

Black Narratives – Culturally Competent Services
April 11, 2016, NCIEC Webinar.

*****DISCLAIMER!!!*****

THE FOLLOWING IS AN UNEDITED ROUGH DRAFT
TRANSLATION FROM THE CART PROVIDER'S OUTPUT
FILE. THIS TRANSCRIPT IS NOT VERBATIM AND HAS NOT
BEEN PROOFREAD. THIS IS NOT A LEGAL DOCUMENT.

THIS FILE MAY CONTAIN ERRORS.

THIS TRANSCRIPT MAY NOT BE COPIED OR
DISSEMINATED TO ANYONE UNLESS PERMISSION IS
OBTAINED FROM THE HIRING PARTY.

SOME INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN MAY BE
WORK PRODUCT OF THE SPEAKERS AND/OR PRIVATE
CONVERSATIONS AMONG PARTICIPANTS. HIRING
PARTY ASSUMES ALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR SECURING
PERMISSION FOR DISSEMINATION OF THIS TRANSCRIPT
AND HOLDS HARMLESS TEXAS CLOSED CAPTIONING
FOR ANY ERRORS IN THE TRANSCRIPT AND ANY

RELEASE OF INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN.

*****DISCLAIMER!!!*****

>> Amy: Hi, everyone. First of all I want to apologize for the technical issues. Sometimes the system chokes up when everyone is logging in at the same time so it can be a bit of a struggle. So I first want to say thank you for your patience. I know you were wondering since you hadn't seen or heard anything if the webinar was happening, but it is. Thank you for joining the webinar this evening. I'm actually really excited about it.

Our presenter tonight is air Erica West Oyedele and I'm excited also to listen to her, see her presentation this evening.

Next slide, please?

Carrie is still dealing with a few technical issues with the captioning so I want to make sure she can see me say go to the next slide.

I'm Amy Williamson. I'm the instructional coordinator at the MARIE Center. One of five regional

centers under the NCIEC, which is the National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centers.

We're federally funded and with those funds we provide interpreter training all over the country in different regions, in different specializations as well, trainings like the one we're going to participate in this evening.

Next slide, please.

Each of those five centers, one is the WRIEC, which is the western Oregon regional center., at Oregon university.

We have the CATIE Center, we have the Northeastern University center, the NURIEC, and then we have the southeast, which is based at Gallaudet University campus.

And I'm sure you're familiar with the work that we do in your area based on those regional centers.

Carrie, would you please mind going to the next slide?

It seems we might still be having some technical issues.

Erica, can you join me on screen, please?

You can change the size of your screen. Right now you may or may not be able to see the PowerPoint, I have someone else monitoring and manipulating the PowerPoints for me. You can enlarge your screen if you want to have the video feed portion larger. You can scale it wide or scale it smaller.

You can always send messages in a separate window as well. For example, we're going to have the scenarios much later on that Erica is going to use in her presentation. That was sent by email and hopefully you've had a chance to look at those in preparation for the webinar this evening. We will be referencing those or Erica will throughout her presentation.

I will hold on to the CEU information for the conclusion of the presentation this evening.

Erica will make your questions, but at the end.

Carrie, can you please advance the next slide?

Is it still on the first slide or am I the only one who is seeing the first slide?

>> Erica: It's still on the first slide.

>> Amy: I think something's happening. We might

have it. We might have it. This is my happy dance.

Okay. Let me just go ahead and introduce our presenter this evening, a good friend of mine, Erica West Oyedele.

A bunch of us are from the West Coast. She did go to American River College and she's from Sacramento, California. She's an awesome person. And she'll be able to go ahead and share her information, but she did her master's thesis in collecting information on narratives, and this is what she's going to share with us this evening.

We're going to go ahead and jump into her slides and I now present Erica.

>> Erica: Thank you very much, Amy, for that introduction.

Good evening, everyone.

I think we'll go ahead and get started.

Before we get started, I would like to know whose in the audience this evening?

If you're looking at your text box on the right-hand side of your screen, in that chat box you will actually see what looks like a pair of hands. I

would like to ask you to go ahead and click the button to raise your hand to respond to my questions.

I would like to know how many of you are working as interpreter educators in interpreter training programs. Please raise your hand.

All right. About 20 or so of you. That's good to know.

You can put your hands down.

And I would also like to know how many of you are interpreters of color, raise your hand, please.

I see we have about 25 interpreters of color who have joined us tonight. All right, you can put your hands down now, interpreters of color.

And finally, I would like to know how many of you work as interpreters or even serve as a mentor for new interpreters? Raise your hand to respond to that question.

I see we have about 80 or so of you who have raised your hand. Well, that's good to know. That helps me to definitely frame my conversation based on the audience that we have with us.

