



IL

CRA

FALL

2015

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ad infinitum

ILLINOIS
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REPORTERS
ASSOCIATION

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President's Message



Salutations, ILCRA members. It is my humble honor to begin my two-year term as president and extend my heart-felt thank you to Circuit Judge Jorge Ortiz for driving down to Springfield from Lake County to swear in myself and the rest of the Executive Board beginning new terms. It was so very much appreciated.

Stephanie Rennegarbe is a tough act to follow. She is not only an inspiration and strong leader but a friend. Stephanie cares about court reporters, court reporting, and is always willing to step up and assist in bringing about change and injecting positivity in the midst of negativity. Of course I must mention Immediate Past President Nancy LaBella. Nancy's energy and frankness and her stick-to-it attitude are remarkable. Why am I gushing with accolades for them? Because I know they at one point sat exactly where I am, drafting their first message to members of the Illinois Court Reporters Association as the new president.

Just as summer has ended and fall has begun, the Executive Board has experienced some changes with board members Nicole Cleary and Debra Musielak departing, Pam Taylor and Deborah Cohen-Rojas joining us, and Bernice Radavich becoming ILCRA's Education Liaison. We are but a phone call away if we have a historical question for Nancy Davis or Bonni Shuttleworth. As we move forward with awe-inspiring ease with Innovative AMC and Dave, Liz, and Donna, we fondly recall our favorite worker bee Glennda helping out during prior conventions.

If you were not able to attend our annual convention, you missed a good one. Congratulations to our speed and realtime contests winner, DSA recipient and third-place Intersteno winner Donna

Urlaub. Friday sessions began with ILCRA's lobbyist Dan Hamilton, Anissa Nierenberger, U.S. probation officers, NCRA's Director of Government Relations Adam Finkel, and the President's Reception. We continued the momentum on Saturday with Margie Wakeman Wells, Congressman Rodney Davis, another session with Anissa and Margie, and concluding the day with Sangamon County Coroner Cinda Edwards. It was a pleasure to meet Mike Nelson, NCRA's new CEO and Executive Director. Mike is on fire and ready to lend a hand or a word of advice.

I hope attendees had as much fun as I did checking out the vendor tables, taking the Luminex out for a spin, making a purchase or two or three just because, or doing a happy dance to your car if you won one of the raffle items. Thank you to all of the convention sponsors and vendors. Seriously, I really like ending the convention with a raffle. We laugh and we cheer together. We congratulate the winners and pack up to head our separate ways. From Springfield I headed home for Lindenhurst, while some of you headed for the Illinois/Missouri area.

We gathered in Springfield this time. The miles may separate us on a daily basis, but ILCRA represents each member. Each member of ILCRA has a unique perspective to bring to the table. Fresh eyes and ideas and/or possible solutions to issues that impact the profession of court reporting are welcome. If you would like to join us in fulfilling our mission statement, let us know.

Until next time, I wish you good health, continued success, peace and joy.

—Vernita Allen-Williams

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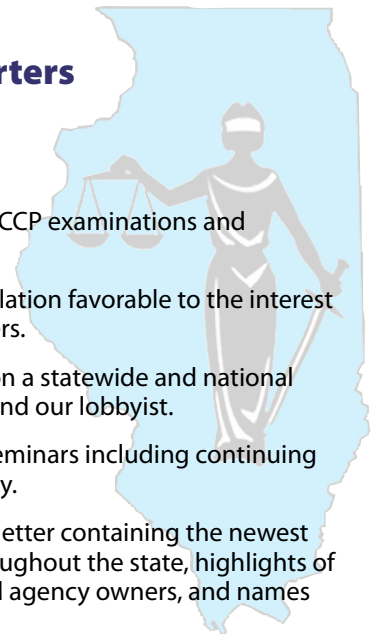
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For a listing of all **committees and current committee members**

[CLICK HERE](#)

