

MCPA TODAY

NEWSLETTER

April 2020

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

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Newsletter Committee

Sarah B. Castner

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Dana Jorna, Pa.C.P.

Dear fellow members,

s we enter May and finish out our seventh week of quarantine, I hope you and your families have been able to stay safe and healthy through this unique time in our lives. The coronavirus pandemic has affected all aspects of life around the world and here in Montgomery County. As everyone is trying to adapt and follow the guidelines provided by county, state and governmental agencies, we are looking into ways we can continue to provide our members with CLE presentations via a webinar service.

Keystone Alliance has approved a three-month automatic extension for renewals for Pa.C.P.'s with a renewal date between March 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020. The extension does not change the timeframe for the Pa.C.P.'s subsequent credentialing period.

We hope to provide more information on upcoming CLE's to you later this month.

If anyone has an idea of a speaker who would be willing to teach a webinar, please contact Jennifer Echikson or I with their contact information.

While this pandemic has affected us all in some way, it has also increased the needs of those at risk in our community. I received an e-mail from the Office of Children and Youth about their work helping to protect vulnerable children and provide families in need of supplies.

OCY provided a link below to an Amazon shopping list, where there are specific items families need. This includes baby wipes, formula, infant/children's Tylenol, thermometers, shampoo, soap, detergent, and more. They are accepting gift cards and asking they be for stores which carry food, hygiene products, and over the counter medicines.

These items can be purchased and shipped directly to the Office of Children and Youth at Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services; Attn: Veronica Hilghman, P.O. Box 311, Norristown, PA 19404-0311.

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1668FD8RGO9L6?ref_=wl_share

There are so many people in our community and throughout the world who could use our help, however big or small the act you can make a difference. If you are able, I encourage you to find an organization or charity that has meaning to you and give back what you can.

Stay healthy, safe, and happy.

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."-Anne Frank

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Robin Witherspoon – Commscope, Inc. of North Carolina Paula Lyons – student member, Villanova University Emily Gatto – student member, Bucks County Community College

ATTENTION Credential Renewal Reminder

*NFPA PACE Registered Paralegals *NFPA CRP Certified Registered Paralegals Pa.C.P. Credentialed Paralegals

Do your Credentials expire between March 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020?

The Keystone Alliance Paralegal Association has granted waivers which extend the deadline to renew. See page 5-6 for details

*extension does not extend to NFPA: RP's and CRP's

If your credentials expire May, June, and July NOW is the time to submit your renewal application and proof of CLE.

For more information, visit: RP and CRP - www.paralegals.org or Pa.C.P. - www.keystoneparalegals.org



RESOLUTION NUMBER: 2020-001

RESOLUTION FOR TEMPORARY THREE-MONTH EXTENSION TO RENEW Pa.C.P. CRE-DENTIAL

WHEREAS, the Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations (Keystone Alliance) oversees the Pennsylvania Certified Paralegal (Pa.C.P.) Program; and

WHEREAS, the current COVID-19 pandemic and associated public safety measures may make it difficult for credentialed paralegals to fulfill the requirements for renewal of the Pa.C.P. credential within their designated certification periods; and

WHEREAS, no recourse is currently available pursuant to the policies and procedures of the Pa.C.P. Program; and

WHEREAS, the Keystone Alliance has a responsibility to address and resolve issues affecting the Pa.C.P. Program, while maintaining its integrity;

THEREFORE, The Keystone Alliance resolves as follows:

All credentialing periods with an ending date of March 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 shall be granted an automatic three-month extension. No application shall be necessary to receive this extension, and there shall be no fee associated with this extension;

EXAMPLE: If your renewal date is May 1, 2020, you may submit your renewal application within 3 months thereafter, i.e., on or before August 1, 2020.

