



TODAY

The Official Publication of the
Montgomery County Paralegal Association
www.montcoparalegals.org

March 2013

MCPA Member Get A Member 2013 Campaign: March 1 through June 30, 2013

There are many benefits to membership in MCPA.

These benefits include free CLE events, job bank availability, networking opportunities, membership in NFPA which includes their quarterly magazine *National Paralegal Reporter*, exclusive discounts from a variety of vendors, and updates of events relating to paralegals. MCPA is also a member of the Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations, which sponsors the Pennsylvania Certified Paralegal program and provides a state-wide voice for paralegals.

Now is the perfect opportunity to share your commitment to the paralegal profession with your paralegal friends and colleagues or fellow paralegal students by having them become members of MCPA.

Every time you recruit a new member, it strengthens MCPA.

Every time you recruit a new member, it ensures the future of MCPA.

Every time you recruit a new member, it expands the entire paralegal network.

As a thank you, your recruitment efforts will be rewarded as follows:

- For voting members in good standing: Recruit two (2) new members and receive a \$25.00 gift card for each two new members;
- For voting or student members in good standing: Recruit two (2) new student members and receive a \$10.00 gift card for each two new student members;
- Law firms: Sign up five (5) new paralegals and receive a free ad in one issue of MCPA Today.

Gift cards will be awarded throughout the campaign. Grand totals will be announced after June 30, 2013, upon completion of our Member Get A Member campaign.

Please be sure that the member name is listed as the recruiting member on the new membership application.

If you have any questions regarding this Member Get A Member campaign, please contact: Debbie Arbuckle at Darbuckle@kaplaw.com or Sherry Barag at sbarag@foxrothschild.com or Tracey Barnes, MCPA Membership Chair at tbarnes@dischellbartle.com.

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SAVE THE DATE...

April 4

Board Meeting

Time:

6:00 p.m.

Location:

Shemtob Law
790 Penllyn Blue Bell Pike
Blue Bell, Pa 19422

April 16

General Membership and CLE Meeting

Topic:

“Gay and Lesbian Rights”

Speakers: Helene Casale, Esq. and Jerry Shoemaker, Esq.

Light bites to be provided by MCPA

Time:

6:00 p.m.

Location:

Nelson Levine de Luca & Hamilton
518 East Township Line Road
Suite 300
Blue Bell, Pa 19422

If you have any suggestions to offer on topics, venues and/or speakers for upcoming events, please contact Kathleen Zamorski at kmz@elliottgreenleaf.com.

Mark your calendar now.



Follow MCPA at our new location on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Montgomery-County-Paralegal-Association/268109046565145>

Don't forget to



US and.....

Check back for photo, news, and announcement updates!

Welcome new members!

Kim Sheridan

Brittany Luke

Nancy Watkins

Rebecca Krupiak-Maly



STUDENT AFFAIRS AND MENTORING COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

If you or someone you know is willing to “job shadow” a student paralegal or someone fresh out of college, please contact me, Lisa M. LaPenna, Pa. C.P., at (610) 941-2523 or llapenna@kaplaw.com.



We have a student member from Peirce College who is seeking a co-op position beginning mid-May to mid-August, 20 hrs./wk. Requirements from an employer based on an entry-level paralegal position:

- **The Training Plan** - Individualized learning objectives are developed by the student and employer to enhance the learning that has already taken place in the classroom. The plan provides a map of desired outcomes and defines how objectives will be assessed.
- **Site Evaluation** - The co-op faculty advisor visits the worksite to meet with the student and supervisor during the course of the co-op experience.
- **Employer Evaluation** - The employer evaluation form allows the employer to rate the overall performance of the co-op student. It includes the quality of a students work, the method of achieving and attaining learning objectives and the students overall professionalism.

If your place of employment is willing to be a part of a valuable experience to a future paralegal, please contact Lisa LaPenna, Pa. C.P., Chair at (610) 941-2523 or llapenna@kaplaw.com.

Support those who support us!

All of the sponsors appearing in the *MCPA Today*
provide financial support to keep
MCPA programs affordable to its members.
Remember our sponsors the next time you need a service.

Check the MCPA website (www.montoparalegals.org) for links to sponsors' websites.



*Congratulations to MCPA Today's
Contributing Editor, April Solla, on
the birth of her son, Nicholas!*

Nicholas was born on February 14 and weighed in at 7 lbs. 7 oz.

We wish the Solla family all the best during this exciting time.
Congratulations on your new addition.



King of Prussia Players
presenting its 2013 Summer Show
www.kofpplayers.org

July 19, 20, 25, 26 at 7:30
July 21, 27 at 2:00

Directed by DEBBIE SCHRAGER
Producer: MARIA BOCCELLA
Music Director: TOM WEXLER
Choreographer: SALLY ROTHCHILD

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of OZ*

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Music and Lyrics by Harold Arlen and E.Y. Harburg
Presented through special arrangement with Icons Winerock

Shannondell Performing Arts Theater
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Audubon, PA

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The Montgomery County Paralegal Association

Presents

Our Annual Spring Fundraiser

featuring our

Personalized Cookbooks



We Want to Publish Your Favorite Recipes!

Our group is collecting favorite recipes from people of our community to be published in a beautiful spiral bound cookbook. Each recipe that is selected will show the name of the contributor.

Please send us your favorite recipes as soon as possible

Just print or type your favorite recipe on the attached Recipe Collection form (please use the easy to follow format). Feel free to submit as many as you want. Be sure to put a title on your recipe. Use only one recipe per form. If recipe is too long, staple two forms together.