Carrie, could you go to the next slide, please?

Just as a matter of introduction, again, I am Erica West Oyedele. I am an interpreter, an interpreter educator from Sacramento, California. I would say last year -- well, actually, 2015 I graduated with my master's from Western Oregon University. And the degree focused on interpreting studies.

While at Western Oregon University I focused my research on African-American and black interpreters and their experiences working in the field of interpreting.

Before I dive into my talk I need to back up a little bit more just to tell you a little bit about who I am and why I decided to research the topic that focused on black interpreters and their experiences.

I can hear, of course. My parents both can hear. And I learned American Sign Language while in a classroom setting at an interpreter preparation program.

I was about 18 or so years old when that started, and that was the beginning of the process for me. Many approached me and said, do you know what? I think it's a great idea for you to learn American Sign Language

because we need more interpreters of color. We need more black interpreters. And so from hearing their comments I said okay, why not? So I continued on in my program and graduated.

Because I enjoyed learning so much, I decided that I would transfer over from the community college and start my studies to earn a degree in the interpreter preparation program. While in the program I had a deaf mentor who worked with me in the classroom and always gave me the support that I needed and let me know that me as an interpreter of color, my work was needed in the field.

Everyone was warm, everyone was welcoming to me. That's what this deaf mentor told me would happen. So of course, after I graduated, I started working as a sign language interpreter.

In the first year that I started working I worked with a team because I wanted to be careful with the types of assignments that I accepted. I wanted to work with a team who had their certification as sort of a support to me.

I do remember one team, he was a Latino male, he

asked me if I was familiar with an organization by the name of NAOBI. That is the national alliance of black interpreters.

At the time I was unfamiliar with the organization. But I thought that it was something that I needed to keep in mind and I was grateful that he shared this information with me.

A little later as I started my career there was one particular situation that I noticed that colleagues were not as friendly or welcoming as I thought that they would be. After we worked an assignment and when the assignment was over, I asked if they could share some sort of tips or share feedback with me that would help me to match my deaf consumer and to provide them appropriate services.

I was told that actually I was very articulate, and after hearing this comment I said, hmm, okay, that's fine.

So there was another situation that came about when I was working with a team interpreter. This interpreter was staff at a particular agency. Because that interpreter was staff, she was familiar

with the deaf consumers as well as the hearing consumers. And so this person thought that it would be kind of funny to sort of crack jokes with me being the butt of those jokes. And so at that time I felt that I had to take those comments and interpret those comments and not share how I felt about the comments because I had to maintain a neutral goal as an interpreter.

Like, for example, they made comments about black people. They would say you know, black people are this way. They would use the N word to describe black people. But of course, these comments were not directed towards me, but they were kind of made in my space. And I didn't really feel comfortable when this was happening, but I was a new interpreter and I thought that I had to behave in an appropriate way to maintain my role of neutrality as an interpreter.

But as a result of this, I left the assignment feeling uneasy. And then as I shared my experience with others, they shared a similar experience.

The feelings that I felt that day kind of resonated with me, and I talked to some other interpreters to

share my experience, interpreters that I had met through the organization NAOBI.

I went to a NAOBI conference and while at the conference my sense of self, my sense of belonging was there. I finally felt connected. I had a shared experience with the interpreters who attended that conference.

Those interpreters at the conference talked about similar experiences that had happened to them at a work environment, so I think having those discussions with them were very beneficial to me. Unfortunately I didn't have those discussions when I was in my interpreting program because there weren't that many black interpreters to have these discussions with.

So when I had these discussions with mentors they would say it's really no big deal. They would kind of minimize my feelings so I kind of felt uneasy because I thought, well, this is important to me, but they don't see it the same way I see it.

But when I talked to other black interpreters and other interpreters of color, my shared my experience.

If I shared my experience with interpreters of

color, there was a sense of understanding. They knew where I was coming from. But if I shared those experiences with a white interpreter, often times I wouldn't receive the same support that I received from the interpreters of color or black interpreter because their experience is not the same experience that I had.

So all the things that I learned at the NAOBI conference were esteem builders for me. I was fired up, I was ready to experience the community in a different way.

I decided to work to establish a group of black interpreters in the northern California area. I thought it would be great if those interpreters could get together to share their narratives and share their stories and that's something we did do.

But that group I would have to say, some of them were working interpreters, some were interpreting students who had not yet graduated from their interpreting programs, and some of them had decided, do you know what? This profession is really not for me. I don't want to be in the profession at all.

