Found in Translation

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

Empowering Women With Livelihoods Through Language, Building Health Equity For All
OUR MISSION

Through our medical interpreter training and job placement program we:

Help low-income multilingual women achieve economic security through the use of their language skills

+ 

Reduce ethnic, racial, and linguistic disparities in health care by unleashing bilingual talent into the workforce
OUR VISION

A world free of racial, ethnic, and linguistic stigma offering every woman the opportunity to build a meaningful career with a livable wage and providing equitable access to high-quality health care for all.
OUR VALUES

Courage + Integrity
Racial + Gender Equity
Language Justice
Healthcare Access For All
Professional Excellence
THE BEGINNING

Having immigrated twice by age 11, Maria Vertkin is no stranger to the very real challenges of adjusting to a strange new language and culture. For her, as for so many, immigration was a reset button on her life, each move erasing her sense of community and language.

Maria watched her parents struggle as the expertise they had in one country meant nothing in another. Homeless at 16, she learned first-hand the hardships of being a low-income, multilingual woman in America.

Despite the struggles of her childhood, Maria forged a path that led to college and a Bachelor of Social Work Degree that launched her into the field of social work and, ultimately, to creating Found in Translation to serve women like herself in similar situations.

"[America] is the land of opportunity. It is also the land where surgeons, chemists, school principals, journalists, and news editors go to become ‘cleaning ladies.’ Imagine crossing an ocean in pursuit of a better life, only to find that your university degree is now worthless and your skills and knowledge don’t count. You see newspaper headlines calling you a drain on society. Eventually, you come to view yourself as less than you are and your heritage as a source of shame.

Found in Translation’s approach is strength-based, leveraging immigrants’ unique skillset of multilingualism.”

Maria Vertkin
Founder + Executive Director, Found in Translation
WE ADDRESS TWO URGENT CHALLENGES

- Economic Disadvantage For Minority Women
- Racial, Ethnic, And Linguistic Disparity In Healthcare
Poverty and homelessness impact women disproportionately — and it’s even worse for women immigrants.

The numbers are stark, the poverty rate among immigrants is 50% higher than for people born in the U.S. The compounding effects of multiple biases like race, ethnicity, language, and gender compound the burdens shouldered by women and are reflected across all economic metrics.

According to a 2018 report, 49% of families in Boston with children under the age of 18 were headed by a single female. Of these families, 47.8% were found to be living in poverty.

Female-headed households in the U.S. are twice as likely to be living in poverty as those headed by men (30.6% vs 14.8%).

In 2018, Hispanic or Latina women working full-time earned an average of $28,000 less than men.
Language barriers in healthcare
Patients with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) are among the most vulnerable populations. Studies consistently show LEP patients experience high rates of medical errors with worse clinical outcomes than English-proficient patients and receive lower quality of care by other metrics as well.

Linguistic barriers are serious impediments to building patient–physician communication and trust, putting quality and safety at risk, compromising the length of hospitalizations, often resulting in costly, and sometimes deadly, errors, and delays.

Even though access to a professional medical interpreter is a legally-protected civil right, the limited number of trained medical interpreters is not sufficient to keep up with growing demand.

In 2018, 17% of Boston’s population over the age of five self-identified as having LEP, saying they speak English “less than very well.”
The two urgent challenges we address — **Women’s Economic Disadvantage** and **Health Disparities for LEP patients** are **getting worse due to COVID**, compounding the burden on low-income women and limited English speakers.

**COVID’S ADDED ECONOMIC BURDEN FOR WOMEN**
A recent survey shows that, between February and August 2020, **mothers of children 12 years old and younger lost 2.2 million jobs** compared to **870,000 jobs lost among fathers**.

**WORSENING HEALTH OUTCOMES**
A recent study released by the Mass General Brigham system revealed that **Spanish speaking LEP patients were 35% more likely to die from COVID-19** than their English-speaking demographic counterparts.

**Found in Translation’s programs are needed now, more than ever.**
GROWING HEALTH DISPARITIES

During a pandemic, language barriers pose an even greater healthcare threat by impeding efforts to stem the spread of the virus and jeopardizing the success of ongoing mass vaccination efforts.

In a 2021 study, LEP patients were more likely to be older, female, less educated, poorer, uninsured, receive Medicaid, and lack a usual source of care. They reported having significantly worse health status than patients with English proficiency.

At the height of the pandemic in Boston in the spring of 2020, 60% of all inpatients at Massachusetts General Hospital were people with LEP, compared to the usual 9% in healthier times.