Please return your recipes to Allyn Pinsker at apinsker@kanepugh.com
or P.O. Box 1765, Blue Bell, PA 19422 by

March 18, 2013

These cookbooks make great gifts!

...it'll be a treasured keepsake for years to come. Simply fill in the following blank to reserve copies for yourself.

Please reserve _____ cookbooks for my own use. Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

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(Please type or print only one recipe per page)

Recipe Title: _____

INGREDIENTS

Recommended Abbreviations: c, tsp, Tbsp, pkg, qt, pt.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
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_____	_____

DIRECTIONS

SUBMITTED BY: _____

NFPA News

National Federation of Paralegals Associations, Inc. Update

Debbie Arbuckle, Pa.C.P., NFPA Primary Representative

NFPA began discussions at the 2012 Convention with a representative of the U.S. Army regarding membership with NFPA and certification. Representatives of NFPA were to meet with representatives of the Judge Advocate General's Legal School and Center in Charlottesville, VA in February to further these discussions.

At the Spring Region IV meeting last year, then Region Director, Val Dolan, RP, invited representatives of the Delaware Paralegal Association to attend, and several sat in on the morning session. Robert Hrouda, RP, NFPA's current President, has also met with them regarding joining NFPA. It also appears that the Chester County Paralegal Association will be rejoining NFPA in the near future.

While I am on the subject of membership, you have all recently received the Member Get A Member flyer and information through the listserv. The flyer appears again in this issue of MCPA Today. Please take a minute and find a colleague you know who is not a member of MCPA to educate them on all of the many benefits of being involved in and being a part of this association. Besides the incentives being offered by MCPA for new member recruitment, every new member of MCPA is a step towards our continued growth of the paralegal profession.

Are you a member of NFPA's LinkedIn page? The page includes job listings, vendor information and more. Take the time to check it out.

I am proud to report that MCPA had two mentions in the recent *Inside NFPA* reports recently published. Robert Hrouda, RP, President, noted that he attended our Holiday Social and thanked us for the invitation and Mary McLaughlin, RP, Pro Bono Coordinator, gave us a "hats off" in her report, noting our pasta fundraiser and the donation of the proceeds of that fundraiser to Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania. These Reports are seen by every NFPA member association President, Primary and Secondary – across the nation! Good work MCPA!



NFPA News (Continued)

NFPA Leadership Positions Available

Below please find a listing of currently available coordinator positions. Each coordinator position is vital to the continued growth and success of NFPA and therefore it is essential that we strive to have all positions filled.

Vice President and Director of Marketing Coordinators:

Strategic Alliances Coordinator

Corporate Partners Program Coordinator

Vice President and Director of Positions and Issues

Technology Coordinator

Regulation Review Coordinator

Secretary and Director of Operations

Governing Documents Coordinator

For your reference, position description and responsibilities are listed following this article.

Coordinator interest forms can be found on the NFPA website and for your convenience below at:

<http://www.paralegals.org/default.asp?page=110>.

(Please also include your resume with your submission – an area for this attachment is available within the form).

Please let me know if you have any questions. These positions will remain available until appointments have been made, but please do not delay!

By: Becky Kerstetter, OSBA Certified Paralegal, Nominations Coordinator

Please refer to the Procedures Manual for a complete description of each coordinator position or contact the nominations coordinator at:

becky.kerstetter@squiresanders.com or nominations@paralegals.org

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<u>Coordinator position</u>	<u>Reports to:</u>	<u>Duties & Responsibilities</u>	<u>Requirements</u>
Regulation Review Coordinator:	VPPI	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain and revise as appropriate information concerning the need for and effectiveness of regulatory programs for paralegals, including, but not limited to, licensing, certification, registration and accreditation; 2. Research, investigate and recommend policy concerning the feasibility of implementing regulatory programs in conjunction with identifying and assessing different forms of implementation (i.e., legislative changes, revisions to court rules, etc.); 3. Conduct research and investigate the effect on the paralegal profession of entities authorized to regulate the legal profession and, if appropriate, develop a proposed conclusion and recommendation; 4. Investigate and conduct research concerning efforts to regulate non-lawyer practice, such as legal document preparers; 5. Maintain and revise as appropriate NFPA's model legislation for paralegal regulation; 6. Develop guidelines to assist NFPA member associations to utilize NFPA's model legislation for paralegal regulation in their jurisdiction; 7. Send monthly e-mails on the Regulation listserv with current regulation news, general regulation information or reminders about what regulation information is available on the NFPA website; 8. Send periodic e-mails on Leaders and NFPA2 listservs promoting the Regulation listserv; 9. Include mentions of the regulation information available on the NFPA website and promote the Regulation listserv whenever possible, such as at the Regulation conference, other speaking engagements and published articles; and 10. Maintain NFPA's website as the "go to" resource on paralegal regulation issues. Review and update the regulation material posted on the NFPA website quarterly. Update the Regulation chart at least once per year, more often as appropriate. 	See Section 8 (and specifically Section 8.4) of the Procedures Manual.