So from being a part of that group and from

observing the conversations that were happening, I wondered why some decided to just leave the profession before they even started? A lot of them talked about that the field of interpreting was not welcoming for them. A lot of black interpreters said this. And their comments really touched me. And I thought about the numbers of black interpreters are already small and if they continue to feel these feelings then the numbers, of course, would decrease even further.

And so it just all very ironic to me that my interpreter educators, mentors, members of the deaf community, members of RID, NCIEC, and other organizations, talk about diversity and how it's important to have diversity in the field of interpreting, but interpreters of color do not feel that, which I wanted to share before we get started.

Next slide, please.

Maybe some of you are already aware of some of the statistics in reference to our profession.

When we look at RID in the field of interpreters, we'll say about 88% of those interpreters are white and typically female. That's about 87, 88 percent of

those interpreters. The other 12% are interpreters of color. And a subset from that group, about five percent, are black interpreters.

So because of these figures we already know that we're working with a very small group of interpreters. And when we look at the annual report from RID, we notice that the numbers really don't fluctuate much at all and the numbers have pretty much been the same over time. But we still hear the narrative by saying we need black interpreters, we need more interpreters, we need to partner with interpreter groups to recruit black interpreters, but it seems to be some sort of a disconnect happening in the profession and that's one of the reasons that I decided to research this population to gather their narratives, to learn more about their experiences, and specifically the experiences of black interpreters.

I wanted to share their experiences with the mainstream so that everyone in the field would know what black interpreters experience. Everything that we discuss tonight of course is not new information to you. It's information that's been discussed over

a period of time. Mostly with interpreters of color.

But I would like to present that we would share this information with other interpreters so that all interpreters will become aware and know what interpreters of color, specifically black interpreters, experience.

So again, getting those experiences of interpreters of colors out into the mainstream, going back to the statistics again, we know about the five percent and we also know about the 12%, but effective change cannot happen unless we partner with the larger community.

I think we definitely need to start discussing our systemic changes and how to make those changes happen. We need to look at power and privilege and how those systems impact interpreters and our access to work. And how the system impacts us individually by sharing those experiences of interpreters of color.

I really would like to discuss cultural competency and also having this competency in our interpreting skill and how I will sign it in this presentation you may think of more of a gloss of understanding, but when

you see the sign of understanding, that means competence in this particular presentation.

During my research there were three components. I started with a survey -- well, let me back up a moment. I actually started with the focus groups. There was a focus group of black deaf users of interpreting services, and I felt that it was important to gain the deaf community's perspective.

Maybe we as interpreters feel that there aren't enough interpreters of color, but I wanted to see what the black deaf community thought, and if they shared a similar feeling.

As a part of my research, after I completed the focus groups with several groups, I sent out a large scale survey to gather those responses from interpreters all over the United States.

And the final part of my research included interviews where I interviewed a few interpreters of color to learn more about their stories. There was a Latino American, there was an Asian American and a black American that I interviewed to gain their stories.

I wanted to know more about what was happening in the field of interpreting through the eyes of interpreters of color. A lot of them reported that they felt that there was not enough cultural competence and they felt that their colleagues didn't understand them. Also, those students -- those who completed the survey also were students of interpreter training programs, felt that this lack of cultural competence was existent in their programs.

We'll move on a little bit further and you'll learn about a specific model that deals with the process of becoming culturally competent. Some may say that this term is overused a bit, but actually it isn't because different people share different views of what the term means. We're a diverse group of people so we need to go back to a definition that we can start with to gain understanding.

As we go on a little bit further we'll have scenarios that we'll talk about. There are five scenarios that we'll go through, and with each scenario we'll discuss cultural competency in reference to that scenario and how we can ensure that

cultural competency takes place.

The last two scenarios that we'll discuss bring on a little different point. I'll actually poll you, the audience, to see what behaviors you think are appropriate in those situations. So next slide, please.

When I discuss cultural competence in reference to interpreters and interpreter educators, I discuss it based on a set of behaviors and actions that we follow to do no harm to one another. And following the code of professional conduct.

But also for a moment I would like us to think about our work as interpreters. We are familiar with American Sign Language, we're familiar with culture, but thinking about how these two aspects of our work intersect.

Also, if you think about the interpreters that can hear, how culture is very important to us, and we want to make sure that we are not doing harm to our consumers, whether the consumers can hear or the consumer cannot hear.

We want to make sure that as interpreters we become

more culturally competent. We want to make sure that we avoid those cases of harm for our consumers.

And these cases of harm of course are things that I've witnessed -- cases of harm are of course things that I've witnessed and I'm sure other interpreters have witnessed.

And as a result of competence, then interpreters can have more positive experiences in their work.

I went to Ohio a couple of weeks ago for their state conference. And while there I saw Dave Cowan. The conference was great. I enjoyed myself there. They talked a little bit about social justice while I was there. That was one of the tracks for the conference.

