



## *News Release*

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## **Century Launches Language Translation and Interpreting Program**

Antonio Mendez of Columbia Heights speaks Spanish and has a master's degree in international management from the University of St. Thomas.

Now he is seeking a credential from [Century College's](#) new [Language Translation and Interpreting program](#) so that he can interpret in legal, medical, educational, business and social service settings.

“Employers want you to have a certificate in interpreting or translating so that they know you have a certain level of expertise and accuracy,” said Mendez. “It is not enough that Spanish, for example, is your mother tongue. You also need the training and the certification.”

Mendez is among the first students to enroll in Century's new credit-based Language Translation and Interpreting program, which offers an orientation in August and a series of classes in the fall. Century's program is one of the few language interpretation programs in the country, and the only one in Minnesota that awards college credit.

[Kathy Matel](#), student success coordinator at Century, said there is a growing need for certified translators and interpreters in our multi-cultural society. She related cases where inadequate or inaccurate interpretation resulted in severe difficulty for non-English speakers.

“I know of a case where an inexperienced interpreter failed to tell parents the bad news about their son’s medical condition because he didn’t want to be the bearer of bad news,” said Matel. “I know of other individuals who, through faulty interpretation, did not understand that they were going into surgery, or others who did not fully realize the extent of their legal troubles. Certified interpreters are trained in the ethics of their field. They know that they must be accurate and not spare feelings or give their personal interpretation.”

Beginning this fall, Century will offer a series of classes leading to a 30-credit certificate or a 60-credit degree. Instructor [Marcela Estibill](#) said the program will be useful for people who speak two languages and want to work as certified written translators or as oral interpreters. She noted that employers increasingly are requiring a higher standard of training for interpreters and translators.

An accredited translator with the American Translation Association, Estibill said her specialty is medical and legal translation. She also has done translation for people who need to submit documents to the immigration department. As higher standards evolve, she said the Century program will bring increased professionalism to the field.

For more information, please call [Mairi Hansen](#) at 651-747-4087.



Photo: Antonio Mendez, Century student



Photo: Century instructor Marcela Estibill