



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION

AUG/SEPT/OCT/NOV 2023

# *Solid Gold*



2023 - 2024

FLORIDA COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION

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To promote the skilled profession of the reporting industry through protecting, connecting, and educating court reporters and captioners.





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Florida Court Reporters  
**FCRA**  
Association

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**June 21-23, 2024**  
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**Be on the Lookout for Upcoming Florida Professional Reporter (FPR) Online Test Dates this Fall**

**BE STRONGER  
THAN YOUR  
EXCUSES**



# Co-Editor's Letter

Stephanie Jordan Nargiz, RPR, FPR-C

## The Solid Gold Plan

This past quarter has brought so much success to my life that I could not have achieved without having a plan and executing key points to put me on the right track. In April, my ice hockey team, the Lucky Pucks 40+, won the USA Hockey Women's National Championship. I will say my feet didn't touch the ground for a full month afterward. Well, maybe I'm still on Cloud 9. The key to winning the hockey nationals is to have a solid gold plan. This plan not only applies to the game of hockey but can also be applied to personal and professional life.

In court reporting, just like in hockey, having a solid understanding of the game and its rules is crucial. As a court reporter, you need to have a deep knowledge of legal procedures, terminology, and the rules of court. It also requires self-awareness and an ability to adapt to changing circumstances.



Winning requires a combination of skills, strategy, and mindset. In hockey, it is important to have a strong team that works together towards a common goal. Similarly, in our personal and professional lives, it is important to have a support system and work collaboratively with others to achieve success.

Working with attorneys, judges, and other legal professionals requires effective communication and cooperation. Additionally, connecting with fellow court reporters through professional associations like our FCRA and networking events can provide support, mentorship, and opportunities for growth. I find these are essential to my growth, as our world can be quite lonely if we let it, especially in these days of Zoom proceedings.

Winning in hockey, as well as in our personal and professional lives, requires dedication, hard work, and perseverance. It is important to stay focused on your goals as a court reporter, continuously improving your skills, staying up to date with industry advancements, and not letting setbacks discourage you. In hockey, this means continuing to practice and improve your skills even when you lose a game. In our personal and professional lives, this means learning from failures and using them as opportunities for growth.

*Never let success get to your head and never let failure get to your heart. ~ Ziad K. Abdelnour*



# Editor's Letter

(continued)

Hockey and court reporting may seem like two completely unrelated fields at first glance, but upon closer examination, we can uncover some surprising similarities. Both require a solid understanding of the game, meticulous attention to detail, and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. By applying these solid gold winning tips, you can achieve success both on and off the ice.

Remember, success is not merely a result but rather a journey. By using a solid gold plan, you can unleash your full potential and achieve extraordinary results in your life, both personally and professionally!

*Stephanie Nargi*



“You miss 100% of the shots  
you don’t take.”  
-Wayne Gretzky



# President's Message

By Sheri Smargon, RDR, CRR, CRC, FPR-C

Thank you all for being here. I think I can speak for all current and former board members when I say that everything we do is for our members, and we appreciate your support.

I have joked for a couple of years that this speech would be on a 6-second delay, as I may be channeling Donna Kanabay up here, filling up our swear jar. Donna and I used to put quarters in here at the beginning of every meeting. Any time we swore, we would drop a quarter in the jar. Eventually, due to the clinking noise, we just started dropping a \$20 in at the beginning of meetings to hedge our bets.

I have worn these bracelets for about six years now. I received them at a court reporting conference I attended. We were told to think of one word that described us and our professional journey. I had two words, so I got two bracelets. One bracelet has the word "perseverance," and the other has the word "opportunity."

My path to where I am may be unique. I went to a brick-and-mortar court reporting school. I was told I sucked at it, and I should think of doing something else, but I was a teenager, and what do teenagers love to do, other than prove "old people" wrong? I figured, "I'll show them! I'll show everybody." I failed theory twice. I never took my machine home to practice, and I write almost everything out. But I found my way, what worked for me.

## PERSEVERANCE.

I was a member of a team that was the first in the country to provide open captioning for its county government meetings.

For those that do not know, open captioning means when you turn on that television station, you see the

captioning, whether you want to or not. The county person setting up the team thought if you could write on that machine, you could caption. Despite the county being told by a preeminent member of our profession, a man who had captioned for the President of the United States on a regular basis, my team wasn't ready to go on the air, on the air we went. In Russian. Yeah. Which meant nothing I was writing was translating. Good start.

The members of my team and I received letter after letter from court reporting firms who were upset the captioning contract didn't go out for bid. They thought that they could handle this project and should have been given the opportunity to give it a try. After we started, however, they slowly backed away when they saw how tough the job was.

During that time, the county offered us a chance to get benefits and a raise to a living wage, which we didn't have at that time. Because there was nobody in the country doing this type of work yet, we were paid at the civil service rate that a secretary would make...\$7 an hour. So, the raise would almost double our salary, which we still thought was great at that time, but there was a catch...we had to pass the RPR to get that bump. We had to show some sort of national or state certification.

## OPPORTUNITY.





# President's Message

## (continued)

I had taken the RPR when I was in school but didn't pass. I don't know what possessed me to try, but I did. I am the world's worst test taker. I get caught up in my head or I forget to breathe, or I just doubt myself. It took me three tries to pass the RPR back when you had to pass all the legs at the same time to get it in the first place.

**PERSEVERANCE.**

What that certification did, however, was open the door for bigger jobs, better jobs, odder jobs.

From the county, I moved to Pittsburgh to work for VITAC, then the preeminent live captioning company. My first day on the air was the Oklahoma City Bombing. But I also got to caption fun stuff, like "Saturday Night Live" and the "Today" Show, BUT they wouldn't have even talked to me if I didn't have my certification.

**OPPORTUNITY.**

I then tried to get my CRR. And three attempts later, I finally passed.

**PERSEVERANCE.**

Three more attempts to get my RMR, albeit, I passed all the skills in one shot and kept drowning on the written.

**PERSEVERANCE.**

I moved home to Florida and started depo and court work. The opportunity came up to live caption the then-Vice President of the United States in a town hall debate in St. Petersburg. The job was offered to me because I had my certifications.

