

Sisters start court reporting school

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“Partners since birth,” is the tagline for an Itasca-based court reporting business that twin sisters founded and now operate in Itasca.

Mary Ellyn D’Andrea and Mary Kay Andriopoulos, own M & M Reporting Worldwide Legal Services. They started the reporting business about 12 years ago and have added several components to the growing firm.

The latest addition is a court reporting school, Court Reporting Institute of America.

D’Andrea knew she wanted to be a court reporter at an early age as a result of a car accident that her family was in. At the age of 11, the twins had to give a deposition, and D’Andrea thought the court reporter’s job looked fascinating.

Later the sisters, who look identical but are not, became certified as court reporters. The job requires a person to be able to type at least 225 words per minute. They then freelanced and worked for another company for about 15 years.

The sisters, who grew up and still reside in Elk Grove Village, then decided to launch their own firm.

The women each spent \$200 on business cards and started working from their homes. Within six months they needed an office and were growing rapidly. They now have about 50 freelance reporters and an

office staff of 25.

With headquarters in Itasca, the business also has an office at 155 N. Michigan Avenue in Chicago. The company has clients around the world.

Several years ago they noticed a great demand for additional court reporters and recently became licensed through the Illinois State Board of Education to start a school.

Opening in September, there are now 50 students enrolled. Through their program, it takes about 2 years to become certified. Classes are offered during the day or night four days a week.

“It’s a great career. It’s so flexible and you can make a lot of money,” Andriopoulos said.

D’Andrea said it was ideal when her children were young. Her son, Pat, now 21, and Maria Anna, 17, are now involved in the business as well. Her son is also a musician and song writer. Her husband, John, left the printing industry in 2000 to assist in the family business.

Andriopoulos’ partner, D.C. Collard, is a successful musician and producer who took a leave from his work to handle the Web site, networking and IT aspects of the business.

Another division of the court reporting business is Twilight Professional Services, which works with law firms looking to outsource their work on big projects.

“We enjoy being busy,” D’Andrea said. She added that they also own an investment company where they own about 15 investment properties in Illinois, Wisconsin and Florida.

For more information on the court reporting school, call (630) 250-5999. For M & M Reporting, call (630) 775-1503 or check out www.mmreporting.com.