What ILCRA Does for Illinois Reporters

- **Works** to maintain your right to be certified.
- **Administers** the RPR, RMR, RDR, CRR, CBC, and CCP examinations and publishes the dates of the tests in *Ad Infinitum*.
- **Monitors, promotes, and lobbies** to pass legislation favorable to the interest of court reporters, captioners and CART providers.
- **Monitors** legislation affecting our professions on a statewide and national basis through both our Legislative Committee and our lobbyist.
- **Sponsors** an annual conference and one-day seminars including continuing education and the latest in reporting technology.
- **Publishes** *Ad Infinitum*, a quarterly online newsletter containing the newest up-to-the-minute reporting developments throughout the state, highlights of board meetings, advertisements of vendors and agency owners, and names and telephone numbers of ILCRA officers.
- **Serves** as an affiliated state unit of the [National Court Reporters Association](#).
- **Offers** members significantly reduced rates for the conventions and seminars.
- **Awards** Student Scholarships, a Distinguished Service Award, an Award of Excellence for an Outstanding Educator, and conducts [speed contests](#) each year.
- **Provides** resources on the ILCRA website, including the CSR Act, Court Reporters' Act, Rules and Regulations of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, Transcript Act, and ILCRA Bylaws. It also includes officers' names and contact information as well as Committees and Committee Members. ILCRA Member Information is included on the website under "Find a Reporter."
- **Offers** an Online Student Mentor Program.
- **Promotes** student recruitment.
- **Organizes** letter-writing campaigns on issues affecting our professions.
- **Sends** representative members to legislative boot camps, leadership conferences, and the national convention for training and education.
- **Provides** reporters for demonstrations on request and attends career days throughout the state.
- **Provides** free CART brochures to its members.
- **Provides** a court reporters network through Constant Contact which allows ILCRA to immediately be in touch with members via email.
- **Serves** the membership with the phone number 703-729-4861 and a [website](#).
- **Provides** an association management company to assist members.



ILCRA MISSION STATEMENT

To maintain standards of excellence in verbatim shorthand reporting, to provide continuing educational opportunities and advocate technological advancements, and to promote a spirit of mutual assistance between the profession of verbatim shorthand reporting and its consumers.

Distinguished Service Award

Amy Quint

DSA Committee Chair

It is my distinct honor and privilege to make the presentation for this year's Distinguished Service Award. I would like to thank my fellow committee members, Bonni Shuttleworth and Lyn Grooms, for their work on the committee. I have to say that, of all the duties I've had on the ILCRA Board and various committees, this one has by far been the most enjoyable. Gathering background information and talking with the recipient's family members and even secreting them here in the hotel this morning has been such a fun experience.

The Policies & Procedures manual delineates the duties of the DSA Committee. In part, it reads: "The Committee will seek someone who has added to the quality of the court reporting profession, improved the manner in which it is perceived by other professionals or the general public, or who has helped fellow reporters to focus on how they can better meet the demands of technology and the changing judicial system." We had several candidates nominated for the award this year but the Committee was unanimous in the selection of this recipient, who has without a doubt added to the quality of the profession, improved the manner in which it is perceived, and went out of her way to help fellow reporters and students.

This year's recipient started out working at a pizza parlor and gave court reporting school a try at the suggestion of her mother. She went from working for other people to partnering in her own firm. She's presented multiple seminars and written articles for national publications. She's soft spoken but a tigress on that little machine. She's wowed us with multiple championships in the ILCRA speed and realtime contests and numerous medals in NCRA speed and realtime contests, and this year she took on the world at Intersteno and finished third.

If you haven't already figured it out by now, this year's Distinguished Service Award recipient is Donna Urlaub. Before I go any further into the presentation, I want to invite into the room Donna's family members, business partner, and co-workers, who are so very excited to be here to share in this special moment with her. We are happy to have with us here today: her husband of 44 years, Dave; her daughter Dayna and son-in-law Nick; her grandchildren, Sophia, Caleb and Leo; her sister Pam and brother-in-law Jim, and her sister Annis and brother-in-law Ernie. Her partner, Nick Bowen, and several of the reporters from her firm also made the trip down today.

Donna's 85-year-old mom, Gloria Jones, and daughter Diana were unable to be here today, but I know they are very happy that she is being recognized for her contributions to the profession.