In spring of 2020, the COVID positivity rate for patients in the U.S. with LEP was 26% compared with 6% for patients with English as a primary language.

For patients with LEP, language barriers during the COVID pandemic have grown more serious, truly becoming a life-or-death concern.
A recent McKinsey study found that women are facing disproportionate stress during COVID. Mothers in the U.S with young children have reduced their work hours at a rate that is four to five times higher than fathers to take on childcare, homeschooling, and household responsibilities.

People of Color are more than twice as likely as Whites to report acute challenges in mental health or job security.

During the past year, employment for Black women fell 9.7% compared to 5% for White men, 5.4% for White women, and 5.9% for Black men.

COVID-19 has significantly accelerated progress toward a virtual landscape. Interpreters urgently need training in up-to-date technologies to stay current in their profession.

Innovative, holistic workforce development programs for low-income, multilingual women are vital to recovery.
The Language Access Fellowship Program begins with 140+ hours (3.5x the standard 40 hours) of free, top-quality, intensive interpreter skills and language instruction, set up in accordance with National Standards for Medical Interpretation. Standard programming includes:

- **Learning thousands of medical terms in two languages** through an in-depth study of body systems, symptoms, diseases, diagnostic tools, and treatments
- **Studying the intricacies of the US health care system, learning the Interpreter Code of Ethics**, and sharpening skills solving hypothetical ethical dilemmas
- **Rigorous language coaching** from an experienced professional medical interpreter who specializes in each student’s language

Upon passing the final exams, students earn a Medical Interpreter Certificate of Training, the required credential for employment as a medical interpreter.
Found in Translation goes far beyond the usual interpreter certificate training, providing a custom-designed program to lower barriers for low-income women.

In addition to a rigorous academic curriculum, our Language Access Fellowship provides students with:

- **Childcare** supports, including on-site childcare during training
- **Transportation** assistance
- **Resources for tech literacy**, equipment, and access to the internet
- **Mentoring + professional development opportunities** and other job seeking needs
- **Financial literacy** education
Post-training, Found in Translation continues to provide career advancement services to all alumnae fellows — for as long as they want it. Our program includes career advising, support applying to jobs, connecting with mentors, honing and expanding their interpreter skills, and more:

- Guidance on career planning, resume writing, job applications
- In-house continuing education opportunities
- Scholarships and access to next-level credential building
- Direct job placement through our Interpreter Services and as faculty in our programs
- Assistance in navigating changes in the interpreting field due to COVID-19
Since 2011, Found in Translation has trained 291 women as medical interpreters in 37 different languages, making health care more accessible to many thousands of immigrants and their families every year.
The women who have participated in our programs speak 53 languages and represent 50 countries of origin.
Post-graduation, our alumnae...

- **Maintain high levels of continuing employment** for years after completing their initial training
- **Increase their average wage** from under $15/hr to $25/hr or more
- **Increase their income** by an average of $10,000 more per year
COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPACT

Found in Translation graduates increase language access in healthcare through their work as interpreters, serving an estimated 35,000+ people every year with limited proficiency in English in the Boston area.
THE GREATEST IMPACT OF ALL — OUR COMMUNITY

Found in Translation is, above all else, a welcoming + supportive community. Earning a Medical Interpreter Certificate and joining the interpreter workforce is just the beginning!

The deep bonds formed through our program inspire past alumnae to return as volunteers, donors, instructors, and employers. They are our — and each other’s — greatest resource.
Found in Translation has completely changed my life by making me regain my self-confidence as an immigrant single mom.
Chahinez, Arabic Interpreter (Class of 2017)

Found in Translation turned my skills of knowing three languages fluently into a money-making skill. Now I’m a certificate holding medical interpreter and well-loved by members of my community who have used my service.
Jaya, Nepali Interpreter (Class of 2016)

When I came to this country, I did not speak a word in English. I was sick and I had to go to the doctor, and that really hurt me because I couldn’t express myself, and people had to look for someone that spoke Spanish to help me out.
I went to college to the ESL program and finally, I was able to communicate. Then I found Found in Translation and my other dream came true. Becoming a medical interpreter has been so rewarding to pay back for all those times I felt lost in translation.
Caterine, Spanish Interpreter (Class of 2013)

Found in Translation shows me how strong women are when they work together.
Darling, Haitian Creole Interpreter (Class of 2019)

OUR ALUMNAE SAY...

Found in Translation shows me how strong women are when they work together.
Darling, Haitian Creole Interpreter (Class of 2019)
Found in Translation is, in my mind, an organization with a perfect mission. It leverages the untapped talent and brilliance of women in our community to not only uplift them professionally and economically, but to mitigate some of the broader-scale racial and economic disparities in healthcare...

