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Top transcriber in legal hearings

Football players need strength and speed. Target pistol shooters rely on steady nerves and sharp eyesight.

Randel Raison's line of work is all about flying fingers, aural skills and rock-solid knowledge of legal jargon.

The Houston resident and head of his own company — All Professionals Litigation Support Team Inc. — has been named 2007 transcriber of the year by The American Association of Electronic Reporters and Transcribers.

Raison has a job in which clarity and accuracy counts for everything.

As an audio registered professional reporter, he works from home, unlike a court reporter who sits near the judge to transcribe courtroom proceedings.



Raison

Using a high-speed Internet connection, Raison downloads previous court proceedings from around the country that are recorded using a digital audio system known as For The Record. Four different microphones can be separated and isolated to catch every word on the audio track.

Raison, who worked for years as a paralegal before embarking on his new career in 2004, has court clients in 12 states.

He has taken down everything from traffic court proceedings to a murder case. The majority of work involves depositions in workers' compensation cases and car accidents — and even recorded corporate employee reviews.

Raison estimates his company churned out more than 900,000 pages of testimony in 2006.

"A lot of testimony in car accidents is from people who are drugged up after the accident, so they mumble," Raison says. "But usually the person asking the question will remind them about it and say, 'Is that a yes?'"

Greg Barr