During David's presentation, he wondered why there was such an emphasis on social justice. And for interpreters of color specifically.

But really if you think about social justice we think about ethics and how ethics are important for interpreters when they're making their decisions.

We think of ethics in terms of decision making and we also think of ethics in terms of cultural competence. Next slide, please.

I want to give you all a moment just to look over the slide a bit before we start our discussion.

I'll go ahead and start on the left-hand side of the slide with cultural awareness.

When we think about cultural awareness, often times we think of cultural competency as well. We think about another person's culture, and of course that's a part of it, but really when we look at this particular model that we'll discuss tonight, we start with the cultural awareness and that awareness starts with yourself. It's an internal awareness.

Thinking about your own culture and how you influence the situation.

Like, for example, if you attended an interpreter preparation program, you studied to become an interpreter, you learned about hearing culture, American Sign Language and you took a few other courses.

If you are a person who has no deaf family members before you started learning American Sign Language, you really were unfamiliar with the culture of the deaf community when you started.

And many times while you were in those interpreting programs they talked about in order to learn more about the deaf community you had to learn more about deaf culture, so we'll start with first the culture awareness.

Starting with yourself. How you were raised, what things you were taught in your view of the world becoming familiar with that and how that impacts your work.

When I think about culture and my identity, I identify as a black female and I also have a whole list of identities that I identify with. And all of those identities influence who I am as I go about my day-to-day. Understanding our identity, how our identity is developed, that's a very important process for us.

And we'll discuss more about identity as we go along.

The next part of the process is in reference to cultural knowledge. And this is more related to the academic knowledge that you gain in a college classroom setting or by attending a workshop,

something that you've read in a book. These are more formal experiences that make up the cultural knowledge portion of this model.

While in my interpreter preparation program I learned about the deaf community, I learned about deaf culture, everything that I learned was given to me in a sense. And of course, I couldn't take on the experiences as a deaf person because I'm not deaf, but I gained knowledge about that community. And as a result of that we were instructed to go out into the community and share experiences with those in the community, but I often feel that we didn't interact with the community enough.

And that interaction, if we move on to the right side of the screen, is our cultural interactions. That's our direct engagement with members of another cultural community.

If I didn't participate in the cultural encounters, just having cultural knowledge is not sufficient. In the classroom we are trained, of course, to have knowledge, but that knowledge needs to be coupled with exposure. And by having cultural

knowledge and cultural encounters, we learned to assimilate and also include each of them in our interpreting experiences and interactions. And that way we learn how to behave appropriately based on the cultural context of the situation.

If I don't gain the knowledge or have those encounters, then of course I'm limited in my interpreting skill. I have to have exposure to members of the deaf community in order for my interpreting skills to improve and also to take on the behaviors and tendencies of that community.

So when we look at the process, we always end with a cultural desire. That's the desire to want to learn more. That's the one thing that pushes us further to engage with the community and to be receptive to interacting with individuals from diverse groups.

So we learn through destruction in a course, that's one thing, but it's also great to follow the process continually to go through and have each of the constructs involved.

So for the next thing that we're going to go to, I'm going to ask a question for those in the group and

I would like to have you type your responses in the chat box. Before we get to that, we're going to talk about the terms individualistic or collectivism.

we'll talk about that in reference to cultural competency and involves in different systems.

So if we think about the hearing community, do you think that the hearing community is more individualistic or collectivist. Go ahead and respond in the text box. I see we have one brave soul that decided to respond. Great.

Thanks for your responses.

All right. So now we'll shift our focus just a little bit. And we'll talk about deaf culture. Is deaf culture individualist or collectivist? Go ahead and respond in the text box.

All right. I see a few of my students responded here.

And the next question, if we're ready for that question. We'll talk about Latino culture, would you say it's more individualist or more collectivist? Go ahead and respond in the text box.

All right. Typically collectivist. I noticed

that a lot of you commented with that for the Latino community.

Someone just mentioned a comment about it really depends on where a person was raised. I understand that, but just thinking about that culture in general and how we typically characterize individuals who are members of the Latino community.

All right. So for the same question applying to the Asian community. Would you say that that community is individualist or collectivist? And we would say most often collectivist for that group.

What about the black community? Individualist or collectivist?

I see some of you have said collectivist, some of you have said it depends. And it depends on several factors, I understand that.

If we look historically at the black community we would say that the community is more collectivist, but when we look at American culture and American system, it looks different for all of us, of course, based on our background.

And so the point of these questions is to look at

an individual, whether that individual can hear or whether that individual is deaf or Latino or black or Asian. Many would also say those who can hear, would we say they are more individualist because they are members of this particular community?

