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LanguageSpeak, the business of the art of translation

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From her office in South Miami, Annette Taddeo knows about almost everything that goes on in Miami: business forums, visits by notables or drug-trafficking trials.

These events have helped her translation company, LanguageSpeak, Inc., to grow in the past few years, not only in this city, but also at a national level.

"We're organized in such a way that we can meet different challenges," said Taddeo, founder, president and CEO of LanguageSpeak.

In 2003, for example, her company was in charge of all governmental simultaneous interpretation activities for the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas Summit (FTAA), which required bringing together 80 interpreters in Spanish, English, French and Portuguese. Many came from throughout the United States and Latin America.

She also handled document translations for the summit. In order to accomplish the task, Taddeo established an Internet system whereby translators whom she contacted "throughout the world" were able to perform the work directly from their countries without having to travel, by receiving documents and resending them, once translated, via the Internet.

"It was a very intense, but very meaningful, job for us," stressed Taddeo, 38.

When she founded the company in Miami in 1995, she set out to create a database of translators, currently comprising more than 275 professionals from all parts of the globe, including Miami, whom she constantly contacts for translation projects. The office in Miami has a full-time staff of eight. Her husband, clinical psychologist Eric Goldstein, is the company's COO.

Without a doubt, LanguageSpeak is thriving thanks to the ever-increasing presence of Hispanics in Miami. Demand for the company's services continues to rise, including at the Justice Department. Taddeo recalled the trial of a Latin American drug trafficker which required transcription and translation of a taped conversation that took place in a restroom. Not only was

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ANNETTE TADDEO, president and CEO of LanguageSpeak, Inc., says there is no room for mistakes in her profession. She has headed Translation activities for meetings at the White House, especially with Latin American leaders.

it an uncomfortable situation, she said, but it included ample foul language and some parts were almost inaudible.

"But we cannot afford the luxury of making mistakes," Taddeo said, adding that the company has not had to use its errors and omissions insurance policy in 10 years.

The company has also made inroads beyond Miami. It has headed translations during meetings at the White House, particularly with Latin American leaders; in the Commerce Department and in politics. LanguageSpeak has translated documents into Spanish for Democratic presidential candidate Sen. John Kerry (Taddeo was National Co-Chair of Business Women for Kerry and is currently Vice Chair of the National Democratic Party's Business Council).

The interest by large companies in U.S. Hispanic consumers is another opportunity seized by Taddeo, who studied Business Spanish and Administration at the University of Alabama. The company handled the translation into Spanish of the Office Depot website; print advertising for Tiffany & Co. and, most recently, ING Financial Services.

The company's list of clients includes American Express, Discovery Channel, Ernst & Young, Greenberg Traug, Kodak, Neighborhood Health Partnership and Oracle.

But something Taddeo always does is to combine her business commitments with community activities. She is a member of the National Forum of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council, and is on the boards of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and the Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce. She also chairs the Coalition of Miami-Dade County Chambers of Commerce.

Her career in both arenas has garnered her much success. Decorating part of her office are awards she has received from organizations including Women in International Trade, *South Florida Business Journal*, *Hispanic Business* and the Business Enterprise National Council. During its annual award ceremony in late May of this year, the publication *Miami Today* awarded her the Bronze Medal in the individual category, and the Small Business Administration (SBA) named her Minority Small Business Champion of the Year 2005 for her role in the National Minority Supplier Development Council.

"There is no one like her in South Florida who exemplifies all the qualities of this award," said Francisco "Pancho" A. Marrero, District Director of SBA's South Florida District Office.