

Volunteers Joined Force to Reduce Barriers

Two weeks ago, nine bilingual volunteers attended a two and a half day, intense training to become volunteer interpreter for the area's community organizations who provide victim assistance services for victims of crime, domestic violence and family support to people with disability and experiencing language barriers.

This first Volunteer Interpreter Program (V.I.P.) training was sponsored by the Great Wall Center in response to the lack of bilingual workers in organizations serving the local growing Asian populations. In crisis, bilingual persons without training may often get involved in a difficult situation where language become key factors to access the needed services for victim of crime or other vulnerable residents.

The training was facilitated by the Cross Cultural Communication Systems and the Great Wall Center. Planning was assisted by the Malden Police Department domestic violence assistance unit, Cambridge College Medical Interpreter Training program, Cross Cultural Communication Systems, Tri City Community Action Program, Portal To Hope and the Triangle earlier this spring. Speakers included representatives from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Civil Rights, Mass Department of Mental Retardation, Office for Human Rights, Mass Department of Mental Health, Office of Multicultural Affairs, Middlesex District Attorney Office Victim Witness Assistance Program, Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston, Portal to Hope, South Shore Elder Service Elder Protective Program, professional interpreters, language coach and a delightful visit by Representative Paul Donato. This project was funded by a grant from the Office for Victim of Crime at the U.S. Department of Justice. For information contact Great Wall Center at 781-388-6931.



Eight out of nine volunteers appeared on the photo. From left Lily Ng, Nita Yung, San San Tanaya, Richard Cheng, Cawina Lam, Zarita Araujo-Lane, Mabel Lam, Song Chen Su, Virginia Lam, Wu Wa Ng