



Racial Justice Lunch and Learn Meetings

Translators (directed by Rudy Valdez, proudly presented by US Bank)

Link: https://translatorsfilm.com/?mc_cid=27ac903f15&mc_eid=21bfa69f3d (2023 [21 mins])

“EVERY KID NEEDS THEIR PARENTS. But for 11 year-old Densel, 13 year-old Harye, 16 year-old Virginia, and the over 11 million children across the U.S. who are the only English speakers in their family, sometimes that relationship gets flipped. This is the untold story of kids who act as their family's translators on matters that are sometimes more adult than they are.” --*Translators* promotional screen

Child and youth translators strive to complete their own English schoolwork (with limited parental home support), while also struggling to help their families by trying to understand, digest and communicate the gist of myriad emails and other adult written or verbal content related to employment, bills, school conferences, licenses, and even health care. The youth say, “What will happen if I say something wrong,” or “Sometimes it’s really hard because you don’t know the word.” The parents understand the strain on their children but have few to no alternatives.

This freely shared, groundbreaking film about children and youth who shoulder the responsibility of translating for their families, *Translators* premiered at several independent film festivals in 2023 including the Tribeca Film Festival, and the USA Film Festival where the film earned a first place for non-fiction. Brought to the attention of the Lunch and Learn series through Ida Perez at Ibero American Action League-- where many are all too familiar with the weight of translating-- it was initially sent by Marlene Cortes, Senior Manager of Language Justice, Empire Justice Center.

Ms. Cortes understands language justice to be a foundational civil rights issue. She writes, “The film depicts the story of 3 different children being interpreters/translators for their families. It’s a short but powerful film giving a glimpse into these children’s lives. For [those of] us who were child interpreters and continue to be interpreters for our family, this hit very close to home. I understood how [the youth and children] felt and the worry... This is why I continue and will continue to fight for language justice. This is not just an ‘US’ problem it’s a ‘WE’ problem. As you can see, language barriers affect members outside the LEP/Deaf/Hard of Hearing communities.”

Additional Resources: <https://international.ucla.edu/cwl/article/119545>

10 Questions: Marjorie Faulstich Orellana on the Immigrant Child Translator

<https://philadelphia.chalkbeat.org/2022/5/18/23061616/translators-child-language-broker-student-voices> “Millions of children translate for their families, I am one of them.”