I’ve worked in healthcare for a long time and my life-long dream is to become a physician, so I am especially aware of the lack of diversity and the lack of empathy in the medical field... I’ve witnessed treatment of non-English speaking patients by doctors and other medical workers that has made my stomach churn, and so it gives me such hope to know that the women in the Found in Translation program are going to be the future of healthcare.

Liz Kantor, 2021 volunteer
RECOGNITION

As the only free medical interpreter training program with holistic supports in the US, our unique and innovative model has earned us recognition at the local, national and international levels.

2021
Excellence in Innovation Award Finalist (Massachusetts Nonprofit Network)
Catalyst Program (Stand Together Foundation)

2020
NBCUniversal Project Innovation Winner

2019
Excellence in Innovation Award Finalist (Massachusetts Nonprofit Network)
People’s Voice Award Finalist (DVF Family Foundation)

2018
WeWork Nonprofit Creator Award
International BridgeBuilder Top Idea (OpenIDEO/GHR Foundation)

2017
Eastern Bank Community Advocacy Award
New Profit Women’s Accelerator
Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans
Roslyn S Jaffe Award
Vital Voices Fellowship

2016
Forbes 30 Under 30: Social Entrepreneurs
Chronicles of Philanthropy 40 Under 40

2015
Grinnell College Innovator for Social Justice Prize
Manhattan Institute Richard Cornuelle Social Entrepreneurship Award

2013
Advancement Award (The Boston Club)
Echoing Green Global Fellowship
New England Innovation Award (SBANE)

2011
Woman of Peace Award
Kip Tiernan Social Justice Fellowship
COMMUNITY PARTNERS

OUR COLLEAGUES
Beth Israel Lahey Medical Center | Boston Medical Center | Tufts University School of Medicine | Cross Cultural Communications | Suffolk University | YNPN | Boston | Tech Goes Home | Sharewood | Boston Rotaract | The Dimock Center | Cambridge Health Alliance | New England Translation Association | Boston Public Library | Massachusetts General Hospital | Boston University | Wheelock College of Education & Human Development | Dress For Success

FOUND IN TRANSLATION IS ATTRACTING THE ATTENTION OF TOP-TIER DONORS
OpenIdeo | Cummings Foundation | New Profit | Echoing Green | GHR Foundation | The Boston Foundation | WeWork | The Claneil Foundation | Imago Dei Fund | Royer Family Charitable Foundation | Eastern Bank Foundation | Fish Family Foundation | Cabot Family Charitable Trust | Anna B. Stearns Charitable Trust

To name just a few...
WHAT LIES AHEAD

CAPACITY BUILDING
- Technology infrastructure + training capacity
- Online training, resources, wraparound support
- Communications + philanthropy

EXPANDED PARTNERSHIPS to build an even broader community of potential employers for our alums, drive growth for our revenue generating interpretation services, and bring accessible high-quality healthcare and other services to communities in Boston and beyond

PROGRAM GROWTH to provide workforce opportunity and stability to more participants, growing our alumnae community to over 800 strong in the next decade

ENHANCED ALUMNAE ADVANCEMENT to amplify the skills and impact of program alumnae, supporting them with next-level credentials, licensing, entrepreneurship, advocacy and organizing
WHY SPONSOR FOUND IN TRANSLATION?

You will bring authenticity, credibility + respect to your brand

- **Your thought leadership will stand out** — and the people in your organization will feel pride in your leadership — when you visibly stand for **racial, ethnic + gender equity, workforce opportunity for women** living in poverty, and **accessible healthcare** for the people most deeply impacted by COVID

- Leaders + influencers in the **healthcare and medical community will know the impact** of your commitment + support

But most important of all, you will extend a lifeline to immigrant and refugee **women**, empowering them to build greater economic stability and success for themselves and their families while providing language access to health care for their communities.
BECAUSE OF WOMEN LIKE NATALIA . . .

Found in Translation changed my life. As a result of its 140+ hours free training, I began and have continued my career as medical interpreter since 2013, which has allowed me to excel both personally and professionally. Found in Translation is deeply committed to empowering low-income bilingual women. . .The language barriers that are broken by its graduating classes of dedicated medical interpreters make Found in Translation an essential participant in today’s local economy and an inspiring leader in trying times.

I fully support and endorse the programs of this organization and encourage you to make yourself a part of this wonderful community.

Natalia Chilcote, Spanish Interpreter
(Class of 2013)
Thank You