Donna grew up on the West Side of Chicago in an area called Austin. She attended Francis Scott Key School and graduated from Austin High School. She worked at Parkside Pizzeria and later for Courtesy Foods. Her mom took public transportation to and from work and one day she brought home a brochure advertising Court

Reporting. Donna decided to give it a try. She attended Bryant & Stratton Business School and graduated within ONE YEAR. Does that surprise anyone?? After graduation she worked for Sullivan Court Reporting for 15 years. In 1984 Donna formed Urlaub Bowen Court Reporting and Video Conferencing with her partner, Nick Bowen, and they celebrated the 30th anniversary of the firm last year. Urlaub Bowen is definitely a family business as Donna's daughter Dayna and her sister Pam both work at the firm... making it quite difficult to communicate with the family members about this award during office hours and keep it a secret from the boss, I might add!!!

Donna literally married the boy from across the street, as Dave also lived on Ohio Street, where Donna and her three younger sisters lived with her mom. Dave & Donna adopted their daughter Dayna and then 20 months later they had their daughter Diana. She now has those three lovely grandchildren with us today. When she's not competing or working, she enjoys spending time with the grandkids, walking her dog Maya and running 5k races.

Donna has given so much to this profession. She has served on committees for ILCRA and served at least eight years on the CSR Board. During her time on the CSR Board she was always concerned with the reporting students and getting them to the point where they could pass the exam. Many of the CSR tests were created from transcript material that Donna submitted. Her passion for the students is evident when you see her talking to them on breaks at ILCRA and NCRA conventions.

She also carried that passion a step further when she established a student scholarship in memory of her longtime mentor and outstanding educator, Bob Fields. This memorial scholarship, funded solely by Donna, has been given each year since Bob passed away to a court reporting student selected randomly in a drawing at ILCRA convention.

From what I've seen and heard, I think Donna's brain must idle on Steno, or maybe it never idles at all! One of her dear friends shared with me how continually impressed she is by Donna. She said that oftentimes while they are in the midst of dinner conversation, Donna will stop her and say "how do you write that?"; followed by some discussion of Steno, followed by Donna picking up the thread of the conversation exactly where they left off!

Donna has won the ILCRA speed contest 11 times since its inception in 1986 and has won the realtime contest four times since its inception in 2007. She has put Illinois on the map by medaling in the NCRA speed contest 4 out of the last 5 years, and now finishing third this year at InterSteno. I know she's also medaled several times in the NCRA realtime contest, finishing second this year, but I was unable to find all of those statistics. Cindy from Urlaub Bowen said they are going to have to build on a trophy room at the office!

Even with all of her many accomplishments, Donna is one of the most humble people I have ever met. It's never about her; it's always about the profession and the students.

On behalf of the DSA Committee, I am pleased to present this year's Distinguished Service Award to Donna Urlaub.

Thank you
to all the individuals,
firms and companies who supported
the 2015 ILCRA Annual Convention!
It was an incredible event and
we could not have done it without you!

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Thank you!

Thank you to **Carole Bartkowicz** for her generous support
of the Diane Dorwart Scholarship Fund!

Thank you to **Donna Urlaub** of Urlaub Bowen & Associates
for her generous support of the Robert P. Fields Legacy Fund Scholarship!

Urlaub Bowen & Associates

Thank you to Pengad for donating our beautiful Convention folders!



Thank you to Stenograph for providing the Luminex writer for our auction!



Student Sponsors

Vernita Allen-Williams
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Barbara Wichmann



Urlaub Bowen & Associates

Thank you!

Exhibitors



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exhibitors.*

Silent Auction Donors

There were many generous donors who brought auction items with them to convention. Please forgive us if anyone was inadvertently left off this list!

Vernita Allen-Williams

Wendy Campbell from ViVi Jewelry

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Friend of ILCRA

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Stephanie Rennegarbe

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Kathryn Thomas

Mary Trezzo

Donna Urlaub

ILCRA 2015 Student Scholarships

Bernice Radavich

Student Scholarship Committee Chair

I had one of the best jobs at the annual convention because I had the privilege of announcing the 2015 ILCRA Student Scholarship winners at our business meeting. We were able to honor those who will be the future of our profession and encourage them to persevere until they cross the finish line.