This extension is being provided as an accommodation which shall not otherwise affect the Pa.C.P.'s credentialing period. Therefore, future renewal dates will not be adjusted for renewal applications submitted pursuant to this extension;

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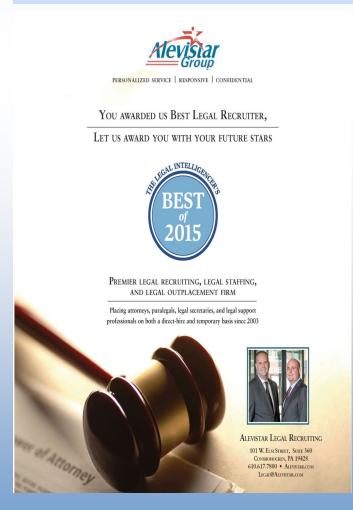
EXAMPLE: If your renewal date is May 1, 2020 and you submit your renewal application on July 27, 2020 pursuant to the renewal extension, your next renewal date will be May 1, 2022.

Beginning January 1, 2021 and henceforward, any requests to extend the credentialing period shall be made by application and submitted with the appropriate fee, all in accordance with the standard policies and procedures of the Pa.C.P. Program.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned as President of the Keystone Alliance does hereby sign Resolution Number 2020-001 as adopted by the Keystone Alliance on behalf of the member associations and agrees to be bound thereby.

KEYSTONE ALLIANCE OF PARALEGAL ASSOCIATIONS

Signed April 8, 2020, by the President of KAPA





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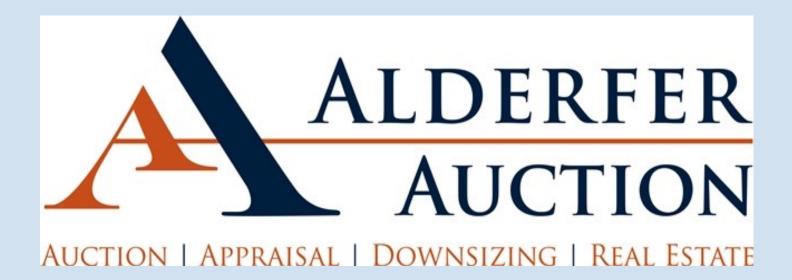
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Working From Home - Sarah Castner

We are currently experiencing especially tough times. Not only must we focus on our physical health, but we should also be wary of our mental health. I know that this is something I initially struggled with when my office moved me to work remotely. Work was my social interaction, so without that, I felt isolated and alone. After going through an emotional rollercoaster of a week, I found some habits that helped me work from home easier.

- Stick to a routine, keep a regulated sleep schedule.
- Practice self care; wake and shower as you would if leaving your home.
- Stay hydrated and eat healthy.
- Create "to do" lists, outline what you would like to accomplish for the day.
- Get out at least once a day; take a walk, sit outside, or even open a window.
- Be active.
- Text or video chat with your family and friends.
- Experiment with art, find humor in your creativity.
- Try out a virtual social hour, laughing helps to lighten the spirits.



CLE WORKSHOPS

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Paralegal Education in the e-World

Written by Julia M. Dunlap, Esq.

In a 1960's photograph tucked away in a photo box somewhere is a picture of me as a small child riding a three-wheeled Dino the Dinosaur from my favorite TV show at the time, The Flintstones. I really wanted to post that picture with this article as an obvious metaphor for how many attorneys and paralegals of my generation are starting to feel these days. I mean really— what better way to say I sometimes feel like a dinosaur in regards to the changing legal landscape than to actually show me riding a purple, plastic dinosaur from 1960-something? Oh well, planning is everything and since the photo has not made its way to Facebook, it will have to stay buried until discovered as proof that, yes, purple, plastic dinosaurs did exist (and still do, and can be bought, like many of my childhood toys, on eBay for the low cost of \$400 ... the average hourly fee for many dinosaurs ... hmmm).

So, with this somewhat outing of my age sans picture, and, more important, as the current leader of the organization dedicated to the promotion of quality paralegal and non-law school legal education, the American Association of Paralegal Education (AAfPE), I have been asked to write about the current state of paralegal education. The times really have and continue to be changin'.