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<u>Coordinator position</u>	<u>Reports to:</u>	<u>Duties & Responsibilities</u>	<u>Requirements</u>
<u>Technology Coordinator:</u>	VPPD	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor developments and gather information regarding the use of technology, including various hardware and software applications in the workplace; 2. Monitor NFPA's Internet list serve on technology; 3. Respond to questions concerning the use of technology, including various hardware and software applications in the workplace; 4. Research and identify other sources of information regarding the use of technology, including various hardware and software applications in the workplace. Provide that information to NFPA members through NFPA publications and/or NFPA's home page on the Internet; 5. Develop articles for NFPA publications. This task will include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. drafting "how to" articles and articles which provide general information on the use of various hardware and software applications in the workplace; b. drafting articles that specifically explain the use of a software program; c. drafting articles that compare similar hardware and software applications; soliciting authors for articles as necessary and appropriate; e. solicit articles for the Internet Department of the Reporter; and f. solicit articles for the Technology Department of the Reporter. 6. Create a network of paralegals with technology expertise to exchange information, draft articles and assist members with problems and/or questions as necessary and appropriate; and 7. Provide consulting assistance to NFPA and its member associations in connection with the development of seminars and continuing education programs regarding the use of 	See Section 8 (and specifically Section 8.4) of the Procedures Manual.

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		technology, including various hardware and software applications in the workplace.	
<u>Corporate Partners Program Coordinator:</u>	VP Marketing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain and update database of potential and current corporate partners on an ongoing basis; 2. Coordinate annual renewal of partner agreements each Fall for new calendar year; 3. Communicate with corporate partners on a quarterly basis regarding entitled benefits of their partner level; and 4. Conduct annual marketing campaign to promote corporate partners program and solicit new partners. 	See Section 8 (and specifically Section 8.4) of the Procedures Manual.
<u>Strategic Alliances Coordinator:</u>	VP MARKETING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare annual schedule of events at which NFPA might exhibit, to be presented at the Winter Board meeting by the Vice president and Director of Marketing; 2. Assist with the recommendations of which conferences NFPA should exhibit and appropriate individuals to represent NFPA at the conferences; 3. Prepare budget information for conferences at which exhibiting is recommended; 4. Coordinate door prizes, giveaways and printed materials to distribute at conferences; and 5. Coordinate exhibitor registration, shipping of appropriate NFPA materials and displays with Managing Director. 	See Section 8 (and specifically Section 8.4) of the Procedures Manual.
<u>Governing Documents Coordinator:</u>	<u>Secretary/ Director of Operations</u>	<u>See Procedures Manual for more information.</u>	<u>See Section 8 (and specifically Section 8.4) of the Procedures Manual.</u>

NFPA News (Continued)

NFPA/Thomson Reuters Scholarship Application Now Available

Theresa A. Prater, RP, NFPA Vice President & Director of Profession Development

NFPA is proud to announce the essay topic for the 2013 NFPA/Thomson Reuters scholarships is now available at http://www.paralegals.org/uploads/TR_Scholarship_app_2013.pdf with the Application form. There are two scholarships available: first place is \$3,000 and second place is \$2,000.

This scholarship opportunity is open to both member and non-member students of NFPA. The deadline for submission of completed applications and accompanying documents is July 1, 2013. Winners will be provided a travel stipend to attend the NFPA Annual Convention in Hartford, CT in October and will be recognized at the Awards Luncheon on Saturday, October 5. Notification will be provided to the winners on or about August 26, 2013.



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Recent Meetings & Events Recaps

MCPA 2013 Kickoff Event

Shawn Glancy

Edited by Heidi Reiss-Tait, Pa. C.P.



On January 17, 2013, the MCPA held its annual Kickoff Event at the Holiday Inn, Kulpsville. President Annette M. Long presided over the meeting. Annette welcomed members and guests, and reminded members to renew their memberships and turn in holiday cards for the recycling program to benefit St. Jude's Ranch. Annette introduced our sponsors in attendance and thanked them for their generosity in supporting MCPA. Sponsor representatives Meg Donahue of Morgan Wentworth LLC, Brian Sweet of ICS Services of Pennsylvania, Jeffrey Love and Victoria Stavish of Love Court Reporting, and Michele Harris of Harris Investigations spoke briefly.

After dinner, Annette recognized special guests in attendance: the Honorable Cheryl Lynne Austin and the Honorable Garrett D. Page. Also, Annette provided a recap of 2012 MCPA events and briefly discussed plans for 2013. Annette acknowledged 2012 Committee Chairs and Student Liaisons. Outgoing Board members Ro Fedorka, Heidi Reiss-Tait, (and Sherry Barag in absentia) were recognized for their years of service to the Board.

Annette introduced the Honorable Cheryl Lynne Austin, who performed the swearing in ceremony for the 2013 Installation of Officers and Board Members. Following the ceremony, members and guests were treated to a presentation by Judge Austin, who works primarily in Family Law in Montgomery County, although in her career she has also dealt with the criminal and civil courts.

Judge Austin spoke about her background: Prior to her current work in Family Law, Judge Austin held the position of Assistant District Attorney for Montgomery County, where she prosecuted individuals charged with felony and white collar crimes. Judge Austin is an adjunct professor at Palmer Theological Seminary in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, teaching a course titled "Counseling Families Undergoing Legal Crises."



Earlier in her career, while an undergraduate student at Northwestern University, Judge Austin entered the Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps in its first class of women. Upon graduation

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from Northwestern, she was commissioned an officer in the U.S. Navy. She retired as a U.S. Navy Captain in 2004, after 24 years of active duty and reserve service. She also attended Capital University Law School in Columbus, Ohio at night, while working as Human Resources Director for the Ohio Secretary of State.