We'll notice in interpreter preparation programs we discuss the hearing community as individualist and we discuss the deaf community as more collectivist.

And this is in reference to more of the white community, hearing community, and some would say that people who are in the deaf community have a similar view possibly.

So when we think about the authors of books and what they've written that impacts our understanding and definition of how we see each group and how we see the collective, of course each community has their own collectivist or individualist behavior so we can't really say that one group is one way or the other.

So going back to that culture desire again, that craving, that stimulus inside of you to interact with others from other communities is most important.

One of the reasons that I attend RID conference

is while I'm there I'll have an opportunity to network with interpreters of color and of course by doing so I receive the energy that I need to go back into my community because these interpreters have shared values with me.

The translators of color conference is also really important. I don't know if anyone has ever attended.

Some don't feel that it's their space and so they don't attend, but when I hear communities like that I always find it really interesting. And the reason why is the explanation I receive is that they don't -- the white interpreters say they don't want to enter into a space that isn't theirs or they want to be respectful of the space.

And while I understand that intention and it is well intended, it's also important that our colleagues come to where we are, listen, learn, find out what our experiences are.

Really interpreters of color, black interpreters, we need our allies and so I'm always at any opportunity that I have encouraging my white counterparts to participate and be present when we have those

discussions. So they can see what's happening, they understand what's happening in our community with us as individuals.

(Dog barking).

I would never say do not enter this space. There are definitely -- you are definitely welcome.

Of course, there we will focus on experiences from the prospective interpreters of color and there might even be an opportunity to chime in or ask questions, and it's totally welcome. It's something that we encourage interpreters to do. Our white counterparts. And also knowing that there is that understanding of intersectionality, which is a topic that frequently comes up and how it affects us directly.

So saying, I shouldn't be there, I don't feel like this is my space, really didn't do any justice to that interpreter or to the interpreters of color who are really depending on their allies to support and trust them in the field.

So you need to start with the desire to be present, the desire to learn and the desire to be involved. And

the interaction takes place preconference, during conference, post-conference. It's an opportunity to socialize, get to know one another. And the more that those bridges are formed, the better we create an allyship between both groups.

So even though I see the hesitancy sometimes when those conferences of color are mentioned, I always encourage my counterparts, my white counterparts, to definitely be present.

Let's go ahead and move on to the next slide.

For the duration of my presentation, obviously I want you to keep thinking about cultural competency. Of course, it starts with the self analysis portion, the education, the encounters, learning appropriate behaviors and interacting, the skills, the desire, all of those portions and constructs we had on that previous slide. I want you to keep thinking about those as we apply them to the scenarios.

I'm not going to show it on the screen right now, but give me one second.

So I do have the first scenario. It's interpreter of color who is with a team interpreter, a white

interpreter. And it's related to -- it's a college course related to gender and race and class, and this was the discussion in this classroom, in this environment.

At the end of it the white interpreter did pull her interpreter of color colleague aside and said why do we constantly have to talk about this? It's making the -- they're making the problem worse.

I'm just curious, reading those comments or hearing this scenario. What was the problem here with the cultural competency, I'm just curious. Go ahead and type your responses or your thoughts.

I guess I should have started with two things first. I did want to let you know first in this scenario that I'm sharing -- all of them actually I'm not making these up. These are actual scenarios that interpreters, our colleagues have experienced, and of course, I'm obscured some of the information -- I've obscured some of the information for their privacy, but these are actual events that have taken place in the lives of our interpreters while at work.

Some of the discussion that will arise will be

tough. It's going to be uncomfortable. And I want to let you know that that is okay because that is actually the process of unpacking information or feelings. And it's important because it applies to us professionally.

There's two things that often comes up when discussing the situation among interpreters. Sometimes the interpreter might say well, I did try to call out the individual prior to and let them know that their behavior was not appropriate. Or that they misunderstood their intention might be the reaction of the white interpreter. But it might be that they don't have the desire to learn more. That is sometimes the feeling that the black interpreter, interpreter of color might feel. But it also could be due to a lack of encounters, and that's something we mentioned on the previous slide.

So I thought it was important to share this particular story because sometimes we do talk about these issues over and over again, but they're real. It's the reality that we live in and that we face on a daily basis that may not be common knowledge to our

white counterparts.

So it's not that we're making the problem worse, but these are problems that do exist for interpreters of color, not just in the profession, but in society as a whole. So facing those encounters on a daily basis is their reality or including myself, our reality.

Let's go ahead and move on to the second scenario. And this scenario we have a deaf consumer of color and the hearing consumer is treating them in an oppressive way, so they're showing some oppressive behaviors. The reasons behind it, whether they were deaf or because they were black, may not know exactly, but nonetheless, this was the reaction that they were receiving.