Just in the last few years, paralegal educators have had to revise their program curricula to reflect what I call the "e-world": a new world made up of email, ESI, e-filing, and e-discovery. Gone are the days of storage rooms filled to the ceiling with banker's boxes of discovery; and sadly, the book-lined walls of law firm libraries have been replaced with computer screens. If a paralegal program has not adapted to the e-world by incorporating instruction in those ewords, they risk their graduates falling prey to the biggest E word of them all: Ethics. Because we all know what happens when you are a legal professional and not sufficiently skilled in all the e-words and how that might affect the client ... the M word happens: Malpractice. And of course, we know who gets blamed when that happens. It's not the dinosaur—it's the paralegal who was hired, with the expectation that she would know all this "e-stuff" so the

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dinosaurs would not have to learn it (despite the requirement under the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct and every state bar rule requiring that attorneys remain current with the law in giving competent representation). Soon, however, no one will be immune; whether you're heavily into litigation representation or doing transactional work, everything will be electronic.

Paralegal programs have had to adapt. Our litigation classes are very different from what they were even two years ago. Potential students are continually asking me if my program includes e-discovery instruction. (They probably have no idea what discovery is, at that point, but they have seen the term e-discovery everywhere.) Currently, there are not enough legal professionals sufficiently skilled in the E words and, if you are, you are in high demand. The future of the paralegal profession is tied to innovation—and the lawyers are always going to expect the paralegal to know how to do the things the lawyers either do not want to learn (after 20+ years of doing it one way) or that they were not taught in law school.

In my own program, after fairly stable course offerings for the first 15 years, we have changed the curriculum five times in the past five years to stay ahead of employer expectations for entry-level paralegals. We have extended the computer skills

learning component and added more instruction in e-discovery. My own legal research class has changed dramatically; while they still start in the dusty old law library, the student's access to Lexis begins almost immediately. And yet, there is only so much that an entry-level paralegal can be expected to know from simply obtaining a paralegal degree or certificate. Just as with attorneys, paralegals have a responsibility—and in some states, a

duty—to possess and maintain up-to-date knowledge in their chosen profession. Seeking continuing education to expand their careers is on the shoulders of the working paralegal. This is where our discussion veers off from the traditional state of paralegal education to what a paralegal can do to expand her opportunities through continuing education.

Currently there is no jurisdiction in the United States that requires licensing of paralegals. Many states have defined the title of "paralegal" in their laws and all require that the paralegals work under the supervision of an attorney, but few have the same kind of regulatory statute as California's Business & Practices Code §6450, requiring a certain number of hours of continuing education to maintain the title. Four state bar associations (Florida, North Carolina, Ohio, and Texas) currently allow state bar certification of paralegals if they meet certain qualifications. This recognition within the state bar of a jurisdiction extends the opportunities for paralegals in those states while at the same time creating a tier system of those officially recognized by the state bar and those who do not meet the qualifications. Specifically, the Florida Registered Paralegal Program and the Texas Plan for Recognition and Regulation of Paralegal Certification require that, to be a recognized member of the state bar, the paralegal must complete a certification at either the national level (NALA's Certified Paralegal or NFPA's PACE or Registered Paralegal) or under a state-provided certification program. While I believe this added recognition is a distinct benefit to the paralegal, there is a substantial fee required beyond the cost of the traditional paralegal or degree program for these certifications.

EDITOR'S CORNER—NO BAKE PEANUT BUTTER CHOCOLATE COOKIES

Line a baking sheet with wax paper or parchment. Over medium heat, bring the sugar, milk, butter and cocoa to a boil in a medium saucepan, stirring occasionally, then let boil for 1 minute. Remove from the heat. Add the oats, peanut butter, vanilla and salt, and stir until combined. Drop teaspoonful's of the mixture onto the prepared baking sheet, and let sit at room temperature until cooled and hardened, about 30 minutes. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days.