Judge Austin is co-chair of the Diversity Committee of the Montgomery County Bar Association, vice-chair of the Military and Veterans Affairs Committee of the PA Bar Association, and serves on the Executive Committee of the Willow Grove, Pennsylvania chapter of the NAACP. She is a member of the Laurel House Advisory Board and the Willow Grove, Pennsylvania chapter of the Military Officers of America. Judge Austin and her husband, Mike, reside in Roslyn, Pennsylvania with their daughter, Jessie.

In her presentation, Judge Austin addressed the issue of continuances in different types of proceedings (e.g., civil, criminal) and how they are handled. She advised that they must always be consistent and inevitable so that “opposing counsel has no objection(s).” When asking for a continuance, it must be put in writing and it is appropriate to call the judge’s secretary to follow-up after faxing or mailing the original request. Judge Austin then spoke briefly to the paralegal’s role in preparing documentation and requesting continuances. In closing, Judge Austin shared some general advice with the group, urging us to walk through the “invisible doors” that are in front of us, always seeking out what our passions are.

Before the Kick-off Event came to a conclusion, winners of the 50/50 raffle, sponsors’ door prizes, and free MCPA memberships were announced. The MCPA is grateful to Judge Austin for her interesting and informative presentation. Thanks are also extended to our sponsors and to the Holiday Inn for the use of their conference room. It is this type of support that helps us to maintain our commitment of professional growth and development to our members and to the paralegal profession in general.



Recent Meetings & Events Recaps (Continued)

Shannon M. Rafferty, Esq. Educates MCPA Members Regarding Bullying and Cyber Bullying, Students with Special Needs, and School Safety

Laura Garifo, Pa.C.P.

On Thursday, February 21, 2013, the MCPA held its general membership meeting at the Whitpain Township Building in Blue Bell. President Annette M. Long presided over the meeting. Annette briefly reviewed topics of interest such as cyber bullying and the safety of school students.



*L to R: Maureen Stankiewicz,
Shannon Rafferty, Annette Long*

Having dispensed with the announcements, Annette then turned the spotlight over to Shannon Rafferty, Esq. of The Law Offices of Caryl Andrea Oberman, LLC, who specializes in assisting parents and children with disabilities in the special education system. Shannon has been active in the disability community for more than 10 years. Shannon received her B.A. with Honors in International Politics and Comparative Literature from the Pennsylvania State University in 2007 and she received her J.D. (cum laude) in 2011 from the James E. Beasley School of

Law at Temple University.

In her presentation on students with special needs, Ms. Rafferty discussed the role between parent and educator to ensure the child with a disability is getting the best education possible. It is important that both parent and teacher work together to understand the student's disability and how the disability affects the learning process. Through an Individualized Education Program (IEP), the student is able to have specialized assistance only when necessary, and otherwise maintains the freedom to interact with and participate in the activities of his or her peers.

Ms. Rafferty also addressed school safety and the importance of educating students on what they choose to wear to school. Messages on the shirts they wear may be a proud choice at the time, not necessarily a safe choice. How others may view them may cause tensions and can lead to violence. Overall, students have First Amendment rights but they are limited when speech or actions cause any disruption in school.

Bullying and cyber bullying were also discussed. Again, it is important that students know what is and what is not appropriate to say or post. There is a difference between not liking someone in school and intentionally creating a threatening environment for someone. Adults need to become more proactive to ensure safe surroundings and schools need to enforce policies and explore criminal action.

The MCPA is grateful to Shannon Rafferty, Esq. for her interesting and informative presentation. Thanks are also extended to Whitpain Township for the use of their conference room. It is this type of support that helps us to maintain our commitment of professional growth and development to our members and to the paralegal profession in general.



Recent Meetings & Events Recaps (Continued)

March 2013 Breakfast Meeting

Heidi Reiss-Tait, Pa.C.P.

The morning of Saturday, March 9th was bright and warm...it was the kind of spring morning that would be wasted by sleeping in. Montgomery County paralegals made the most of that morning by meeting at Zoto's Diner in Line Lexington for breakfast and a hot CLE topic: *Social Media and Divorce*. MCPA President, Annette M. Long, started the meeting with announcements and thanked the sponsors of the meeting, Love Court Reporting and Morgan Wentworth LLC. Allyn Pinsker, chair of MCPA's Annual Spring Fundraiser, urged members to submit their favorite recipes so we can publish our first MCPA cookbook. Personalized Cookbooks will create our cookbook, and copies of it will be sold as a fundraiser. Debbie Arbuckle invited members to participate in the Member Get A Member 2013 Campaign, which "incentivizes" MCPA members to recruit new members to grow our organization.

Annette introduced our speaker, Joel B. Bernbaum, Esquire of Timoney Knox, LLP in Fort Washington. Attorney Bernbaum has practiced family law for 28 years and is a Fellow of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. In his career, Mr. Bernbaum has chaired the Montgomery Bar Association's Technology and Family Law Committees, and his expertise in both areas was evident in his presentation as he spoke about *Social Media and Divorce*.



Mr. Bernbaum talked about the advice he gives to clients about use of social media, including Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and email, and how it might affect divorce proceedings. He showed videos and told stories to illustrate his talk. One piece of general advice he gives clients: don't post anything online that you don't want a judge (or your grandmother) to see or better yet, stop using facebook and Twitter for the duration of the divorce proceedings. He also advises clients to open a clean, web-oriented email account specifically for attorney-client privileged communications, and urges them to change the password weekly.