And that also toggles us into various trauma, coming into this situation that has resonating and continual effects.

This particular interpreter tried to talk to their mentor, to talk about the emotions they were feeling after experiencing this negative impression from the consumer.

And several interpreters have shared these types of stories and experiences over time that they experienced oppression from interpreters or from their deaf consumers is well while working. And so trying to go to your mentor to express your -- your feelings has proved to be frustrating because then they've been disregarded on that end as well and not acknowledged.

So how does this scenario fit into the topic of cultural competency? Where does the problem surface in this scenario?

There's a point that was just mentioned here about vicarious trauma. Yeah, that's the reason why we have mentors. We want to be able to unpack and discuss the emotional stress that we might face on an assignment.

And sometimes we can't just rely on our daily encounters or our once in awhile encounters with interpreters of color. Sometimes, for example, when we're in the deaf community or in the deaf culture, there might be very, very forward or direct, and we tend to recognize that, but there's also deaf people of color within that community too.

And they can sometimes feel oppressed, even if their own -- among their own group. And that does happen.

And that happens to interpreters as well. And it can hurt interpreters and it can really cause a shortage in their ability to be able to function in their profession. And these experiences accumulate and they are real.

Let's go to the third scenario.

I think the third scenario is maybe something that I see happen often, perhaps I can even include myself in this, with educators of color and interpreters as well. How do you respond to people who say you need to get more involved?

Some in some ways that's -- in some ways that's a great response when there's a recognition of a problem that we have, it is nice for someone to encourage you to get involved.

But we're talking about numbers here, five percent black, 12 percent of color in our field. We're not working with high volumes of numbers, which means there's not very many of us in the profession. So we

need our allies to also be involved in that process of getting involved.

When we can't say hey, this 12 percent or five percent are responsible for changing the system. Interpreters of color, which is probably something that may be overlooked, volunteer quite a bit in their community, with their colleagues. For example, I live in the Sacramento area in California, and I'm about two hours from the San Francisco bay area. And I drive regularly to the San Francisco bay area, and there I get involved with the black deaf advocates of the area, with events they may be hosting or other events that may be taking place.

Just any uplifting event that I can participate in.

I'm with the deaf community there, but I don't typically see any of my white colleagues in that space. So often it looks like the interpreters of color are in the community, but they are there in different ways and I think that's important that that be recognized as well.

So it's about giving power not only to the deaf

community, black deaf community, but also to that interpreting community of color.

So yeah, absolutely, we should get involved, but before you ask them to get involved you should ask or find out what they already are doing.

All right. Let's go on to the fourth scenario. This one will be handled a little bit differently. I want to know what you would do in this particular situation. And again, I want to emphasize these are real situations. I can't overemphasize this enough. So you might get a little uncomfortable with the verbiage. I will explain a little bit and elaborate more about what happened, but in this particular situation, as you have read previously, there's an interpreter who was white and a team interpreter there on this assignment. The team was white as well, but they were getting switched out because one of them had to call in sick so the agency had to be responsible to send a new interpreter to replace the sick interpreter.

The interpreter that got the new assignment was black, but the interpreter knew something about the

client, that the client -- the team knew that the client would not receive this black interpreter well.

What would you do in this particular situation? I want you to think about that because the team interpreter who was white tried to deter the black interpreter from going in there, but think about it as an individual facing racism and this particular type of situation. I'm just curious about what you would have done.

I see lots of thoughts coming through. Everyone's thinking.

Okay. I'm reviewing the responses. I think they're all pretty valid. I'm looking over them. I'm going to tell you what actually did happen in this scenario.

The interpreter who is regularly assigned to this particular consumer, I don't know how they knew or why they knew, but the interpreter regularly assigned to this particular consumer -- of course everything worked out at the last minute, but this particular interpreter tried to stop the black interpreter, team interpreter, from going in. Literally saying, do you

know what? You shouldn't go in. And the black interpreter was a little stumped, wasn't quite sure why they were being told not to go in to the assignment.

And just note that the team interpreter never told the black interpreter why, just said no, you shouldn't go in. But eventually did give an explanation. And the black interpreter just regurgitating what happened, said that it seemed that the white team interpreter just didn't feel comfortable, didn't seem comfortable explaining how they felt or what the situation was that they were about to enter into. So that made them feel a little bit disenheartened. And of course the client, the interpreter went ahead and went in, the black interpreter went in and the client did say nigger. And the interpreter said, well, did this nigger interpret well for you today? And then left.