**OPPORTUNITY.**

Without that certification, I wouldn't have been able to continue my lucky streak of captioning the Olympics three more times, or seven times in total. And I wouldn't have had the opportunity to move to Australia and caption "Big Brother After Dark." If you don't know, you don't need to know.

I've captioned the Stanley Cup Finals where the Cup was awarded. Being a hockey geek, it was pretty cool. I captioned news and international news, everything from nuclear disasters to Pope visits to 9/11 coverage.

**OPPORTUNITY.**

Basically, the point I'm making is that certification matters. Certification opens the door. Having your FPR, which shows you understand the transcript formats and rules we should all be following, should be a minimum for all Florida reporters, voice and steno. I'll put it another way. Do you value what you do? Do you want other people to see the value in what you do? Do you talk to your clients about what you really do and what you can offer them?

**OPPORTUNITY.**



## Perseverance and Opportunity



# President's Message

(continued)

I'll repeat the story I read some time ago on social media. A father had kept an old Jeep for his daughter. She had graduated high school with honors, and he wanted to congratulate her in a special way. Innocently, she asked, "Daddy, how much is the car worth?" The father simply answered, "Bring it to the used car dealership and see how much they will give you for it." She came back saying, "They offered me \$1,000 as the car is old and needs repairs." He then told her to take it to the pawn shop and see how much she would get for it. She came back and said, "With all the other cars they already have and the weak economy, they would give me \$100." The father then told his daughter to go to the Jeep club and show them his old car. The daughter went to the club, and when she returned, she said, "Some people in the club offered me \$100,000 because it is a classic and sought by many collectors." Now the father said to his daughter, "The right people value you the right way."

If you are not valued, do not be angry or doubt your abilities. Those who know your value are those who will appreciate you. Never stay in a situation where no one sees your value.

Another exchange was between two radio operators, one of them aboard a U.S. Navy ship.

Radioman 1: Please divert your course 15 degrees to the north to avoid a collision.

Radioman 2: Recommend YOU divert YOUR course 15 degrees.

Radioman 1: I am the captain of a U.S. Navy ship. I say again, divert your course.

Radioman 2: No, I say again, divert YOUR course.

Radioman 1: This is an aircraft carrier of the

U.S. Navy. We are a large warship. Divert your course now!

Radioman 2: This is a lighthouse. Your call.

Are we going to be so stuck in our ways, the way "we've always done things," that we are going to plow headlong into the proverbial lighthouse?

**OPPORTUNITY.**

I want to assure everyone that FCRA's goal is in no way to hinder any steno/voice reporter's ability to make a living nor add to the already challenging task of finding coverage for jobs. However, if and when other circuits in our state, on their own accord, require certification in the future, FCRA now has a recognized certification as an option for these circuits.

**PERSEVERANCE.**

This is just the beginning of a very bright future for Florida's steno and voice reporters.

FCRA is actively working on the logistics of offering the FPR-C exam more often to increase the number of FPR-Cs in our state. This will be a slow rollout starting with only those circuits that already require NCRA/NVRA certification.

**PERSEVERANCE AND OPPORTUNITY.**

As the gold standard, we need to educate everyone about our value and the pride we take in our work. Achieving and maintaining our certifications, the FPR all the way to the RDR, reflects that you have pride in your work, you are proud of what you do, and you are the best of the best. Become your own champion within and be your own best advocate for yourself. Recognize opportunity and you will persevere.



Thank you,  
Sheri Smargon, , RDR, CRR, CRC, FPR-C, M.A.  
FCRA President (2023 - 2024)



# FPR-C

Skills, yeah, we got them.



## Stay tuned for the next FPR-C Skills Test!

*Congratulations*

**to our new  
FPR-Cs:**

**Marty McArver, FPR-C  
Linda Wolfe, FPR-C  
Darline West, FPR-C  
Heather Suarez, FPR-C  
Janet Beason, FPR-C  
Deliris Perez, FPR-C**

**Ashley Munoz, FPR-C  
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Samantha Omine, FPR-C  
Julia Giordano, FPR-C  
Jeannie Sanchez, FPR-C  
MaryAnn Casale, FPR-C  
Tina Stuhr, FPR-C**



### What is the FPR-C?

The FPR-C is the skills complement to FCRA's FPR and is a voluntary (optional) skills examination.

In order to be eligible to sit for the FPR-C, a candidate must:

Be a current member of FCRA\*;

Be a steno or voice writer;

Provide his or her own laptop and CAT software for testing;

Have the ability to email his or her test papers to the  
Committee for grading.

**\*A candidate may take the FPR-C before taking the FPR, but may not use the initials "FPR-C" until the candidate successfully passes the FPR modules and test. A candidate who wishes to take the modules and examination for the FPR certification must be a participating member of FCRA.**



# *Congratulations* **TO OUR NEW**

## **FLORIDA PROFESSIONAL REPORTERS**

Amy Zoller, FPR  
Corine Marut, FPR  
Sabrina Beauvais, FPR  
Jeannette Alvarez, FPR  
Tosha Seaney, FPR

Mary Ann Blake, FPR  
Carla McCarthy-Hopson, FPR  
Heidi Hutson-Vain, FPR  
Dana Spears, FPR(S) - Student  
Suzanne Hall, FPR(S) - Student

**FPR** *Online*



## COMING SOON

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**The FPR™ Course/Exam and FPR™ Designation can only be taken and held by current members in good standing.**

**The FPR™ Course/Refresher can be taken by non-members for informational purposes only. Non-members are not eligible to take the exam or hold the FPR™ designation.**



# STENOCON

GO FOR THE GOLD - BE THE CHAMPION WITHIN

Key Largo



FCRA ANNUAL CONVENTION  
OCEAN REEF CLUB  
JULY 14 - 16, 2023

















# Thank you

We just want to give a heartfelt THANK YOU to all the membership, speakers, exhibitors, sponsors and guests for your support of FCRA in attending StenoCon 2023 conference at Ocean Reef. We loved seeing all your smiling faces and were touched by all your kind words. You are the real heart behind FCRA.