Attorney Bernbaum indicated that there really are no special laws for social media; it all boils down to expectation of privacy. For example, incriminating information in an email might seem like solid evidence against a spouse, but like a locked drawer, password protected email accounts and computers give an expectation of privacy that shouldn't be breached. Alternatively, a court may consider such evidence if a husband and wife share a family computer without password protection, since there is less of an expectation of privacy.

Mr. Bernbaum gave many considerations of the use of social media in discovery and litigation: GPS systems inherent in social media software can be prove location; Google and YouTube searches are a great way to learn about the background and conduct of a client, client's spouse, witness, or expert witness; closing a facebook account does not get rid of past information posted; deleted emails may still reside on a computer's hard drive; mobile phones with social media applications have hard drives that hold information; facebook and Twitter respond to subpoenas; nothing on a work computer is considered private; court rooms in Montgomery County have Smart Boards that allow social media evidence to be accessed and shown in court;

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social media data is absolutely requested by courts in custody evaluations; and the app Docket in a Pocket is a tool that can be used to find legal actions against a party.

Although Attorney Bernbaum would not advise his client to disclose a password in a deposition, he would allow the client to login in on a laptop that was provided. The rules of authentication of data, relevance, and hearsay apply to evidence obtained through social media; it is not treated differently than paper data. Mr. Bernbaum concluded his talk by taking questions from the group. The MCPA is grateful to Attorney Bernbaum for his topical, interesting, and informative presentation.

At the end of the meeting, Vice President Harry Reichner announced the winner of the 50/50 drawing and upcoming meetings and events. The support of the local legal community and our sponsors helps us to maintain our commitment of professional growth and development to our members and to the paralegal profession in general.



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Recent Meetings & Events Recaps (Continued)

Photos from the March Breakfast Meeting





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Peirce College Alumni Events

Saturday, April 13, 2013

Fabio and Danny's Station Café
135 North Wayne Avenue, Wayne, PA
5:00 to 7:00 PM

Have fun with your fellow alumni in the historic setting of the Wayne train station. The Paoli/Thorndale SEPTA train stops right at the Café. Enjoy a light buffet and beverages.

Free

To register: <http://peircealumni413.eventbrite.com> or call 215-670-9323

Saturday, April 20, 2013

University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology
33rd and South Streets, Philadelphia, PA
510:30 AM to 3:00 PM

The Alumni Association invites you to join in a special day at this internationally-renowned museum of artifacts from cultures from around the world. Egyptologist Dr. Stephen Phillips will start our visit with a special talk and tour. You will then have free time on your own to explore centuries of treasures housed at the Museum.

\$10 per person; lunch is available on your own at the Museum's cafeteria

To register: <http://pennmuseum420.eventbrite.com> or call 215-670-9323.

Monday, May 20, 2013

Spring Reception
5:30 to 8:00 PM

Peirce College's Spring Reception brings together members of the Peirce community for an evening of social camaraderie, professional networking, and reconnecting with the school. The College's Distinguished Alumni, Student and Service Awards will also be presented.

Free

An invitation will be going out to all alumni in early Spring. To register online:
<http://2013springreception.eventbrite.com>.

Student Section

Bucks County Community College Paralegal Program

Kim Sullivan, Student Liaison

Bucks County Community College offers an Associate Degree in Paralegal Studies and a Paralegal Certificate for those students who already have earned an undergraduate degree. This certificate program will qualify graduates to serve as paralegal and legal assistants for law offices, government agencies, or businesses involving legal work under the ultimate direction and supervision of attorneys.

The courses in this program are designed to impart knowledge and expertise of legal concepts, the legal system, and substantive and procedural law to qualify graduates to perform work of a legal nature that is customarily, but not exclusively, performed by a lawyer. The focus of the curriculum is occupational in nature. Graduates complete the program fully prepared to meet the current career demands of public and private sector legal assistants and paralegals.

Paralegal Program Coordinator Tracy Timby is a collaborative divorce attorney and is a partner in the law firm of Timby Hunt, LLC. She is a Certified Mediator for the Bucks County Court of Common Pleas and a trained family law mediator. She received her Master of Science in Counseling Psychology from Loyola College prior to obtaining her law degree.

Heather Costello has been teaching at BCCC since 2008 and has been a full time instructor in the paralegal program since 2010. She earned her undergraduate from Holy Family University in criminal justice and earned her law degree from Rutgers University in 2002. She had previously worked for the Philadelphia District Attorney's office and was in private practice as a criminal and civil trial attorney for Hanan M. Isaacs, PC in Princeton, NJ. Additionally, there are four part time instructors for BCCC's paralegal program, Christine Simcox, Richard Giannini, Mitch Aglow and Dan Wassmer.



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Newsletter Committee News

BOOKS/APPS/WEBSITES – We NEED You!

Shari Weber Bradley, Pa C.P.

BOOKS: What book have you read recently that is enlightening, inspiring, or just plain helpful to paralegals? (It *does not* have to be non-fiction.) We are collecting book recommendations for our list: 30 Books Every Paralegal Should Read. Please fill out the following information and email it to me at sweber@bortlaw.com.



Book Name:

Author:

Description on why paralegals would like it:

APPS: What Smartphone/Droid/Iphone apps do you find helpful to your job or just plain interesting?



App:

Description:



WEBSITES: Reliable Internet sites can be so helpful to paralegals in our jobs. What website do you find yourself going to time and again for information?

Site:

Description:

Let's keep the lists going... Take a few minutes and email your suggestions to sweber@bortlaw.com today!

