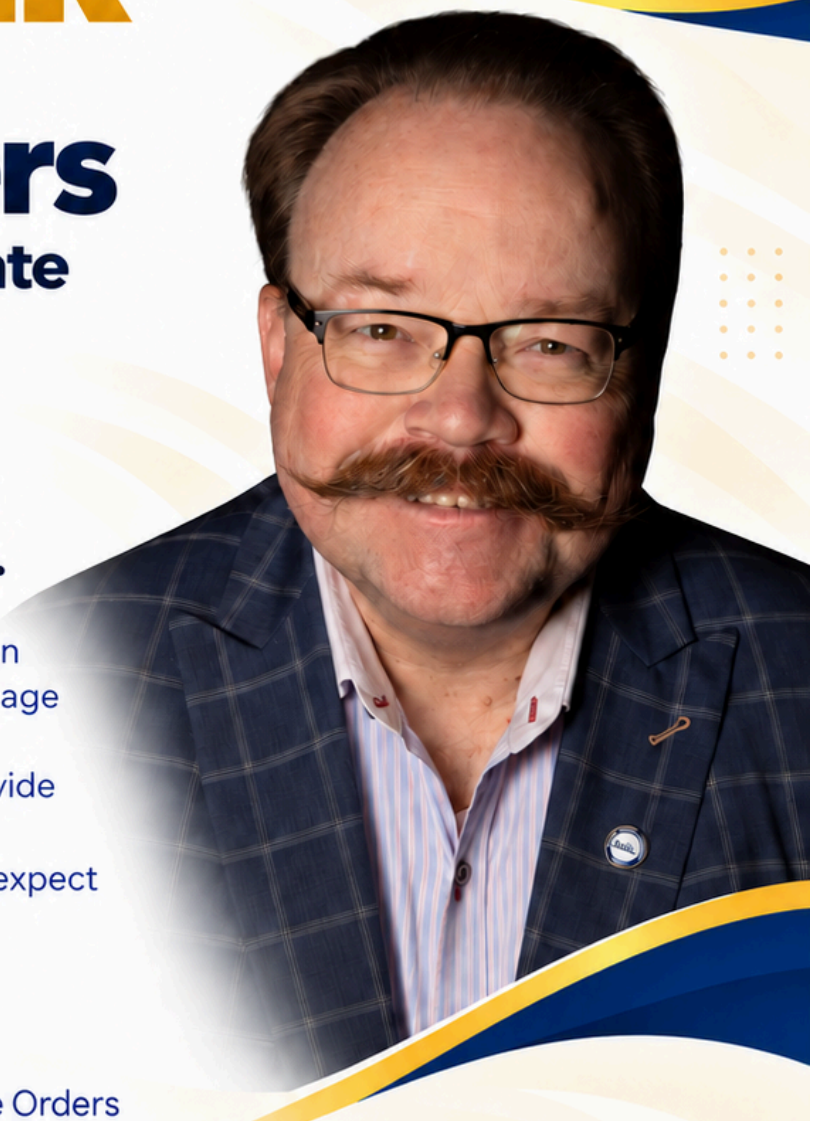
- Understand the value and limitations of AI interpreting solutions and communicate them clearly to clients.
- Apply frameworks and vendor evaluation guidance to ensure safety, compliance, and alignment with industry standards.
- Recognize the essential role of human oversight and professional standards in delivering responsible AI interpreting.

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KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Bill Rivers
Congressional Advocate



Session:

Language Access in 2026: Where We Stand — Federal Updates & the Road Ahead.

Join Dr. Bill Rivers for an informative session on the current federal landscape for language access. Drawing on his deep experience in policy and advocacy, Dr. Rivers will provide a clear overview of recent developments, what they mean for our field, and what to expect in the year ahead.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Understand the legal limits of Executive Orders and federal guidance on language access.
- Learn about recent advances by the U.S. Congress in promoting language access at the federal level.
- Gain a comprehensive view of the federal laws and regulations requiring language access.