*Love,  
Your 2023 Ocean Reef  
Convention Chairs,*

## Danielle & Amber





# Congratulations



EMILY MANN  
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD  
Presented to  
**KELLY OWEN**

The Emily Mann Distinguished Service Award shall be bestowed by the FCRA upon a person who possesses exceptional qualifications and experience in the field of shorthand reporting while contributing in a meritorious manner to the welfare of FCRA; and has served the Association in at least two (2) of the following categories:

1. Served the Association with active participation on committees and/or on the Board of Directors of the state association.
2. Contributed to the profession in areas of teaching, editing of publications, or other contributions which have been designed for the advancement of shorthand reporting.
3. Contributed important books, papers, or other written material dealing with the profession.
4. Contributed seminars for the state association for members, such seminars having received the approval of NCRA for continuing education points.
5. Aided in the advancement of the profession by working in liaison with the Bar, the media, judicial groups and/or educational institutions.





# *Congratulations*



ARLENE P. SOMMERS AWARD

Presented to

DANIELLE FREEZE

**Danielle has been a member of the schools committee for years, as well as committee chair. She has tirelessly dedicated many hours to coordinating our numerous career fairs and very graciously donated the promotional materials and the displays used at the many events FCRA attends each year to promote court reporting.**





# Congratulations



MICHAEL GREENHILL  
PRO BONO AWARD

Presented to

BROOKE CRUISE

Words cannot express my  
gratitude for your unwavering  
commitment and dedication to  
FCRA. You are a problem solver  
with an undeniable ability to "get  
things done."

Thank you for your generosity,  
taking charge and making things  
happen.







## MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

Presented to

# TRACY FINAN

Presented in grateful recognition of your visionary guidance, exceptional leadership and unconditional commitment to FCRA. Thank you for always going above and beyond. You're an inspiration to us all.



Presented by Laura Landerman, President  
62nd Annual Convention - Key Largo, Florida,  
July 15, 2023



## PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Presented to

# AMBER RODRIGUEZ

Stars rise to the top not by chance but through purpose and passion. You put your heart and soul into everything you do. I am honored to present this award for your extraordinary dedication to FCRA. Thank you for all you do and for who you are.



Presented by Laura Landerman, President  
62nd Annual Convention - Key Largo, Florida,  
July 15, 2023







## SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

Presented to

# HEATHER SUAREZ

Thank you for going above and beyond. Without being asked,  
you take charge and tackle issues with your can-do attitude.  
You radiate pure awesomeness.



Presented by Laura Landerman, President  
62nd Annual Convention - Key Largo, Florida,  
July 15, 2023



## SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

Presented to

# JEANNIE SANCHEZ

This award is proudly given in special recognition of your  
ongoing commitment and dedication to FCRA and promoting  
this amazing profession. You're a rockstar whose passion and  
experience ensures a bright future and leaves a legacy of  
success.



Presented by Laura Landerman, President  
62nd Annual Convention - Key Largo, Florida,  
July 15, 2023





# 2023 Thomas Hughes Memorial Realtime Challenge

OVERALL WINNER



Lori Bundy

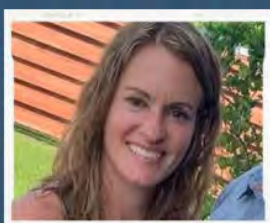
## WINNERS 225 Q&A

FIRST



Laura Landerman

SECOND



Mae Fisher

THIRD



Pam Hardy

## WINNERS 180 LIT

FIRST



Lori Bundy

SECOND



Laura Landerman

THIRD



Heather Suarez



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## *2023 Nominating Committee Report*

In May 2023, the FCRA Nominating Committee met to interview the FCRA Board of Directors candidates for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. After interviewing several candidates, the 2023 Nominating Committee submits its nominees for consideration by the membership during the FCRA 2023 Annual Business Meeting to be held Saturday, July 15, 2023, at Ocean Reef Club, Key Largo, Florida.

Thank you to our Nominating Committee, chaired by Rick Levy, RPR, FPR-C, and committee members Sandy Narup, RPR, FPR-C, Susan Riesdorph, RPR, CRR, CLVS, CLR, Jessica Donnelly, FPR, Kelly Owen McCall, RPR, FPR-C, and Cindy Bender, RPR, FPR.

### **PRESIDENT**



**Sheri Smargon, RDR, CRR, CRC, FPR-C, M.A.** has been a broadcast captioner, CART provider, and general stenographer for a variety of different jobs for the past 33 years. In 2022, she has placed in the top three at NCRA's competitions in Orlando, Florida, and first and third at Intersteno in Maastricht, Netherlands, competing against the best of the best within the profession. She also recently passed the California CSR exam on her first attempt. Sheri also holds a master's degree in general psychology. She currently volunteers on several NCRA committees, including as Chairperson of the Certified Broadcast Captioning Committee, and she is a long-time member of the WKT Test Writing Committee. She loves to bake to relax, and she collects anything to do with "The Muppet Show" or "Sesame Street." Sheri has fur babies, three cats (Pita, Snuffleupagus, and Mocha) and she adopted her first dog ever right before COVID hit, a Whippet named Winnie.



## PRESIDENT ELECT



**Michael Sciré, (sha-RAY) RPR, CMRS, FPR-C** has been reporting for nearly 25 years. He graduated from the Sarasota County Technical Institute in Sarasota, FL. He began his career as a freelance court reporter for Metzger Reporting Services in Charlotte County. In 2002 he became a Realtime Official Court Reporter for the 12th Judicial Circuit where he was promoted to department supervisor in 2008 and worked there until November of 2021. He has since joined the executive team at Diamond Court Reporting and helped open their new offices in Sarasota in 2022. He obtained the RPR in 2005, the CMRS in 2010, the FPR in 2008, and the FPR-C in 2021.

In 2007, he and his twin brother, Richard, were recipients of SCTI's Wall of Fame, an award recognizing distinguished alumni. In addition to reporting, Michael currently serves on the executive board of directors for the FCRA as Vice President.

He previously served as Director At Large, Central Director, Secretary, and Associate Editor to *FCR Online* and *The Florida Reporter*. Michael also has served on several committees and chairing several of them as well. Michael was previously a contributing editor to NCRA's *Journal of Court Reporting*. He has been an NCRF Angel for the last eight years. Michael was a speaker at NCRA's keynote premier session in 2015. He, along with his brother, conducted several seminars for FCRA as well as other state associations throughout the country including Alabama, Mississippi, New Jersey, and Hawaii. Michael also was a contributor to the film *For The Record, A Court Reporting Documentary*, and traveled to different film festivals promoting the film, as well as to multiple media outlets. Michael frequently shares his passion for court reporting by speaking, educating, and advocating to the legal community.