Ingredients:

2 cups sugar 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder

1 cup smooth peanut butter

1/2 cup milk 3 cups old-fashioned rolled oats 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract

1 stick (8 tablespoons) unsalted butter

Large pinch kosher salt



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of the legal professional.

And yet, this is in fact where success in any given profession lies: in the furtherance of your education so that you can present yourself as the most highly qualified professional. Every year, AAfPE welcomes both NALA and NFPA to our conferences, and our president and president-elect attend the NALA or NFPA conference in acknowledgment of the importance of continuing education and certification. I encourage my own paralegal students to seek out individual voluntary certification to demonstrate their commitment to their profession. Most legal education-

al programs have begun to offer advanced legal education to their gradu-

ates and local legal community to meet the continuing education needs

I cannot expect my current paralegal certificate students to understand the complex requirements of, for example, the EDRM (Electronic Discovery Reference Model) but I do expect them to come back after they graduate and learn the complex rules of e-discovery either through our university's e-discovery offerings or other educational opportunities. I have always believed in the "if you build it, they will come" model, but the ultimate responsibility lies with the individual professional— and only through continuing your education can you continue to rise in your profession. Soon, no one will be immune to the expansion of the e-world. Don't be a dinosaur ... because we all know what happened to them.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MAY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The Board met via Zoom on Thursday, May 7, 2020.

Membership at the time of the meeting stood at 91 members.

The Board and the Planning Committee have been very active in planning webinars for the coming months. There was discussion that one of the webinars may be held during the day instead of in the evening.

The Board continued its discussion regarding the focus on student involvement. Due to current circumstances of classes being remote and career fairs being canceled, further student involvement contact is being postponed until the summer.

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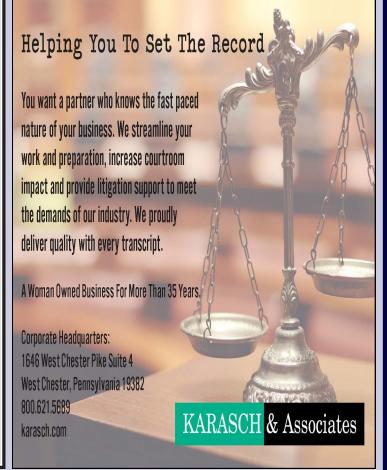
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HIGHLIGHTS CONT.

It was reported that Keystone Alliance granted a 3-month extension to all Pa.C.P.'s whose certifications expire March through December 31, 2020. NFPA has not offered this extension to their current RP's or CRP's. NFPA has indicated that they would review certification extensions on a case-by-case basis.

MCPA will be hosting the July Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Association's Meeting at the law offices of Dischell, Bartle & Dooley P.C.

The Board will meet again in person or via Zoom on June 4, 2020 at 6:00 pm.

All Board meetings will continue to be on the first Thursday of every month (except July and August) and meetings will be held at the office of Dischell, Bartle & Dooley P.C. in Lansdale.

If you have any questions or comments regarding any of the Board items mentioned above, or if you would like the Board to discuss an issue, please contact Dana Jorna (djorna@kanepugh.com) or any Board Member.

The following dates remain in 2020 for Board Meetings/All are welcome to attend:

September 3, 2020

October 1, 2020

November 5, 2020

December 3, 2020



THE MCPA NEWSLETTER

The MCPA newsletter is a valuable tool and reaches a large and diverse audience each month including all its members, sponsors, and vendors, providing current news and information. The Newsletter Committee is always looking for content, specifically articles pertaining to paralegals or the paralegal profession If you would like to contribute to the publication of the newsletter, now is the time!

For more information and to send any content ideas, completed articles, or general suggestions/feedback please contact:

Lisa Lagreca at <u>llagreca@dischellbartle.com</u>

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

ARE DUE BY THE FIRST OF EACH MONTH.