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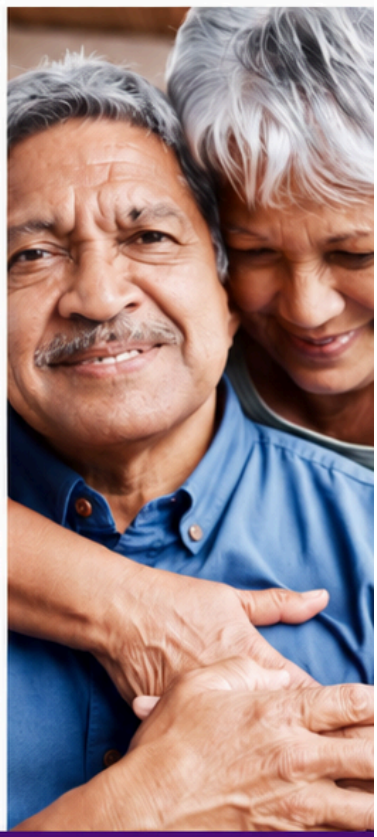
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TAHIT 2026

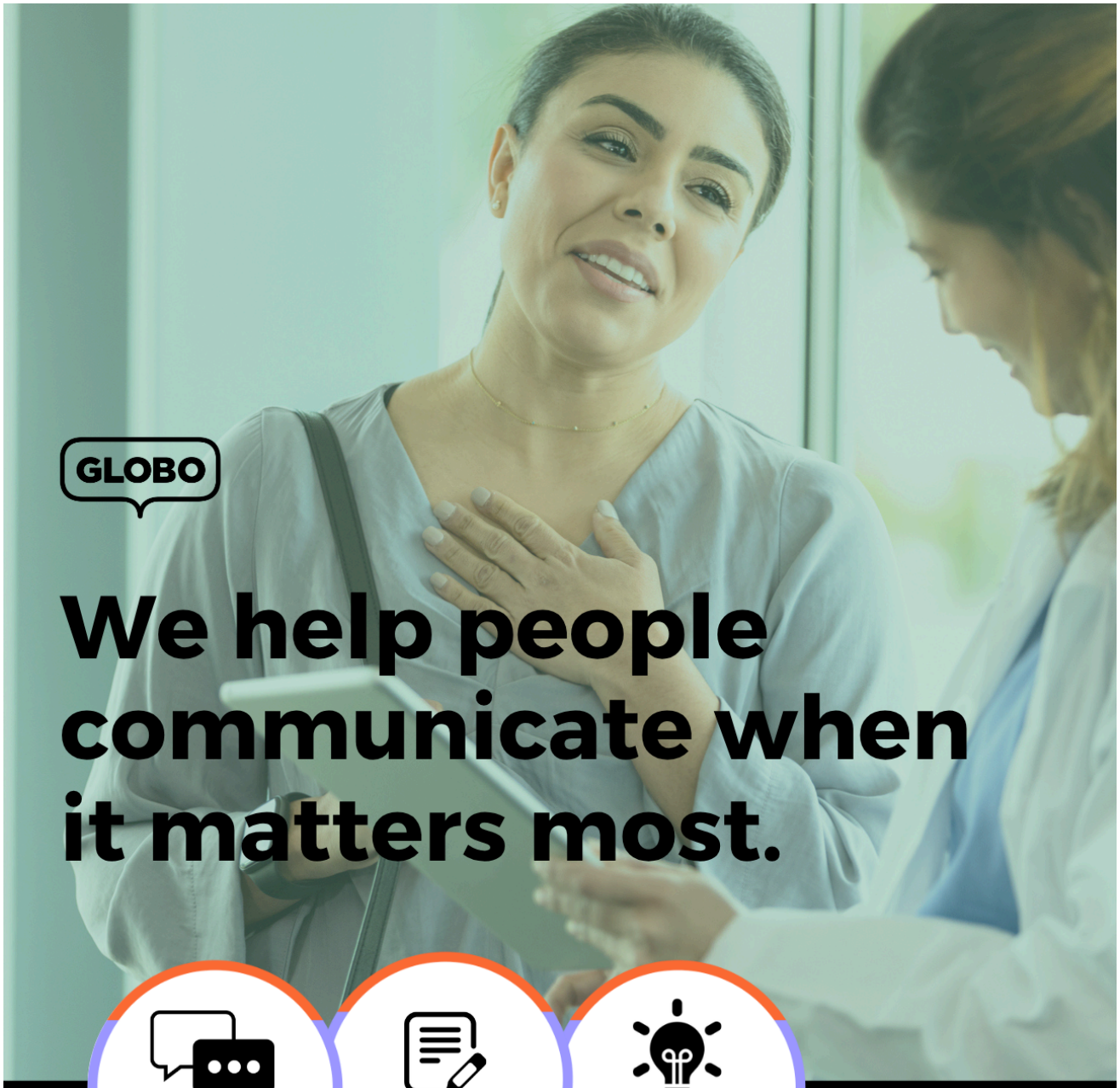
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Dr. Elba Garcia
Dallas County Commissioner, District 4