Thank you to the Student Scholarship Committee members for all their hard work. The committee members this year were Melissa Clagg, Tana Hess, and Amy Krueger.

The topic for this year's essay was "How do you achieve professionalism and ethical conduct in the social media/ technological age?"

We received entries from students attending MacCormac College, Midstate College, Sage College, and South Suburban College. In the winning essay, the student discussed how social media encompasses all areas of our daily lives and made this suggestion. "To maintain professionalism, ask yourself the following question: 'Would my future employer or a potential client be pleased to see the information I am about to post?'"

On behalf of the Board and the Scholarship Selection Committee, I would like to personally thank each and every one of the students for applying for the scholarship this year. I would also like to thank all of the contributors to the Diane Dorwart Memorial Student Scholarship Fund and our student fund.

ILCRA awarded three scholarships in this competition.

In first place was Michael Hensley from Sage College. Michael received a \$1,000 scholarship and a complimentary one-day registration to our annual convention in Springfield. The prize included hotel accommodations for one night, a mileage stipend, and a one-year associate membership in ILCRA. He will also become a member of the Student Scholarship committee for next year.

In second place and receiving a \$500 scholarship was Laura Pacini from MacCormac College.

In third place and receiving a \$300 scholarship was Amanda Thompson from Midstate College.

One of the requirements of the scholarships is that the students must have passed a 160 Q&A, so these students are in the home stretch, and we hope to encourage them to join our ranks in the near future.

Congratulations to the 2015 ILCRA Student Scholarship Award winners!

Michael Hensley
Sage College

Laura Pacini
MacCormac College

Amanda Thompson
Midstate College

Robert P. Fields Legacy Fund Scholarship

This scholarship was established by Donna Urlaub in memory of Robert Fields who passed away on March 2, 2011. Mr. Fields was a court reporting instructor for 53 years and was a teacher, mentor, and friend to many people. A monetary scholarship in Bob's name was awarded at ILCRA's Annual Convention this year in Springfield. The lucky winner was Michael Hensley, a student at Tammy Hanson-Sage College. The students present at the Annual Business Meeting were thrilled to learn that attendance was the only prerequisite for a student to be eligible to win the scholarship! Bob loved working with students and mentoring them after their schooling and would have been proud to see these students showing their commitment to their future profession! Thank you, Donna, for your generous support of this scholarship and congratulations to Michael!

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Winning Scholarship Essay by Michael Hensley, Sage College

Professional and Ethical Conduct in the Social Media Age

Technology has become a deeply-ingrained part of our everyday lives in personal and professional settings. As court reporters, it is important to remember that our ability to remain professional, ethical, and impartial must be at the forefront of any activity related to our profession. Bearing this in mind, these are the approaches that can be used by court reporters and students alike to maintain professionalism and ethical conduct in the age of technology.

Social media is an innovation that encompasses all aspects of our daily lives. We must face the fact that social media is not going away; it is only becoming stronger and more prevalent as time goes by. Reporters must be aware that social media can and will be viewed by anyone they come into contact with. To maintain professionalism, ask yourself the following question: "Would my future employer or a potential client be pleased to see

the information I am about to post?" By keeping those important figures as a priority, we can avoid any type of communication that could damage a potential relationship or job opportunity.

The saying goes, "If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all." This adage is arguably one of the most powerful guiding principles in social media. The time, energy, and emotion that goes into writing a defamatory or negative post is not worth any perceived validation that one might expect. That time could be far better spent on sharing information that is helpful, encouraging, or informative.

We should strive to present ourselves through any means of communication consistently. Whether it is a face-to-face interaction or a communication by phone, text, email, or website, reporters must carry themselves in a way that upholds the integrity and impartiality that our predecessors worked so hard to establish so that we might follow in their footsteps. Though the world around us may change because of innovation, we can always maintain our character and behavior regardless of the lens through which we are viewed.



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Realtime and Speed Contests

Rita Corson

Speed and Realtime Contest Chair

Every year I learn new things. I am so glad that I get to head up these contests. I learn so much from my contestants! We had a new face at this year's Speed and Realtime Contests. There were eight contestants in the Realtime Contest and seven in the Speed Contest. Every contestant is a winner in my book. I wish they all got first place!