But then the team interpreter did stay and she asked -- I'm saying she. I'm sorry, interpreter clarification. The team interpreter did stay and then asked if the other black interpreter wanted to continue providing interpreting services.

Anyway, the job did end eventually and at the end of the job that is what the black interpreter said, asked the consumer who had used a racial slur to them, did this nigger interpret well enough for you today? And they were received with a thumb's up from the side of the consumer.

That might be a little uncomfortable, but I shared this story with you for several reasons, because this happens often. Maybe I shouldn't say often but it happens more often than it should and also more often than anything that our white counterparts have had to experience on the job.

You're showing up to an assignment, even before you even lift your hands, wow, you're getting hit with a racial slur. Maybe even the word nigger.

To be able to discuss that with a mentor and to be rejected or to minimize your sentiment or for someone to tell you that, oh, it was nothing, just by the way that they don't take seriously what you have to say, can be hurtful. And I'm not going to mention any details about the assignment or the location because I want to keep the integrity of the interpreter

anonymous, but yeah, this was research that was performed with different interpreters in different locations, and this situation resurfaced several times.

And really the interpreter wasn't really upset with the deaf consumer. They were more upset with their team because they were detained from even going in prior to the assignment, not being explained the reasons why they were not to go in. A lack of perhaps ability to have a conversation about it. And not being able to discuss racism and the experiences that may have affected this interpreter being able to be effective on the job.

And this is what scenarios look like when individuals are not culturally competent.

And this can impede the ability to effectively work and feel safe in your job environment. Think about all the layers that we have to manage, manage being professional, managing my own sense of safety, my own personal experiences, my own perhaps past trauma with a host of other things and being able to function effectively in your role as an interpreter.

How do we address it?

well, the culturally competent response is that we work as a team. At least being able to talk ahead of time with your team to preconference, discuss. Maybe it's not the actual interpreter's responsibility. We know that individuals have strong preferences and biases. Maybe that can be informed to the agency who is making the decisions in placements for the interpreters on assignments.

Do we say the deaf consumer must accept anyone and everyone? well, I mean, think about that. It's just saying that you have to accept something day in and day out, whether it's a racist behavior or other. These are comments for discussion that need to be had and need to take place.

But all in all interpreters want to be able to feel safe, talking about interpreters of color and their environment and feel validated so they can be successful in this profession.

I think because of time I think the fifth scenario.

was not as egregious as being called a racial slur, but it had to do with a team and their comments to the

interpreter of color.

For example, when in the waiting room it was noticed that a mother came in with five children, there was some negative comments related to the mother, her culture and the fact that she had so many kids, and it was a negative comment about why they keep having kids.

I think it's important for us to think about our comments and the impact that they have on our colleagues and to the profession and community as a whole. So I'm not going to have the time to really dive into the fifth scenario, but I do notice Barbara Hunt -- I'm not sure if I understand exactly what you mean. You asked about the responsibility of the interpreters. Did you want to type that?

I'm talking about the interpreter talking about the black consumer, that it was racist. I'm saying take responsibility. My experience has been that if you just tell your league don't go in to the job, it won't be as well received. I hope I clarified that a little bit.

Next slide, please.

I wanted to go ahead and wrap up briefly about -- with a few comments about cultural competency and the professionalism of the individual. Again, we start with our self and that comes with desire, demonstrating that desire. We have to do a self-analysis regardless of our background, our experiences, we have to look at ourselves from the inside out and how that relates to the majority culture, the dominant culture and how that impacts us in our behaviors.

Especially we're talking about a marginalized community and their stories and their history. It's important that other groups listen to and acknowledge. The important part is not to be dismissive or to minimize the discussion. That's super critical. We never want to get on the defensive.

Interpreters of color or from whatever background or diverse background you come from, it's important to ball out our colleagues, whether it's intentional or not. And help them to understand the impact of their behavior in a particular situation.

Maybe you don't do it that day, maybe you do it

another day. Maybe you take a moment to really empathize with your colleague in the situation, mull it over, and this is what I found in my research, specifically talking about the subject of social capital.

That social capital really relates to the quality of relationships that we have, the network that we have with individuals and our relationship with them inside of that network. We have to analyze if our relationships are strong or weak with those members.

I did notice throughout my research -- I should say that the research that I've collected does show specifically in relation to social capital the lack of connection with the community reduces social capital. So it's really important that the interpreters of color have those networks.

It might be that it requires more education, maybe explaining more about organizations like NAOBI, ITOC. Have those organizations mentioned and taught about in the interpreter preparation programs. And mention of other organizations in which these interpreters of color and their allies can join to increase social

capital.

And of course resources are important. The connection to the resources in our field is of optimum importance. For example, I did recently read a particular book that mentions the history of the profession and other persons of note in our field, but how often do they actually talk about or reference individuals of color? Or their contributions to the field.