Friday, October 2, 2026

Texas Stars advancing language access and patient safety in Texas

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I Speak Texas

Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing persons have a right under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to free interpretation services.

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Non-English speaking persons have a right under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act to free interpretation assistance in their language. The "I Speak" card will help service providers identify a person's language before calling an interpreter for assistance. Remove the card above and use it to request language assistance when accessing services. This card is not required for you to receive services.

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- Public Assistance Programs
- Public Services (water, trash, electric)
- Social Service Organizations
- Public Schools and Universities
- Public Transportation
- Emergency and Non-Emergency Services (911, 311)
- Courts (city, county, state and federal)

18th Annual TAHIT Language Access Symposium

Friday, October 2, 2026 • Texas Scottish Rite for Children • Dallas, Texas

Room A = Auditorium | Room B = Reverchon Room

Time	Room A	Room B
7:30 AM	**Registration Opens • Continental Breakfast**	
8:30–8:45 AM	**Opening Statements / Welcome**	
8:45–9:45 AM	**Opening Keynote — Dr. Christina Cordero** *The Joint Commission Accreditation 360 Updates* **Location: Auditorium**	
9:45–10:00 AM	**Q&A**	
10:00–10:10 AM	Transition / Room Change	Transition / Room Change
10:10–11:10 AM	**Matthew Dickens** Ethics in Healthcare: Interpreting for People with Disabilities	**Joshua Collier** Cross-Training as a CHW: Core Competencies, Certification, and Lived Experience
11:10–11:20 AM	**Q&A**	**Q&A**
11:20–11:30 AM	Transition / Room Change	Transition / Room Change
11:30 AM–1:00 PM	**Manuel Higginbotham** MD Anderson Advanced Ethical Decision-Making Process **1.5 HOURS**	**Dr. Tatiana Cestari** Remote Interpreting in Healthcare **1.5 HOURS**
1:00–2:10 PM	**Lunch / Networking / Exhibitors**	
2:15–3:15 PM	**Brian Duran** Children's Health — Pediatric Oncology Interpreting	**Mila Golovine** AI Ethical Interpreting
3:15–3:25 PM	**Q&A**	**Q&A**
3:25–3:30 PM	Transition to Auditorium	Transition to Auditorium
3:30–4:30 PM	**Closing Keynote — Dr. Bill Rivers** *Language Access in 2026: Where We Stand, Federal Updates, and the Road Ahead* **Location: Auditorium**	
4:30–4:45 PM	**Q&A**	
4:45–5:15 PM	**Closing Statements and Raffle**	
6:00 PM	**Texas Star Award Reception** Canopy by Hilton Dallas Uptown	

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