First of all, I want to thank Donna Urlaub of Urlaub Bowen & Associates for sponsoring the Realtime Contest and Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag of Planet Depos for sponsoring the Gary L. Sonntag Memorial Speed Contest.

A big thank you to my committee - my right-hand woman, Theresa Hovick-Thomas; the two who did the dictating, Judy Lehman and Teresa Ozuna; and all of you who stepped up to be my graders and monitors! I couldn't have done this without you guys!

Well, my biggest thank you goes to the contestants who make these contests so much fun and exciting.

Now, let's get to the results:

Realtime Contest:

There are two parts to this test - 180 wpm Literary and 200 wpm Testimony. It takes 95% accuracy to qualify. That's only 45 errors on the 180 Lit and 50 errors on the Testimony. For any of you who have taken the CRR test, you will appreciate what these gals have accomplished with their test results. You will be amazed when you hear some of these percentages. These reporters blow me away!

The 180 Lit was taken from an actual Veteran History Project interview I took of a World War II fighter pilot. I found out when I took this Veteran History, that this veteran was my junior high school principal. I did

not realize he was a veteran or that he had to hide from the Germans for 90 days after his plane was shot down!

In the **180 Literary**, the qualifiers were:

1. Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag with 96.11%
2. Judith Walsh with 97.89%
3. Donna Urlaub with 99%
4. Laura Kooy with 99.22%

The **200 wpm Testimony** was about some good police work apprehending a burglar of a convenience store. Those contestants who qualified were:

1. Bernice Radavich with 96%
2. Paula Campbell with 96.7%
3. Laura Kooy with 97.2%
4. Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag with 97.5%
5. Donna Urlaub with 98.1%
6. Judith Walsh with 99.1%

By averaging both of these scores, I come up with a first, second, and third place. Those three receive medals. We had four people who qualified for both legs of this contest.

Our fourth place finalist was Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag with a score of 96.81%. The third place medal, with a score of 98.21%, went to Laura Kooy.

Second place medal, with a score of 98.49%, went to Judith Walsh.

The winner of the Realtime Contest, with a score of 98.55%, was Donna Urlaub. Donna received the first place medal and the Bonni Shuttleworth Realtime traveling trophy.

Gary L. Sonntag Memorial Speed Contest:

I had seven contestants who fiercely competed against each other for the right to take home the Sally Cochran Speed Contest traveling trophy. And compete they did! They take this very seriously!

The Speed Contest consisted of three takes - 220 wpm Literary, 230 wpm Legal Opinion, and 270 wpm Testimony.

The **220 Lit** was a speech given by Jeff Beals giving advice to freshmen starting college. Those who qualified were:

1. Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag with 96.91%
2. Donna Urlaub with 98.36%

The **230 Legal Opinion** was an argument before the Appellate Court over something boring and hard to report! Legal Opinions are always so hard you can't even imagine, but we had four qualifiers:

1. Kathryn Thomas with 96.35%
2. Paula Campbell with 97.04%
3. Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag 98.7%
4. Donna Urlaub 99.39%

The **270 Testimony** was testimony about a traffic stop of a suspected drunk driver who couldn't keep his clothes on. The qualifiers were:

1. Paula Campbell 95.7%
2. Ann Marie Hollo 95.78%
3. Bernice Radavich 98.44%
4. Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag 98.89%
5. Donna Urlaub 99.19%

In order to win a medal in the speed contest you have to qualify in all three areas, and we had just two qualifiers so there was not a third place medal given. Second place medal, with a score of 98.17%, went to Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag.

The winner of the Gary L. Sonntag Memorial Speed Contest, with a score of 98.98%, was Donna Urlaub. Donna received the Sally Cochran Traveling Trophy and a first place medal.

Donna competed in the Intersteno Competition in Hungary earlier this year and placed third in the world. What an awesome writer she is!

I am so in awe of all of these contestants. Just sitting for these contests makes them winners in my book. They made me proud to be a part of this contest experience.

If you have never attempted a speed contest, why don't you sign up next year at National? It's exhilarating! And practicing for this contest can only improve your skills as a court reporter.



