

Alison Beyea, ACLU-ME, & Meryl Troop, Deaf Services Advocate, to Keynote at Language Access Event

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Washington, D.C. – Alison Beyea, Executive Director at the ACLU of Maine, will be the Keynote Speaker at this year's Annual Membership Meeting (AMM) of the National Council on Interpreting in Health Care (NCIHC). The meeting will take place on June 9-10, 2017 at the Westin Portland Harborview Hotel in Portland, with the theme of "Crossroads: The Future of Language Access in Health Care."

With over 8,000 members, the ACLU of Maine is the state's oldest and largest civil liberties organization. The state is also home to approximately 45,000 immigrants, including 12,500 from Africa. The latter include refugees from Somalia and Sudan, countries included in President Trump's Executive Order banning persons from seven Muslim-majority countries from entering the U.S.

According to Enrica Ardemagni, President of the NCIHC, "We are thrilled to have the ACLU be a presence at this year's AMM given the current environment in the country affecting refugees and immigrants. Our focus is healthcare, and the proposals from the new administration have had a direct impact on the health and well-being of people who face barriers in accessing care because they don't speak English."

The ACLU of Maine has been involved in many of the activities in the state to support newcomers, and has stated that it is determined to fight the order in court. "Freedom of religion is enshrined in our Constitution, and no one should be discriminated against on the basis of how they look or how they choose to pray," said Beyea.

The second day of the AMM will also feature a keynote by Meryl C. S. Troop, CI, CT, SC:L, American Sign Language Interpreter, and Medical Interpreting Instructor at Southern Maine Community College for spoken language interpreters.

Ms. Troop is the current Deaf Services Director at Disability Rights Maine (formerly Civil Maine Center on Deafness), and previously served as Deaf Services and Language Access Manager for the state of Maine.

During her 20 years working for the state, Troop improved access to state-funded services for people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, and late deafened, as well as those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), by creating specialized services, writing language access policy, providing interpreter workshops, and by training over 8,000 people in how to work with interpreters.

For more information about the NCIHC AMM in Portland, visit <http://www.ncihc.org/2017-membership-meeting>. #NCIHC2017

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