The oppression of deaf individuals and to and to individuals of color has basis in other theories that impact and reduce social capital, so connecting individuals with resources is of great importance.

Let's move on to the next slide.

When we look at considerations for interpreter educators and those who teach in interpreter preparation programs, typically there are small numbers of people of color within your classroom. As a result of that, you know, of course we need to work harder in our recruitment efforts to recruit those students of color while they're in the ASL beginning classes. And of course, if you recruit them while

they're in those classes, they have a greater chance to have a stronger social capital.

If, of course, you have those individuals in the program, which are I guess faculty or staff, that are diverse, they can of course work with the students of color, but they can't be involved in everything. You don't want to wear them too thin. You want to make sure that that responsibility is not placed on the educator of color, but the other educators within the program share those experiences for participating in multicultural items and curriculum.

When we talked a bit about social capital and how that impacts the interpreter preparation, but of course we think about technology. We have a lot of technology available, so there can be a sort of sense of distance mentoring as an option. You can connect with your mentor online. It will be a great way to connect people of color with students of color who are not in the same geographic area, but that they can connect to share experiences.

And as a result, you have cross-cultural communication taking place.

It's great to pair that student with a mentor who has a shared experience, to help them through the process. When we think about curriculum and curriculum design, we think about the NMIP, the national multicultural interpreter project that provides curriculum for interpreting instruction. So if we have the curriculum available and other resources available, even having access to NCIEC, their social justice infusion, that of course would help interpreters as they're learning more about the profession.

Additionally when we look at design, we think about the demand control schema and we will look at that book as well as the encounters of reality book.

It gives students something to consider when they're thinking about ethical issues and what's happening in the real world.

Going back to the NMIP, that curriculum is still available online, you can do a Google search and you can find the information readily available for you.

And we'll move on to the next slide, please.

All right. I would say that's all that we have

for you this evening. I know we have a very short time to go ahead and wrap up everything, but I want to thank everyone for your time and attention.

Hopefully we can continue this discussion and you also continue this discussion in your area.

You can feel free to contact me to also continue the discussion. I would like to thank NCIEC and also Amy Williamson for encouraging me to participate in this webinar this evening.

>> Amy: You did great. I was reviewing all the comments based on your discussion, your presentation and the conversation has been really ripe, and I'm glad it took place and this is just a great format. I'm just glad that this happened.

And it really is important because it gives us an opportunity, a moment to be introspective so I really appreciate that. Thank you so much. And I look forward to me. Obviously we need more. Thank you, Erica.

>> Erica: Thank you very much.

>> Amy: Okay, we'll go ahead and wrap up now. We'll move on to the next slide.

I first wanted to thank Carrie Woodruff, and those in the MARIE Center who are behind the scenes setting everything up and whoever else was involved, those counterparts.

Also too I wanted to thank the interpreters, Nicole Shambourger and Tiffany Hill, thanks so much. It's not easy work doing long distance interpreting via the webinar format. And then also the captioner tonight, we really appreciate that.

I introduced myself in the beginning, I'm Amy Williamson. I'm the instruction coordinator for the MARIE Center.

Next slide.

Just as a reminder for CEUs, if you're certified and are looking to receive CEUs, you will get an email this evening. The email will have a link embedded, go ahead and select that link. You will have to answer some mandatory questions. And then you will have to do a final click to submit. That will be sent over and then you will get your CEUs, but prior to that they just want to confirm with all the participants and those who fill out the actual request for CEUs that

those names match, and once that matches and is approved, then you will receive your CEUs.

And you will be able to find them registered with RID.

So that's the link that will be sent via email later this evening.

If you did participate in this webinar as a group, everyone will need to go ahead and do the sign-in on the sign-in sheet.

That's important that each person participate, even if you were with a group, sign a sign-in sheet and then have that sent over to Carrie Woodruff. And that's -- and the information will be sent over to an email to her and that way we can make sure everyone gets the collection of CEUs.

Next slide, please.

Erica did mention some resources and NCIEC was one of those mentioned, and the ones that are in place nationally. Here's the website here, www.interpretereducation.org and the work by NCIEC. Thank you for your attention this evening and I hope that the talk was very beneficial and you enjoyed the

presentation. Next slide.

And our funding for tonight for this webinar was based from a grant from the U.S. Department of Education and rehab services administration, and then also the training of interpreters program.

This webinar will be archived and able to be viewed later, so look forward to being able to review the webinar if you haven't already seen it. And for those who would like to see it.

Thank you, Nicole and Tiffany and thank you, Erica. And everyone just have a good evening. Thank you.

[End of webinar].