



News Release

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Madonna University is New Testing Site for Sign Language Interpreters

LIVONIA, Mich. - Last year a law was passed in the State of Michigan requiring sign language interpreters to earn state Quality Assurance (QA) certification. In addition, any interpreters working in K-12 education must pass the national Educational Interpreter Proficiency Assessment (EIPA). Until now, Lansing was the only EIPA testing sight in the state. Madonna University has been approved to administer these tests at its main campus in Livonia.

Rebecca Shriner, interpreter coordinator for Madonna's Office of Disability Resources and instructor for sign language studies, is certified to proctor the national EIPA exam at Madonna. The exam is given in two parts, written and performance. The written portion can be taken at Madonna; however the performance portion must be completed at a Lansing testing sight, where Shriner also is a certified proctor. The University plans to offer performance testing for the EIPA exam in the future.

"These certifications are important to ensure that only knowledgeable and qualified people are interpreting the words of the Deaf community," Shriner commented. "Madonna's sign language studies program is proud to offer convenient testing for those performing this vital service."

The Michigan QA test also can be taken at Madonna University, where Delores Gariepy, Madonna sign language studies instructor, administers the test one Friday a month. Upcoming test dates are: Sept 19; Oct. 10, Nov. 14 and Dec. 5. Arrangements to take the EIPA or QA tests can be made by calling the Division on Deafness at 877-499-6232.

Since 1975 Madonna University (www.madonna.edu) has offered the state's only Bachelor of Arts degree in sign language studies (SLS). By the year 2012, all sign language interpreters must have a bachelor's degree before taking the national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) exam. The program prepares students for careers as interpreters, or enhances their skills as teachers, social workers, family counselors, community advocates, law enforcement officers or gerontologists. The SLS curriculum places emphasis on the socio-cultural aspects of the Deaf and their right to learn and use ASL. The SLS program is offered at Madonna University's main campus in Livonia, and at the University Center in Gaylord.

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