30 Books Every Paralegal Should Read

1. Chambermaid by Saira Rao
2. The Art of War by Sun Tzu
3. John Grisham's
 - a. The King of Torts
 - b. The Testament
4. Eats, Shoots & Leaves by Lynne Truss
5. Pennsylvania Attorney's/Secretary's Handbook published by Namar Communications

Newsletter Committee News (Continued)

Is There an App For That?

- **Paralegal Pocket Guide** - multiple choice quizzes, a legal glossary, flashcards and a dictionary of terms.
- **Docket in your Pocket** - a PA-specific app for looking up different individuals or companies to see if they have anything on their public records.
- **Burton's Legal Thesaurus** - It contains 8,000 synonyms, terms and definitions, and can increase the efficiency and accuracy of any paralegal.

Notable Sites:

The Oyez Project at Chicago-Kent College of Law – A Multi-Media Archive of the Supreme Court:

<http://www.oyez.org/>

Law and Legal Research - Lawyers, Legal Websites, Legal News and Legal Resources: <http://law.onecle.com/>
FREE access to the laws for 19 states (including Pennsylvania and New Jersey), the U.S. Code, and the U.S. Constitution. Links for Pennsylvania laws: pinpoint your legal research:

- **Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes – Pennsylvania Attorney Resources – Pennsylvania Laws:**
<http://law.onecle.com/pennsylvania/>
- **Crimes and Offenses – 18 Pa. Cos. Stat. – Pennsylvania Attorney Resources – Pennsylvania Laws:**
<http://law.onecle.com/pennsylvania/crimes-and-offenses/index.html>

Montgomery Bar Association – The Sidebar: <http://www.montgomerybar.org/publications/sidebar.php> - the free Quarterly Newsletter of the Montgomery Bar Association.

The American Bar Association's Standing Committee on Paralegals:

<http://www.americanbar.org/groups/paralegals.html> - GREAT resources from the ABA!

Paralegals and Legal Assistants: Occupational Outlook Handbook: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:

<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/Legal/Paralegals-and-legal-assistants.htm> - A statistical snapshot of U.S. paralegals.

The Empowered Paralegal: <http://theempoweredparalegal.com/> Comprehensive online blog by Robert E. Mongue, an Assistant Professor of Legal Studies at the University of Mississippi.



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Paralegal Mentor

Will Paralegals Disappear? The Paralegal Mentor Says "No"!

Vicki Voisin, ACP

Recent headlines on the Internet have been alarming:

- Paralegal Jobs are Vanishing....
- Rise of Technology Causing Paralegal Jobs to Disappear?
- Recession, tech killing middle-class jobs...
- Paralegal jobs being overtaken by technology...
- As technology evolves, jobs disappear...

Instead of allowing these dire, attention-grabbing headlines to create a profession-wide panic, let's give some common sense thought to these predictions.

Background Information:

1. As recently as 2010 the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, predicted there will be an 18% growth rate in paralegal jobs through 2020 and that this is one of the fastest growing professions.
2. In contradiction to that, The Associated Press released a report in January 2013 stating that 5 years after the start of the Great Recession, millions of middle-class jobs have been lost world-wide and will never return. Additionally, millions more are likely to vanish.

Further, the report states that, "Year after year, software that runs computers and an array of other machines and devices become more sophisticated and powerful and capable of doing more efficiently tasks that humans have always done." The analysis refers to jobs that are routine and repetitive in the service sector and examples used are paralegals, meter readers and travel agents.

3. In August 2012, The ABA's House of Delegates approved updates to the Model Rules of Professional Conduct to acknowledge that information is stored digitally as well as in paper files, clients communicate electronically as well as by phone calls, and email isn't the only method of electronic communications.

New commentary language added to Rule 1.1 (the duty to provide competent representation) requires lawyers to keep abreast of the benefits and risks associated with technology, according to new commentary language added to Rule 1.1 on the duty to provide competent representation.

4. It is insulting that the work of a paralegal would be classified as a "routine and repetitive" job, similar to those of a meter reader. The American Bar Association defines paralegals as *performing specifically delegated substantive legal work for which a lawyer is responsible*. Working as a paralegal is not just a job, but a career. It's doubtful meter reading can be considered a career.

The reality:

Paralegal jobs will not be obliterated by technology. Instead, technology will *change* paralegal jobs. It will *change* paralegal responsibilities and skill requirements. But what's new?

From the time this profession emerged in the 1970's, paralegals have had to deal with change. The unwritten rule has always been that you either kept up or you were out of a job.

From the manual typewriter to the good old Selectric to today's desk tops, iPads, laptops, and smart phones, paralegals have accepted new challenges and met expectations. Often it is the paralegal who introduces the new technology to their employers and then trains the staff to use it.

One more thing: the legal field will always require the human touch. Software cannot soothe clients, decide what must be done, or run by itself. Software cannot deal with court staff. Software cannot be relied upon to be correct. A good example is your spell check! The training and expertise of the paralegal, as well as the ability to deal with people, will always be needed.

What should you do?

Don't be frightened by these headlines. Instead, do what you have been told to do over and over again:

- Observe trends in the industry. If business is slow in your focus area, take necessary steps ensure you will have a job, perhaps in another specialty area.
- Never stop learning; take advantage of CLE opportunities.
- Pursue professional certification.
- Become an expert in your focus area. This will require work on your part which might include pursuing advanced certification, returning to college, and keeping up with new rules and case law.
- Be the one establishing systems and routines that will help your employer.
- Watch for new technology, adopt it, and learn it. Never -- *ever* -- refuse to use it.
- Prepare a great resume and keep it up to date.
- Use social media. It's here to stay, folks, and it's a great networking tool, as well as an excellent way to learn about new trends, technology and tools.