If you are interested in contributing on a regular basis, please consider joining the Newsletter Committee.

NO MEETINGS!



OFFICERS



Dana Jorna, Pa.C.P.—President

Kane, Pugh, Knoell, Troy & Kramer (610) 275-2000 DJorna@kanepugh.com

Dana is a Litigation Paralegal at the law firm Kane Pugh Knoell Troy & Kramer, LLP. She has been a member of the Montgomery County Paralegal Association since 2013, and a board member since 2018. More recently, she has become the MCPA's Job Bank Coordinator and co-chair of the Community Outreach & Pro Bono committee.



Tracey Barnes, Pa.C.P.—Vice President

Dischell Bartle & Dooley P.C. (215)362-2474 tbarnes@dischellbartle.com

Tracey is a Paralegal at the law firm of Dischell Bartle & Dooley P.C. in its Lansdale office. She has been an active member since the organizations inception in 1999 and has been a Board Member, Secretary, Treasurer and President. She is currently the Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations Credentialing Chair. In 2017, she was appointed as the CLE-Associations Co-Coordinator for the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA).



Christopher Gregg—Treasurer

Kane, Pugh, Knoell, Troy & Kramer (610) 275-2000 cgregg@kanepugh.com

Chris works for the law firm, Kane, Pugh, Knoell, Troy & Kramer as a Paralegal. He has been an active board member for the past 3 years and serves as its Social Media Committee Chair. Chris was born and raised in Willow Grove and still resides there with his family and their dachshund Queenie.



Deborah L. Arbuckle, Pa.C.P.—Secretary

Kaplin Stewart Meloff Reiter & Stein (610) 941-2573 DArbuckle@kaplaw.com

Deb is a Paralegal at the law firm Kaplin Stewart Meloff Reiter & Stein in its Blue Bell office. She has been a member of the Montgomery County Paralegal Association since 2003, serving as a board member from 2007 through 2011. Debbie has also co-chaired the MCPA Marketing Committee and currently co-chairs the Pro Bono and Community Outreach Committee. She has served as the primary delegate for the MCPA to the National Federation of Paralegal Associations for 10 years.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Noreen Messmer, Pa.C.P.

Noreen is a Paralegal with the law firm of Ford & Buckman, P.C. in Blue Bell and has worked with Sarah Ford, Esquire for over 40 years. She has been a Board member since 2010 and also serves on the Hospitality/Planning Committee.

Noreen lives in Blue Bell and is the mother of three and Nana to three granddaughters.





Trista is an Estates
Administration Paralegal at
Kozloff Stoudt Attorneys in
Wyomissing. She attended
Central Pennsylvania
College completing the
Paralegal Program and
graduated in 2009. In
2014, she received her
Pa.C.P. certification
through the Keystone
Alliance of Paralegal
Association. Trista lives in
Douglassville with her
husband and son.

Lisa Effrig Lagreca



Lisa is a Municipal Paralegal at the law firm of Dischell Bartle & Dooley P.C. in its Lansdale office. She recently graduated Summa Cum Laude from Bucks County Community College's Paralegal Program and plans to attend Pierce College in the fall. Lisa is a mother of four and grandmother and has been a member of the MCPA since 2018.

Jennifer L. Echikson, Pa.C.P.



Jenn is a Family Law Paralegal at the law firm of Dischell Bartle & Dooley P.C. in its Lansdale office. She graduated from Peirce College in 2009 with a Bachelor of Science in Paralegal Studies. She became a certified paralegal through the Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Association in 2015. Jenn is on the planning and outreach committees for the MCPA and is also membership chair of the Family Law Paralegals of Pennsylvania.

Karen D. Manzanares



Karen is a Law Clerk for Attorney Michelle A. Fioravanti and recently became a realtor. After graduating from Villanova University she spent 22 years as a law clerk for the Governor's Office, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) Chief Counsel in King of Prussia.

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