## VICE PRESIDENT



**Elizabeth W. Chorrushi, RPR, FPR-C**, has been a court reporter since 1991 when she graduated from Erwin Technical Center. Beth began her career as a deputy official for the Fifth Judicial Circuit and completed her RPR that fall. In 1993, she returned to Tampa to take a freelance position with Thelma Dreyer at Dreyer & Associates. To this day, she approaches the profession with a WWTD attitude – what would Thelma do? Through the years, there have been three names on the door, but Beth remains intrigued by the people she meets and the places she goes, especially when those places require a passport, like Hong Kong and Copenhagen.

For her fourth year on the Board, Beth will be stepping into a new role, that of Vice President. Prior to serving as Treasurer for

two years and Northern Director for one year, Beth served as secretary for the Executive Committee Board of a local chapter of Pilot International, treasurer of her children's elementary school PTA and multiple positions for the Parent Advisory Board for her daughter's swim club. This year also brings the new fun of sharing Team Mom duties for the University of Montevallo Men's and Women's Swim Teams.

When she is not working, Beth's family is her priority. Her husband of 29 years has always been her biggest "court supporter." Together, they have raised a newly-minted University of Florida alumnus son – Go Gators! -- and University of Montevallo daughter – Go Falcons!



## SECRETARY



**Ninette Butler, RMR, CRR, CRC, RSA, FPR-C.** Ninette has been a stenographer since 1994 and has attained her RMR, CRR, CRC, RSA and FPR-C. She started her career as a ProCAT authorized representative/trainer and is currently a freelance reporter, specializing in realtime and daily copy civil trials and depositions. She developed the captioning program for the hard-of-hearing ministry at First Baptist Orlando. Ninette is happily married and is on her way to becoming an empty nester, having proudly raised a boy and a girl. She has four cats and a German Shorthaired Pointer. She enjoys traveling to Park City, Utah, for some outdoor fun and much-needed rest and relaxation.

## TREASURER



**Stephanie Jordan Nargiz, RPR, FPR-C** is a freelance stenographer located in Tallahassee, Florida. She has been a working stenographer in the state of Florida since 2005, after attending Key College and graduating with a Certificate in Court Reporting from Atlantic Technical Center. She is a member of NCRA and FCRA. She is the co-editor and co-publisher of The Florida Reporter magazine and loves serving on other FCRA committees. She has enjoyed serving in the roles of Director at Large and State Director for FCRA.

Prior to her career as a court reporter, Stephanie worked as an accountant in West Palm Beach, Florida for Oxbow Corporation. She also has experience working for an engineering firm in Boynton Beach and was a district manager in the clothing retail industry, working in Virginia, Washington D.C., and Texas.

She enjoys her free time traveling with her ice hockey teams to tournaments with the Florida Thunder team and the Lucky Pucks 40+ national team. This year in April of 2023, her Lucky Pucks 40+ national team won the USA Hockey United States national championship. She also serves as the secretary for the Florida Women's Hockey League. Her musically talented husband (together for 24 years) is Garo Nargiz. He has been working as a legal videographer for the past 17 years.

She loves spending time with her family whenever possible, which also includes seven nephews and nieces. She also has a gift basket company and loves working with her direct sales companies. She has two rescue Pekingese dogs (Rocky and Layla) and a blue- and-gold macaw (Curious George.) The beach is her favorite place to relax. She loves jet skiing, enjoying the sunshine, and gathering seashells.



## STATE DIRECTOR



**Heather Suarez, RMR, CRR, FCRR, FPR-C** is a passionate and dedicated professional with an unwavering love and respect for the challenge of stenography and the pursuit of knowledge. From a young age, she recognized the immense opportunities for growth that this field offered and wholeheartedly embraced it.

Currently serving on several committees, including Chair of the Courts Committee, and now as a first-year Director on the Board of FCRA, Heather is thrilled to be in a position where she can serve the best interests of stenographers and voice writers in Florida. Her commitment to the profession is evident in her extensive experience and impressive achievements.

At the age of 17, Heather embarked on her court reporting journey by enrolling in court reporting school. In a remarkable display of determination, she even attended night classes during her final month of high school. By the time she was 20 years old, Heather had already begun her professional court reporting career, freelancing for the first four years before assuming the role of an Official Court Reporter for the Ninth Judicial Circuit. She has since served as a United States Official Court Reporter for the Middle District of Florida for the past five years.

Heather's dedication to the court reporting community extends beyond her professional roles. She currently holds several certifications, including the esteemed Registered Merit Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter, Federal Certified Realtime Reporter, and Florida Professional Reporter. In recognition of her exceptional skills, she secured second place in the Literary leg of the FCRA Thomas Hughes Memorial Realtime Challenge in June of 2022.

Outside of the courtroom, Heather finds joy and relaxation in the company of her beloved Frenchie, Oliver, and her partner in life, Eddie. Despite her demanding schedule, she always makes time to cherish the simple pleasures and embrace a well-rounded life.

Heather Suarez embodies the essence of professionalism and passion in the world of court reporting. Her unwavering commitment to excellence, combined with her extensive experience and impressive achievements, make her a respected figure in the field. As a Director on the Board of FCRA, Heather is determined to champion the interests of stenographers and voice writers, ensuring their growth, success, and recognition in the profession.

## STATE DIRECTOR



**Erin Best, FPR-C,** Hey, Everyone! I've been a voice writer for three years now with Wasilewski Court Reporting located in Lakeland, FL. This is my later in life career, and I absolutely love what I do. Every day is different and challenging, and I've gotten to meet a lot of great people. I especially enjoy working in criminal trial in our circuit. In my opinion, we have the best court personnel and judges.

My husband and I are foodies and love trying new restaurants and recipes. We enjoy spending as much time as we can with our growing family of six kids, two daughters-in-law, and three grandchildren. Our favorite thing to do is spend the day with all of them hanging around the pool at a gorgeous resort, and we try to do that as often as we can get everyone together.

I look forward to serving as your FCRA director over the next year!