The bottom line? Remember that headlines are designed to grab your attention. Lately, they have caused paralegals to fear for their future.

Don't fall for this! Instead, study and interpret the materials yourself so that you can make wise decisions. Then follow the steps above so that your career will continue to move in the right direction: *forward*.

~~~~~

Vicki Voisin, "The Paralegal Mentor", delivers simple strategies for paralegals and other professionals to create success and satisfaction by setting goals and determining the direction they will take their careers. Vicki spotlights resources, organizational tips, ethics issues, and other areas of continuing education to help paralegals and others reach their full potential. She is the co-author of *The Professional Paralegal: A Guide to Finding a Job and Career Success*. Vicki publishes *Paralegal Strategies*, a weekly e-newsletter for paralegals, and hosts *The Paralegal Voice*, a monthly podcast produced by Legal Talk Network.



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## Resume Advice

### Is Your Resume Standing In Your Way?

*Meg Donahue Halloran, Esq., Director of Staff Recruitment, Morgan Wentworth, LLC*

Job searching in today's market is an arduous process. If you have been sending out resume after resume and are not getting any response from potential employers, you may want to take another look at those few sheets of paper that are supposed to define you and your career. Your resume could be standing in your way of getting those highly prized interviews.

Preparing a resume can be an art and a science, and there is no one way that is guaranteed to be the best. Resumes are subjective and there is no way to know the exact tastes of the ultimate recipient. However, there are a few things to keep in mind when you are writing, reviewing, or tailoring your resume for a particular job application. While format and structure are in the eye of the beholder, and can certainly be a way to express some individuality and creativity, always remember that you are trying to show that you are the best candidate for *that* job.

**Don't over generalize to fit any job.** We often try to write one version of a resume and use it for every application because, let's face it, resume writing is tedious and time consuming. However, when you discuss your experience and skills in very broad terms, you are leaving it to the reviewer to interpret and infer how your experience relates to the available position. Employers receive dozens of resumes every time they list an opening, and it is more likely than not that whoever evaluates those resumes has other responsibilities that significantly limit the amount of time spent on this task. If an employer does not see immediately relevant experience or skills, they are not likely to consider a person any further.

**Make a clear connection in your resume to the particular job.** Employers want to see enthusiasm for the position, not someone who just needs a job – and any job would be fine. Overly general resumes make employers feel like you are just papering the market and looking for any bite you can get. This can make you appear desperate and, therefore, make the reviewer feel that you must not be a desirable candidate. Employers want to feel like you are interested in the work and that you will stick around for a while if you are offered the job. You may not have to change much to make your resume look like it was prepared specifically for the job being offered. Look for responsibilities and requirements in the job posting, or look up the firm and their practice areas or sample cases/clients, to give you some specific points to include or elaborate on. Before submitting a resume for a position, read back over it with the job description or firm/company in mind. One or two words can make a big difference in giving the impression that you want *this* job, versus any job.

**Discuss relevant experience with specificity.** If you are a personal injury paralegal with 15 years of experience applying for a paralegal position at a personal injury firm, you will not have to try very hard to show that you are experienced in the field and possess all the necessary skills for the job. However, it isn't always that easy. If you have worked in a number of different practice areas, make sure that you note each practice area with which you have experience under each position. Law firms more and more want to see specific experience in the given practice area when they are hiring.



If you do are lacking some degree of experience requested, but you believe you have other traits that would recommend you for the position, spell out those qualities for the reviewer and don't leave it to inference. For example: if you have not composed a particular document in your prior positions, but you have reviewed and analyzed that same document in some aspect of your prior positions to the extent that you know the content, how to find it, and the format; you can find a way to briefly discuss your familiarity with those materials in your resume so that the hiring manager can see that the training required would be minimal.

**Lead with your most important information.** I often see resumes from candidates applying for a position requesting experience in a very specific practice area, and that experience is either barely mentioned or buried so deep in the resume that I have to read very closely to even see it. The natural inclination is to first list and discuss the area in which you worked the most, then follow with the other areas. However, employers may fail to see things further down the resume or assume that the person did very little in that area. Always begin with your most relevant experience because this is what potential employers are looking for. Talk about your work in the area for which you are applying, even if it was a smaller portion of your overall workload. Be sure to be as specific as possible about aspects of the work that you have performed in the past; listing specific types of documents that you have prepared, for example, helps to show that you know what is involved in that practice area. Make sure that you show that you have the desired experience right away while you have the attention of the reviewer. Then, if they get to a bullet on another practice areas and stop reading, they haven't missed the most important part.

**Explain breaks in employment.** If you were out of work for a significant period, or moved to an unrelated field for a time, you are not alone – the difference in getting the next job may be how you address those circumstances. In this industry, people very often go out of work for a time for family situations, raising children, medical issues, or returning to school. This may create a gap in your career timeline on your resume. Candidates also often leave off unrelated experience all together, which creates more questions about a candidate than answers and typically results in getting passed over. Employers want to know that you have stable employment history because it gives them an impression about your work ethic and your commitment to your work.

If this is the case for you, find ways to show you either have been working, or have a compelling reason why you weren't. Give short detail on any time gaps either in the resume itself or in your cover letter, or both. If you have chunks of unrelated experience, something like an "other experience" heading with brief bullet points listing other positions is an excellent way to show that you have a steady work history. This also allows you to present that information in a way that doesn't require great detail on work isn't relevant to the position for which you are applying.

