I am interested in becoming an interpreter, but I need more American Sign Language training. What should I do?  
The most important first step towards becoming a sign language interpreter is achieving near-native fluency in American Sign Language (ASL). This requires at least two years of continuing ASL instruction and frequent contact with deaf people who use ASL by attending social events, volunteering in deaf organizations or interacting with deaf people in work or educational settings.

Interpreter training programs include in their curricula understanding and knowledge of ASL (applicable to sign language interpreting programs only), Deaf Culture, the complex process of interpretation from one language to another language, and the interpreter code of ethics, which embodies professional standards of integrity, impartiality and confidentiality. To become a skilled certified interpreter takes years of practice and training.

Are there interpreter training programs in Rhode Island?   
Unfortunately RI does not currently have any interpreter training programs. However, there are programs in neighboring Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Northeastern University  
American Sign Language Program  
276 Holmes Hall  
Boston, MA 02115  
617-373-3064 Voice  
617-373-3065 TTY  
617-373-3067 TTY  

Northern Essex Community College  
Sign Language Interpreter Program  
100 Ellitott Way  
Haverhill, MA 01830  
508-374-3611 TTY  
508-374-3723 Fax  

Clarke School for the Deaf  
Oral Interpreting Program  
Round Hill Road  
Northampton, MA 01060  
413-584-3450 V/TTY  
413-586-6644 Fax  

Northwest Connecticut Community College  
Career Education for the Deaf  
Park Place East  
Winsted, CT 06098  
860-738-6382 V/TTY  

For a complete list of Interpreter Training programs across the United States, contact the RICDHH office.

Is there a professional organization of interpreters?  
Yes. Interpreters have a national organization with statewide chapters across the United States:

Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.  
8630 Fenton Street, Suite 324  
Silver Springs, MD 20910  
301-608-0050 (V/TTY) 301-608-0562 (TTY)  
301-608-0508 Fax  

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