## STATE DIRECTOR



**Lori A. Seiden, RPR, FPR-C**, has been a reporter for 32 years. After graduating in 1991 from Tampa College, her entire career has been as a freelance reporter in Tampa and Lakeland. After 25 years of reporting civil depositions, Lori then transitioned to reporting felony trials, where she discovered her true passion in reporting. Lori loves all things steno, is passionate about learning new briefs, but especially loves meeting fellow reporters and exchanging work stories.

Lori is currently a member of NCRA, where she volunteers as a mentor and a test reviewer for the Career Launcher program. She has served on the FCRA board or directors as a director at large, and also serves on the membership committee, professional ethics committee, and government relations committee.

Lori has been married to her husband, Paul, for 16 years, with whom she loves to travel and do life with. She is the proud mom of four adult children and their spouses, and now proud “grammy” of her first grandchild. Lori also serves at her church on the host team and is lead of the care team there.

## DIRECTOR AT LARGE



**Lisa L. Taylor, RPR, FPR-C**, is a native Floridian, born and raised in Daytona Beach, Florida. She graduated from Daytona Beach Community College in 1988 with an Associate in Science degree in court reporting.

Lisa started her career as a freelance reporter, then moved to a firm that covered civil, as well as all the criminal court work, for the Seventh Judicial Circuit. After enjoying that position for over ten years, she became co-owner of Southern Reporting Company. She attained and has maintained her NCRA national certification as a Registered Professional Reporter since 1991. She also received her Florida Professional Reporter designation in 2010 and received the designation of Florida Professional Reporter-Certified in 2021. In her thirty-five years of reporting, she has taken numerous capital felony trials, covered aviation litigation, construction defect litigation, and a plethora of depositions.

She has a son, Matthew, and a daughter, Madison, which she is very proud of. She enjoys her best dog ever, a pit bull named Milo, and her two Pomeranians, Taz and Payton. In her free time, she loves to travel, help with animal rescue, and edit and proofread her transcripts! After all these years, she still loves her profession and her clients! She is also an admin and co-founder of the popular Facebook group Cocktails for Court Reporters!

This will be her second year as a board member with the Florida Court Reporters Association, and she looks forward to being involved and advocating for her profession.



## DIRECTOR AT LARGE



**Roberta Turner - RPR, FPR, CLR, CCR (GA) ACR (NY)** A veteran in the court reporting industry, Roberta has been reporting since 1991. Among her extensive skill sets, Roberta has successfully reported for highly complicated depositions, trials, sworn statements ranging from criminal cases, medical malpractice cases, Workers' Compensation cases, personal injury cases, technical matters, and much more. She has reported throughout the country with a primary focus in the Central Florida and Georgia area for the past 33 years.

Giving back to the court reporting profession is extremely important to Roberta. She has written several articles for the National Court Reporters Association with a wide range of topics from steno writing to health and wellness. Most recently, she has been nominated as the Director of the Florida Court Reporters Association. Roberta has been instrumental in serving the court reporter community as she volunteers and mentors new and seasoned reporters by facilitating High Speed Dictation sessions Daily. Roberta also actively visits area high schools to introduce the court reporting profession to rising students.

## IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT



**Laura J. Landerman, RDR, CRR, FPR-C**, is a native of Central Florida. Immediately upon graduating high school in 1984, she enrolled at Winter Park Vo-Tech, graduating in 1986 and immediately launching her career as a freelance reporter. Laura has served on the board for six years, first as Central Director, Treasurer, Vice President, President Elect and is currently President. In addition to her board service, she also serves on many of our committees. Laura is a huge proponent of skills certification and proudly holds NCRA's RDR, RMR, RPR, CRR, and Realtime Systems Administrator, as well as FCRA's FPR and FPR-C designations. She also loves the challenge of participating in both state and national speed and realtime competitions.

Throughout her career, Laura continues to share her passion and enthusiasm for this profession by volunteering her time on behalf of FCRA at events throughout the state to promote court reporting and captioning to our next generation. Laura had a wonderful mentor early in her career, and now she herself is a mentor for students, new reporters, as well as veteran reporters who want to learn to become realtime writers or just improve their writing skills. In June 2014, she received the Arlene P. Sommers Award in recognition of her passion and dedication to mentoring reporters.

Having served on the FCRA board the past six years has given Laura a broader perspective of the many challenges facing reporters in our state. She has made it a priority to put membership first and has been a part of many initiatives our association has undertaken.

When not busy working or with board service, Laura lives to be spontaneous and live life to its fullest. This amazing career has afforded her the opportunity to travel the world extensively, and she spends hours in her free time planning that next big adventure. She is married and has two stepsons. She currently lives in Altamonte Springs with her husband and their two mischievous Doodles.



# **GOLD MEDAL MOMENTS**

**“My "Gold Medal" moment had to be winning the 2014 FCRA Realtime contest.”**

**Janet M. Beason,  
RMR, CRR**

**“Doing the first virtual-by-Zoom trial during Covid.”**

**Sharon Velazco**

**“The battles that count aren’t the ones for gold medals. The struggles within yourself - the invisible, inevitable battles inside all of us - that’s where it’s at.”**

**Jesse Owens**

**“Winning is not about how many medals you get - it’s about accomplishing goals and just being the best you can be.”**

**Michelle Kwan**





# Roll with It!

Why did the lawyer's chicken cross the road?



He had an easement.

Win is wine with an e on the end



How much better would life be if that liar's pants actually did catch on fire?







2024 Court Reporting  
& Captioning Week  
February 3-10

*Join us in celebrating!*

*We would love to hear how you're celebrating.  
Email [editor@fcraonline.org](mailto:editor@fcraonline.org)*





# SCHOOLS COMMITTEE

## PROMOTING OUR PROFESSION

### YOUR DONATION IS APPRECIATED



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Venmo

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please reference "schools"





# CEU REMINDER

**Are you an FPR or FPR-C?**

**Is Your Cycle Ending on 12/31/23 or 3/31/24?**

**Here are a few important things to remember regarding your FPR cycle:**

**Please remember that NCRA does not report your CEUs to FCRA or other state associations. You must submit any CEUs to FCRA to be applied to your transcript, other than the FCRA Annual Convention and the FPR course/exam and refresher. We apply those automatically.**

**NCRA Carryover CEUs do not apply to your FPR transcript, just as your FPR Carryover CEUs do not apply to your NCRA transcript.**