If you have a significant but understandable period of unemployment, your cover letter is a good place to give an explanation about your work history. While I am normally not an advocate of the Objective Statement, as I will explain later, this is an instance where it can be a useful tool. For example, if you are returning to your legal career after taking a leave of absence, an Objective Statement is a great place to briefly explain your exit and re-entrance into the work force. If you have a gap somewhere in the middle of your work history, you may want to put a bullet point under the position noting the decision to take some time away from the work force so that an employer can see that it was a conscientious decision.

**Don't forget to use your words.** Positions in the legal field absolutely require strong written and verbal communication skills. However, many people try to save space and time by listing their responsibilities and skills in a series of words strung together by commas and little other substance. This creates two problems for the reviewer: they have no idea if the applicant can form a real sentence, and they don't get a good sense of the applicant's true understanding of the tasks listed.

There are several aspects of traditional writing that are intentionally left out of resumes. Use of personal indicators (I, me, my) and full and complete sentences are generally not efficient in getting across the information that you need without crowding the page. However, partial sentences instead of lists serve far better to present the quality of your writing skills as well as depth of knowledge.

For example, preparation of time slips and expense reports are common responsibilities that are valuable to law firms when seeking new staff members. Think about the reaction a review would have when reading two resumes, one that lists merely "Time Entries, Attorney Expenses" to the other that states, "Prepare attorney time entries and expenses, utilizing appropriate client codes and invoicing procedures." The list suggests that you are familiar with those duties; however, the partial sentence not only demonstrates a well-formed piece of descriptive writing, but an understanding of how time entries and expenses fall play into client billing practices and cognizance for varying details and procedures from client to client. You can use these short but more descriptive sentence fragments to impress upon the reviewer that you know how to prepare a certain item.

**Avoid being redundant.** Try to create some differentiation under each position listed to keep the reviewer interested and create a story of how your career has grown and progressed. Your resume should tell a story about you and you want to keep the reader interested all the way to the end. If you find that the responsibility bullets under each of your positions to be striking similar, you can get creative with the format and try providing a section of competencies and responsibilities, then showing your positions and dates of employment in list form under a separate heading.

As I mentioned previously, I am not typically a fan of the Objective Statement. On most occasions, the candidate simply tells me that their objective is to get a job - usually with a few more flowery words, but generally, they want a job. This is redundant, superfluous, and takes up valuable space on your resume that could be filled with something substantive. If you are submitting your resume, clearly your objective is to get a job and you don't need to have a statement reiterative that point. If you have a certain situation that you need to address, i.e. return to the work force as earlier discussed, then the Objective Statement may actually be of some benefit. Otherwise, use your cover letter to explain why you want the particular job, and use that room at the top of your resume for something more exciting and impressive than repeating what was already assumed by your application for the job.

In today's atmosphere of job-seekers outnumbering available positions by a significant number, candidates have to be more deliberate in the application process. The personal aspect of inquiring about a position is taken away by online posting and zapping off resumes to nameless, faceless recipient and attractive formatting is often undone by mismatched computer software. However, if you give some time and attention to the content of your resume, you can still speak volumes that will transcend format foibles and piles of paper.



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## VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE MCPA

Below are the names and contact information for the Chairpersons of the various MCPA committees. If you have an idea or would like to volunteer, please contact a Chairperson! The Fundraising and Public Relations Committees are newly formed and are actively seeking new committee members.

### **Membership**

Coordinate membership drives and membership matters

- Tracey L. Barnes, RP, Pa. C.P.  
[TBarnes@dischellbartle.com](mailto:TBarnes@dischellbartle.com)

### **Newsletter**

Solicit and write articles; layout and editing for the bi-monthly newsletter, MCPA Today

- Rachel Fineberg, Committee Chair  
[rfineberg@goldblumhess.com](mailto:rfineberg@goldblumhess.com)

### **Job Bank**

Solicit, accumulate, and distribute current job postings to the general membership

- Kelly Smith  
[ksmith@kanepugh.com](mailto:ksmith@kanepugh.com)

### **Marketing**

Solicit sponsors and advertisers for MCPA

- Deborah A. Long, Pa. C.P.  
[deblong420@gmail.com](mailto:deblong420@gmail.com)  
Deborah A. Arbuckle, Pa. C.P.  
[darbuckle@kaplaw.com](mailto:darbuckle@kaplaw.com)

### **Public Relations**

Promote the MCPA in the legal and general Community

- Annette M. Long, CRP  
[amlong83@gmail.com](mailto:amlong83@gmail.com)

### **Hospitality & Events Planning**

Plan and schedule upcoming MCPA presentations, meetings and social events

- Kathleen M. Zamorski, Pa. C.P.  
[kmz@elliottgreenleaf.com](mailto:kmz@elliottgreenleaf.com)

### **Community Outreach & Pro Bono**

Plan and schedule MCPA charitable and community events

- Roberta Fedorka, Pa. C.P.  
[rfedorka@obrlaw.com](mailto:rfedorka@obrlaw.com)

### **Fundraising**

Organize and hold fundraisers for the Association and/or charitable organizations

- TBD

### **Student Affairs & Mentoring**

Provide a range of services and support to students interested in a paralegal career

- Lisa LaPenna, Pa. C.P.  
[llapenna@kaplaw.com](mailto:llapenna@kaplaw.com)

Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.

*Theodore Roosevelt*



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