

Report: NZSTI Conference

By Jaqueline Nordin

Attending the NZSTI Conference in Aotearoa New Zealand was a privilege in more ways than one. I participated as a presenter while also representing the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT), creating an opportunity to contribute to the program and to build connections across professional borders.

NZSTI, the New Zealand Society of Translators and Interpreters, serves as New Zealand's national professional association for translators and interpreters and convenes an annual two-day conference for practitioners, researchers, government representatives, and language-service stakeholders. The event provided a lively forum for examining where our professions have come from, the pressures and opportunities we face now, and the kind of future we want to shape together.

What stood out most was not simply the breadth of the program, but the familiarity of the concerns expressed throughout the conference. Conversations about professional standards, remuneration and working conditions, certification, technological change, and culturally responsive language services echoed many of the discussions taking place within NAJIT and across the United States.

My presentation on *The Tanden Method* focused on training interpreters in multilingual cohorts. I was especially encouraged by the thoughtful questions and discussion that followed, which showed that the issue has relevance beyond its immediate national or institutional setting. The exchange reinforced the value of international dialogue: local systems may differ, but the professional principles at stake, including accuracy, ethics, access, accountability, and respect for the people we serve, are widely shared.



The conference also highlighted the importance of grounding translation and interpreting practice in the linguistic and cultural realities of Aotearoa New Zealand. Sessions addressing Indigenous languages and community connections situated professional practice within broader questions of identity, equity, and public service. For those of us working in legal and community-interpreting settings, this was a valuable

reminder that language access is not only operational; it is also closely tied to dignity, participation, and trust.

Representing NAJIT offered an opportunity to introduce colleagues to the association's work and to learn from NZSTI members' experiences. Professional associations play a vital role in convening practitioners, advocating for standards, supporting education, and creating spaces where difficult industry questions can be discussed openly. NZSTI's program included direct discussion of translator and interpreter rates and working conditions, demonstrating the importance of making practitioners' lived experience part of the profession's future planning.



I returned from New Zealand with renewed appreciation for the reach and relevance of our professional community. The NZSTI Conference demonstrated that international engagement is *not* an optional extra: it is a practical way to exchange ideas, test assumptions, build professional solidarity, and strengthen our collective ability to advocate for high-quality language services. I am grateful to NZSTI for its welcome and to NAJIT for the opportunity to represent our association in this important global conversation.