**If you have any CEUs to be applied, you may send certificates of completion for individual courses or send your NCRA transcript to [fprquestions@fcraonline.org](mailto:fprquestions@fcraonline.org).**

**If you have CEUs that are not NCRA approved, and they fall under the categories of approved topics, we will need this FCRA CEU request form (PDF) submitted along with those CEU certificates.**

**Your FCRA membership must stay current in order to maintain and use the FPR or FPR-C designation. Remember to occasionally check the status of your FPR cycle so you know when your cycle ends and what CEUs you need to complete your cycle.**

**To check the status of your current FPR cycle, you will log into CE Tracker Live by using this link: <http://www.cetrackerlive.com/app/>. This information can also be found on our website under FPR, View and Print Current Transcript. Account Name for all users on CE Tracker is FCRA FPR.**

**If you have any questions, please email [admin@rfcraonline.org](mailto:admin@rfcraonline.org) or call 844-438-3272.**





2271 McGregor Boulevard  
Suite 220  
Fort Myers, Florida 33901  
[scheduling@fmreporting.com](mailto:scheduling@fmreporting.com)



**We would like to give  
a shout-out to all of  
the countless  
volunteers on behalf  
of FCRA.  
We appreciate YOU!**





# We want to work with you!

Stenography will always be at the core of our foundation and the legal industry. We remain committed to recruiting, educating, and providing the best possible court reporter experience all while continuing to promote and support the nationwide community of professional Stenographers.

As an independent contractor partnering with U.S. Legal Support, you have access to a dedicated team of professionals to assist with any questions you may have, in addition to:

- ✓ Competitive rates
- ✓ Quick payment with original and copy sales paid upfront
- ✓ Abundance of job opportunities nationwide
- ✓ Access to our proprietary online portal to track job assignments and more
- ✓ Ultimate flexibility to set your own schedule
- ✓ In-person, virtual or hybrid proceedings
- ✓ A dedicated team of professionals to handle scheduling, billing, and client management
- ✓ Robust library of resources
- ✓ Access to insurance coverage

## ENGAGE TODAY, WORK TOMORROW

To learn more or get started, email us at [reporterrelations@uslegalsupport.com](mailto:reporterrelations@uslegalsupport.com)



## Board of Directors Fall Meeting October 2023





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"I love Stenographers. They are the unsung heroes of the justice system. They write down the historical record that future lawyers will study. They connect the past with the future with grace and accuracy. Thank you court reporters!"

**Betsy Young**





## FPR-C RECIPROCITY

*Do you qualify?*

A CANDIDATE WHO WISHES TO USE THE FPR-C DESIGNATION BUT DOES NOT WISH TO TEST MAY USE THE FPR-C DESIGNATION IF THEY MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- BE A CURRENT FPR OR PASS THE FPR BEFORE BEING ELIGIBLE TO USE THE FPR-C DESIGNATION;
- BE A CURRENT MEMBER OF NCRA (NATIONAL COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION) AND SHOW PROOF TO THE COMMITTEE OF THEIR CURRENT MEMBERSHIP STATUS; AND
- SUCCESSFULLY PASSED AT LEAST ONE OF THE RPR, RMR, RDR, CRR, OR CRC SKILLS EXAMINATIONS AWARDED BY NCRA.

Florida Court Reporters Association  
**FCRA**



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Fernandez & Associates  
court reporters

# THANK YOU

## BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Your dedication and commitment to our profession is very much appreciated. We are honored to have you representing FCRA.**



# “Know your worth, then add tax.”

A group I'm in asked people to post things they wish they knew before becoming a working court reporter. I realized that all but (maybe) one could be applied to any industry/field and just to life in general. I know I'm constantly preaching 2, 3, 4, and 7 to my kids. The fourth one is the one that chagrins me the most when they use it against me. 🤔

- Get/find a mentor ASAP. Learn from someone who is successfully doing what you want to do. Your state association is a great place to start.
- What's for you is for you. Just cuz it's always been done a certain way, doesn't mean it's the only way. There's nothing wrong with going out and blazing a trail even from day one/as a new reporter.
- As trite and cliché as it sounds, it's true: Know your worth, then add tax.
- Don't be afraid to ask for everything you want. The worst thing you can be told is "no," which leaves you no worse off than before you asked.
- Don't get in the habit of working nights and weekends unless you're being paid extra (expedited rates) to do so (or because you actually want to).
- Take time off and away!
- Others' experiences don't have to be your own. You can learn from their mistakes.
- If you choose to freelance, production isn't scary and having your own clients doesn't need to be either.



KORNIKA KING, FPR-C, CCR (GA)

PLACE  
YOUR AD  
IN THE NEXT EDITION OF  
THE  
FLORIDA  
REPORTER

[admin@fcraonline.org](mailto:admin@fcraonline.org)

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TOGETHER.

VERITEXT  
IS SEEKING  
EXPERIENCED  
& PROFESSIONAL  
REPORTERS!

## LET'S CONNECT.

Veritext is on a mission to work with the most exceptional partners to support the rapidly growing demand for freelance court reporters throughout North America. If you're interested in learning more about Veritext, we want to hear from you!

## BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH VERITEXT:

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Jill Percy, FPR | Director of Reporter Relations - Florida  
(800) 275-7991 | [jpercy@veritext.com](mailto:jpercy@veritext.com) | [www.veritext.com](http://www.veritext.com)





*Danielle Freeze*  
RPR, CRR, FPR-C

# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

FCRA IS LOOKING FOR COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS

**If you are interested in volunteering  
your time, please contact  
[ADMIN@FCRAONLINE.ORG](mailto:ADMIN@FCRAONLINE.ORG)**





