

201 Wesbrook Hall
77 Pleasant St. S.E.
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, MN 55455

March 19, 2007

Dear Kaying,

Re: Update on the *Interpreter Training Project in Crookston and Willmar, Minnesota*

We are writing with a brief update on the project to expand interpreting services in Bremer Communities that has been funded by your foundation. We would be grateful if you could share this information, where appropriate, within your organization.

Two key activities have been funded by the Otto Bremer Foundation:

1. Tuition scholarships for eight students in Crookston, Minnesota, to take two semester-length University of Minnesota interpreting courses,
2. A 70-hour training session in August 2007 to train skilled and experienced interpreters from Greater Minnesota as future trainers.

Scholarship-supported places in interpreting classes

We ran a three-day orientation in Crookston with Bush Foundation funds on November 3rd, 4th and 5th 2006. Sixteen local interpreters participated in this workshop. The subsequent interactive television course connecting a classroom at the University of Minnesota, Crookston, with a class in Willmar and a class in the Twin Cities started this January. Interpreters in Crookston quickly filled the eight scholarship places and the class is now running successfully, with an excellent attendance rate even on -20°F Crookston nights! These students each received a \$1,000 tuition scholarship funded by the Otto Bremer Foundation and will be eligible for a second scholarship when they enroll in the *Consecutive*

Interpreting class in the fall. Supplemental scholarships of \$200 were given to six Willmar students participating in the current ITV class to bring the support to the same level as Crookston students.

Interpreter Trainer Training

The training this August supported by the Otto Bremer Foundation will follow a training supported by the Bush Foundation for Twin Cities interpreters (Hmong, Somali, Oromo and Spanish speakers), that took place at the University of Minnesota last month. The 70-hour training was co-taught by instructors from the Program in Translation and Interpreting and the university's Center for Teaching and Learning. We received twice as many applications as we could accommodate for the stipend-supported places in the training. This enabled us to select a very well-qualified and diverse group of trainees, whose attendance and participation was exemplary. The participants have subsequently organized themselves (independently of our program) to meet and follow up on issues raised in the training. This experience encourages us to believe that this summer's training will be a high-quality and successful program. We will also use our experience of this January's course to make further improvements before August. The August trainees will include current students from Crookston and Willmar, some of whom will then be appointed to assist in the fall semester credit courses.

We attach pictures of the three-day Crookston orientation, with members of the current ITV course. We also attach a copy of our revised budget, which reflects the differences between the original proposed \$62,686 project and the actual funded \$30,000 project.

Thank you once again for your support of efforts to improve interpreting standards in Minnesota, thus improving access to health care and other services for limited English proficiency members of the community. We will be in touch again soon to report on the project's completion.

Kind regards,

Bruce T. Downing Ph.D.

Director, Program in Translation and Interpreting