Hello and welcome to the U.S. Department of Labor’s Podcast Series on Allied Health Occupations for Young Adults. My name is Sara Hastings and I will be the host of this podcast series. The allied health field has great promise for employing young adults served by the workforce system. Understanding more about specific occupations in allied health is a first step in determining what the opportunities are in the field. This podcast series highlights young adults who are in training or who have been trained and are working in different allied health occupations. These young adults will discuss how they chose to enter this occupation, what kind of training they needed and what type of work or continued training or education they plan to do in the future. This series provides practical information about allied health occupations in order to assist both young adults and workforce staff in developing a career plan.  
  
Today we will be speaking with Daniela Franco. Daniela is a medical translator who received training and work experience from the Lane Workforce Partnership in Eugene, Oregon.  
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So, Daniela, why don’t you start off by telling us a little bit about yourself and about how you ended up becoming a medical translator?  
  
Hello, my name is Daniela Franco. I'm 17 years old and I’ll be graduating high school this coming spring 2012. I come from a very supportive family. I’m the oldest of two kids. I’ll do four years already in the WIA program. Nicki helped me get an interview with Volunteers in Medicine. I’ve been there almost six months. I got the interview and they saw the way that I was really fluent in Spanish. They trained me for a couple of weeks and then I just went to volunteering for a couple of months, maybe three months. Then I started getting paid.  
  
That’s great. So, can you tell us a little bit, so what is a medical translator?

A medical translator is somebody that translates in the language they are capable of speaking. For example I am translating Spanish for Spanish speaking patients. A medical translator is not only a medical translator. A medical translator also helps out with the patients and their problems and giving them the trust that they can tell you what’s going on with their health.

Great. So, sounds like medical translators do a lot. So for you, what would a typical day on the job look like?

Well for me, my dad drops me off. I don’t drive yet. And he drops me off and the first thing I do is tell them I’m here, is there anything I can do for you guys? I’m usually in the front office in the morning waiting for my patients, Spanish speaking to come in and tell me that they need my health. I usually, if there is nothing that I can do, I do phone calls, lab results, I do reminder calls, reminding them they have an appointment, or any other calls they have for me, for example, the coordinator usually has calls for female exams that I also have to call and make sure they are coming and that they have everything ready, that she has everything ready or have any questions before her appointment. Then, I go to the back and tell the nurse that I’m here, if you guys need me I’m going to be in the front. I see if there are any patients coming up. By the time I’m there in the front office then I’ll be ready for them and prepared myself for my first appointment with the patient.   
  
That’s great. Wow, it sounds like you really do a lot. A lot of exciting work. So, if I wanted to become a medical translator what kind of training would I need? Or maybe just tell us a little bit about what your on the job training looks like.  
  
It all depends how long your training will go. I was in training and they told me the way that I had to do it with patients. How I am supposed to introduce myself, how I am supposed to talk to them, how am I supposed to stand with them. That’s not what I exactly do. I try to do it the way that it is the best for the patients. The way that they feel more comfortable with me and the way that they feel more with honest and trust. So, when they trained me, it took me around maybe a month to get trained and then I started volunteering like I said. They trained me really well. They even gave us a dictionary if we need to and sometimes I don’t know the words and I have to apologize and get my dictionary.

One day I was in the clinic and there was this patient who called in and I was giving her her lab results. She told me that she would feel more comfortable if I was with her and I said, of course, I will be with you, I just need to change my time a little bit and I will be with you. And for me, it’s really nice and really wonderful that they will come back to me and come with that trust to tell me that they need me and that they need a medical translator.  
  
That’s great! So what do you like most about being a medical translator?

There are a lot of things I like about being a medical translator and that is speaking both of my languages which is Spanish and English. I can practice them every day I go in and help out and I also like to learn new stuff, new words, new ways of communicating with the patients. I love to help my community and this is the way to help my community. Those are the three main things I like about medical translating.

That’s very cool. So, what are your plans for the future?​  
  
My plans for the future are to graduate from high school, that’s my first plan. And I am planning to go to college. And, I am really planning on becoming a really good medical examiner. And, throughout my professional job I am planning on having a foundation for those students who can’t graduate for some reason or can’t go to college and I’m willing to give them my time and support them with the supplies they need to be successful.

That’s great. Well, wow, it really sounds like the experience you’re gaining as a medical translator has really allowed you the opportunity to see the many different occupations within the world of allied health. So, I wish you the best of luck in your continued goals and thank you so much for taking the time to talk with us today. We really appreciate hearing from you.

Thank you.  
  
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