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# STENOCON 2024

## SAVE THE DATE

*Sarasota, Florida*



JUNE 21 - 23, 2024

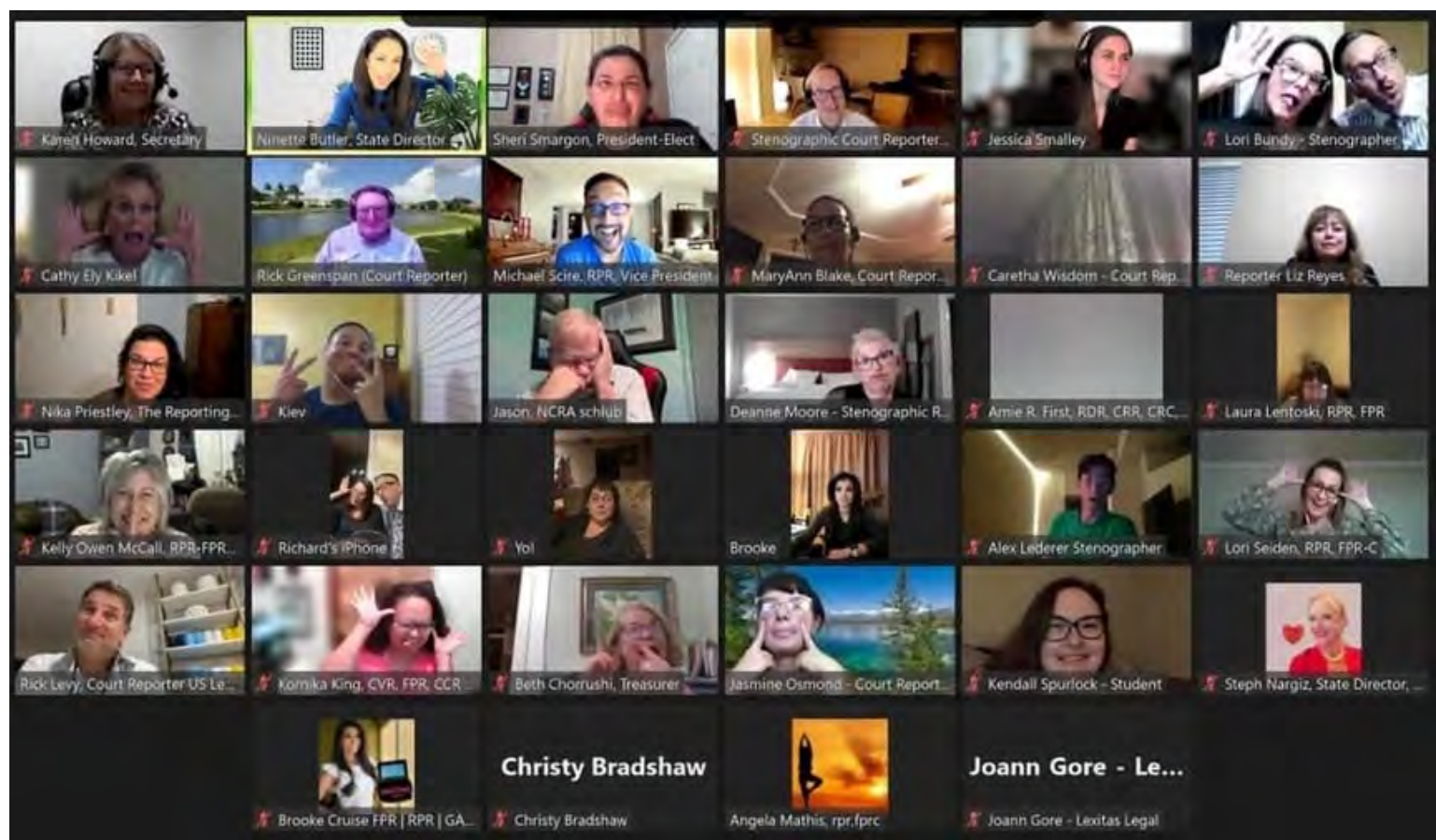
HOT PURSUIT OF COOL EXCELLENCE



# NETWORKING

# NETWORKING

# NETWORKING



Who do you know that needs to be a part of this wonderful group of court reporters?

Who can you encourage to join FCRA?



# What is FCRA doing for me?



- **The Ethics Committee diligently fields reporter-related questions that come into headquarters and provides guidance following our Florida rules.**
- **FCRA Government Relations Committee, through our lobbying team in Tallahassee, Corinne Mixon and Diana Ferguson of Rutledge Ecenia, were able to secure our fresh off-the-press success with making remote oath permanent. The remote oath became law effective January 1, 2022.**
- **FCRA has rolled out a skills portion to accompany our Florida Professional Reporter™ certification. Holding the FPR-C™ shows you have knowledge of Florida rules and laws AND demonstrates to clients you have the skills necessary to capture their record.**
- **Our Convention Committee is hard at work putting together a comprehensive agenda featuring topics relevant to today's world of court reporting, offering CEUs pre-approved by NCRA, and enabling fun networking opportunities.**
- **Our Schools Committee is putting boots on the ground and promoting this fabulous career to future students throughout the state.**



# BECOME AN FCRA VOLUNTEER



FCRA depends on the volunteer services of our members. Committees are formed immediately after the Annual Convention. Remember, FCRA depends on its committee members to be our boots on the ground, whether it's through the Membership Committee reaching out to new potential members, the Government Relations Committee working hand-in-hand with our lobbyist, the PR Task Force presenting educational seminars to paralegals across the state, or the Fundraising Committee handling our annual fundraiser. Each committee is an integral part of how FCRA is out there working for you.

## Committees Include:

**COMMITTEE COORDINATOR**  
**ARLENE P. SOMMERS AWARD**

**CART/REALTIME**

**CHARTER & BYLAWS**

**CONVENTION COMMITTEE**

**COURT REPORTING SCHOOLS**

**COURTS COMMITTEE**

**EMILY MANN DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD**

**FINANCE AND BUDGET**

**FUNDRAISING**

**GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**  
**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

**THE FLORIDA REPORTER**

**MEMBERSHIP/INFO EXCHANGES**

**NOMINATING**

**PLACEMENT**

**PR TASK FORCE**

**PRO BONO**

**PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

Go to [fcraonline.org](http://fcraonline.org) to volunteer today!



**Protecting  
the record  
starts with  
YOU.**



**Advocate for our profession and encourage  
others to join their state association today.**

## **Need to contact FCRA?**

**Christy Aulls Bradshaw, RPR, FPR-C  
Executive Director - Florida Court Reporters Association  
201 North Magnolia Avenue  
Ocala, Florida 34475  
844-GET-FCRA (844-438-3272)  
Cell: 352-427-8008 Email: [admin@fcraonline.org](mailto:admin@fcraonline.org)  
[www.fcraonline.org](http://www.fcraonline.org)**





# Do you know someone who has gone above and beyond?

## The Arlene P. Sommers Award

The Arlene P. Sommers Award for Outstanding Achievement in Education is presented to a person who is or has been a teacher, tutor, or administrator engaged in a court reporting education program in the State of Florida approved by the Arlene P. Sommers Award Committee, or any other person who has made a significant contribution to the education of court reporting students.