Thank You to Student Sponsors

Susan Kempf

Thank you so much to the ILCRA members who sponsored students for the conference in September. I was one of the students who was able to attend the conference because of the financial support they provided and am grateful for the opportunity to attend, expand my knowledge, renew friendships and connections, and become inspired and excited about court reporting all over again. The Saturday sessions by Margie Wakeman-Wells were the BEST. I always learn something new from Margie about grammar and punctuation. She is an incredible wealth of knowledge and an fantastic teacher. I also really enjoyed hearing Congressman Davis speak about his experiences in Congress. Anissa Nierenberger is an amazing captioner and had some great dictionary building tips that I have already used. The awards luncheon was truly inspirational, to see the reporters with such incredible speed, talent and dedication. I can't wait to join your ranks one day! Thank you so much for the support and for the sponsorship.



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A Visit from the Court Reporter

'Twas the night before the Deposition, when all through the courthouse
Not a witness was stirring, not even a mouse;
The conference room chairs were setup with care,
In hopes that The Court Reporter soon would be there;
The attorneys were nestled all snug in their beds;
While visions of lawsuits danced in their heads;
When from the concourse there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my desk to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,
Gave a lustre of midday to objects below,
When what to my wondering eyes did appear,
But a realtime reporter with her writer and gear,
She dressed with much class, from her head to her toes,
Her clothes were all polished with rhinestones and bows;
A bundle of exhibits she had flung on her back,
She looked like a peddler just opening her pack.
Her eyes—how they twinkled! her dimples, how merry!
Her cheeks were like roses, her nose like a cherry!
More rapid than eagles her fingers they moved,
And she typed, and listened, keeping the groove:
“Speak Louder! Talk Slower! She sang and she sang!
Still her fingers kept moving steadily with each clang!
On top of the transcript! On top of each word!
Now type away! type away! type away what is heard!”
Sitting quietly in the corner, fingers flying with might,
Two-hundred words per minute, taking down each one right;
Up from the tables the questions they flew
With all listening joyfully, The Court Reporter too—
And then, in a twinkling, I heard from the crowd
The deposing attorney end the proceeding so proud,
She sprang to her feet, to her scopist gave a whertle,
And away they took off like the down of a thertle.
But I heard her exclaim, ere she walked out of sight—
“Happy Deposition to all, and to all a good night!”



Melanie Humphrey-Sonntag, President, is pleased to announce that Chicago-area Realtime & Court Reporting has been acquired by Planet Depos, LLC, a global court reporting company.

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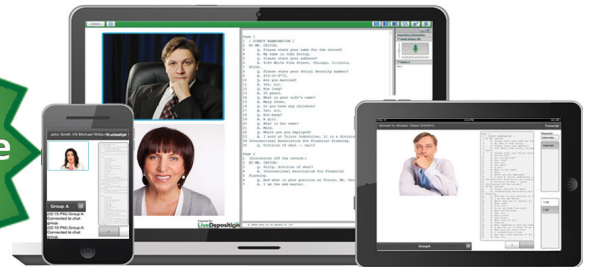
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29 E. Madison Street, Chicago, IL 60602
312.922.1884 www.maccormac.edu

Midstate College*

411 W. Northmoor Road, Peoria, IL 61614
309.692.4092 www.midstate.edu

Prince Institute, Great Lakes*

1300 E. Woodfield Road, Schaumburg, IL 60173
847.592.6600 www.princeinstitute.edu

South Suburban College*

16333 S. Kilbourn Ave., Oak Forest, IL 60452
708.596.2000 www.southsuburbancollege.edu

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ILCRA 2015 DATES

March 11-13, 2016

STARtech16

A joint meeting between

STAR and ILCRA

The Drake Hotel, Chicago, IL

April 9, 2016

CSR Examination

Chicago area and Carbondale

August 3-7, 2016

NCRA 2016 Annual Convention & Expo

Hilton Chicago

August 13, 2016

CSR Examination

Chicago area and Carbondale

December 12, 2016

CSR Examination

Chicago area and Carbondale

*NOTE: ILCRA will not hold an
Annual Convention in 2016*