## The Emily Mann Distinguished Service Award

The Emily Mann Distinguished Service Award shall be bestowed by the FCRA upon a person who possesses exceptional qualifications and experience in the field of shorthand reporting while contributing in a meritorious manner to the welfare of FCRA; and has served the Association in at least two (2) of the following categories:

1. Served the Association with active participation on committees and/or on the Board of Directors of the state association.
2. Contributed to the profession in areas of teaching, editing of publications, or other contributions which have been designed for the advancement of shorthand reporting.
3. Contributed important books, papers, or other written material dealing with the profession.
4. Contributed seminars for the state association for members, such seminars having received the approval of NCRA for continuing education points.
5. Aided in the advancement of the profession by working in liaison with the Bar, the media, judicial groups and/or educational institutions

Dates for Nominations for the Arlene P. Sommers Award for Outstanding Achievement in Education and The Emily Mann Distinguished Service Award will be posted in early 2024.







## Pre-Authorized Payment Plan Form

### Participating Membership Only

Please complete and return payment plan form and membership application to:

FCRA Headquarters  
201 North Magnolia Avenue  
Ocala, FL 34475  
Phone: 844-GET-FCRA (438-3272)  
admin@fcraonline.org

The FCRA payment plan is available only through submission of this form and is not available online.

**INSTALLMENTS:** Plan is payable by credit card only. Check payments will not be accepted.  
All payments will be automatically processed as outlined below.

First Payment	Processed upon receipt of this form	\$90.00
Second Payment	Processed 30 days after first payment	\$90.00
Third/Final Payment	Processed 60 days after first payment	\$90.00

Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Member Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Terms of the Agreement: I hereby authorize FCRA to process the fees for my participating membership in three credit card transactions. All transactions will be processed to the credit card provided on this form. The first payment in the amount of \$90.00 will be processed upon receipt. The second installment in the amount of \$90.00 will be automatically processed 30 days following the first payment. The third and final installment in the amount of \$90.00 will be automatically processed 60 days following the first payment. Check payments will not be accepted under this agreement. I understand there will be NO REFUNDS for any installment (partial payment) processed under this agreement. I also understand that FCRA membership will not be considered active until all three plan payments have been processed successfully. The full amount paid under this plan for my FCRA Participating membership dues will be \$270.00 which includes a \$20 administrative fee for processing multiple payments.

☐ Please enroll me in the payment plan. I have included credit card information for all three installments below. I fully understand and agree to the Terms of the Agreement as stated above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Payment Method:

☐ Master Card ☐ Visa ☐ American Express

Billing Address: (If different from above)

\_\_\_\_\_

Account #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder's Name / Signature

Payment plan effective 8/3/22 for Participating Members only.





# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

## Florida Court Reporters Association

\*Name (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_ NCRA # \_\_\_\_\_ NVRA # \_\_\_\_\_

\*Company \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Owner ☐ Co-owner ☐ Manager

\*Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

\*City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\*Telephone: Home (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Office (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK ONE: ☐ OK to publish home phone number in directory. ☐ DO NOT publish home phone number.

\*Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

\*METHOD OF REPORTING: ☐ Stenographic ☐ Voicewriter ☐ Gregg ☐ Pittman ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

\*TYPE OF REPORTER: ☐ Freelance ☐ Official ☐ Deputy Official ☐ Federal ☐ Teacher ☐ Student ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

\*DESIG: ☐ CSR [List State(s) other than FL] \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ FAPR ☐ FPR ☐ RPR ☐ RDR ☐ CMRS ☐ RMR ☐ CLVS ☐ CRI ☐ CRR ☐ CPE

\*Asterisk indicates required information.

I make application for Membership as a: (CHECK ONE)

☐ PARTICIPATING MEMBER .....\$250.00

Open to anyone engaged in active practice of official or general court reporting by either stenographic or voicewriter method. (Please indicate method above.)

PAYMENT PLAN AVAILABLE

☐ \*Pre-Authorized Payment Plan Attached  
(Participating Members Only)

☐ STUDENT MEMBER .....\$35.00

Open to any student of shorthand reporting who is endorsed by a court reporting training program instructor or director.

☐ RETIRED MEMBER .....\$45.00

Open to any participating member in good standing who has retired from the active practice of shorthand reporting.

☐ ASSOCIATE MEMBER .....\$90.00

This category is open to the following (please check one):

\_\_\_ Teachers of shorthand reporting

\_\_\_ Individuals officially connected with a school or college conducting shorthand reporting course - School Name & Location \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Non-member individuals retired from active shorthand reporting

\_\_\_ Non-reporters professionally associated with or employed by a member of FCRA whose application is endorsed by a participating member in good standing (please print sponsoring member's name below where requested)

\_\_\_ Anyone qualifying for Participating membership, but residing outside of Florida - State of Residence \_\_\_\_\_

☐ VENDOR MEMBER .....\$500.00

Open to any firm or corporation engaged in selling products or services to FCRA members.

PRO BONO: Are you interested in donating time to the Pro Bono Program?

☐ Yes ☐ No

FLORIDA MANUAL: The guide to court reporting in Florida — sample forms, guidelines, and rules of court. Cost for members: \$75.00. Subscription to updates: \$25.00.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY: Searchable geographical and alphabetical members' listing on our website.

Membership year runs one year from date of enrollment. Dues payments are deductible by members as an ordinary and necessary business expense. In accordance with Section 6033(e) (2)(A) of the Internal

### For Administrative Use Only

Date Recd \_\_\_\_\_ Ref # \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Date Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Computer \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby make application for membership in the Florida Court Reporters Association and pledge myself, if accepted, to abide by the requirements of the Bylaws and Code of Professional Responsibility of the Association as they are now and as they may be amended in the future.

I understand that all applications are subject to review and approval by FCRA. All applicants must be sponsored by an FCRA member in good standing per FCRA bylaws.

Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Sponsoring Member (Please print or type) \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about FCRA? Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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