

Amicus Lex

Fall / Winter 2021-2022

"FRIEND OF THE LAW"



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Kathryn Greene, RP®

Winter is here! A time to recharge our spirits and enjoy the season of rest and relaxation.

Our virtual Summer Social was held on July 28, filled with many laughs and a few surprises along the way! Our 1st Vice President, Megan, hosted the Summer Social and we kicked off the evening with a guest visit to the home of the recipient of the Outstanding Paralegal Award, Cathy Wright! Congratulations Cathy on receiving the Award; it was such a pleasure to surprise her with this very well-deserved award! I want to thank the Committee for their hard work over the past few months for their hard work in making this process possible.

For the last few months of the year, we offered CLEs each month. For our October Lunch and Learn, we welcomed back Attorney Mark Podvia to discuss the laws of witchcraft and the trials that followed. For our November Lunch and Learn, Sybil Taylor Aytch discussed the impact of proliferation in the use of social media in the legal profession. This CLE provided

an ethics CLE credit. For our December Lunch and Learn, we welcomed The Honorable Robert Graci (Ret.) who gave a very informative presentation on judicial misconduct. Judge Graci was also a prosecutor for the US Attorney General's office who handled the prosecution of Jay Smith, the former school principal accused of killing Susan Reynard and her children in Upper Merion Township. Ultimately the conviction was overturned due to mishandling by the Pennsylvania State Police. It's not too late to enjoy these programs as they were recorded and are available for viewing on our website under the "Events" tab. You can purchase the on-demand webinar and receive the credits you need!

As a reminder, the Board has made the decision that an Ad Hoc Committee shall be formed to update our Bylaws, which I will oversee. If you are interested in being a member of the Committee, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly.

It is also that time of year to consider running for a position with the Board! As the Annual Meeting in February approaches, please consider putting your name on the ballot. It is with a heavy heart that I also must announce that our Secretary, Tara Shade, will not be renewing her position in February. Tara has worn many hats for many years for CPPA, and I cannot thank her enough for her hard work, dedication,

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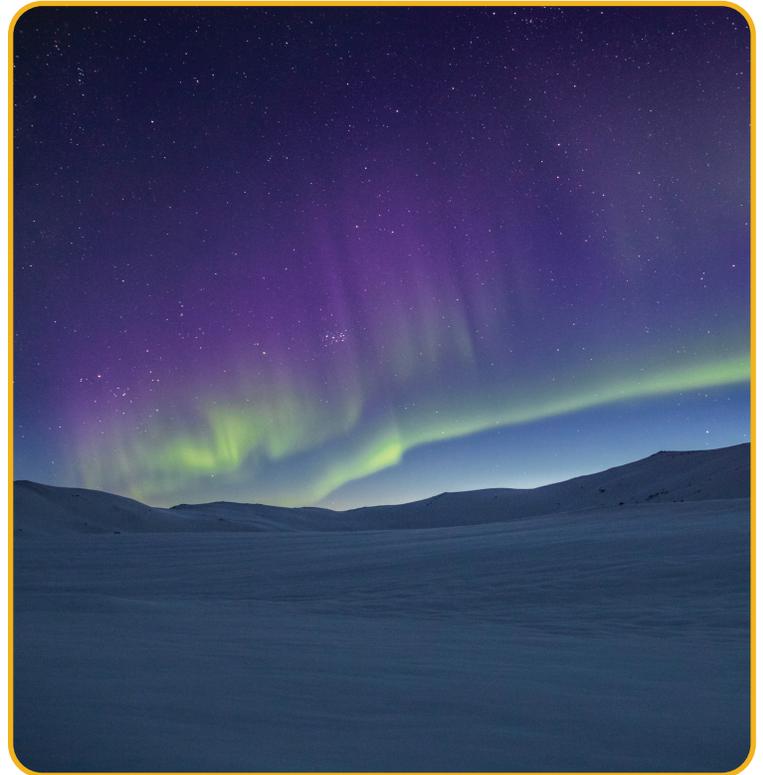
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and talents that she has given to us. Tara will be greatly missed by everyone on the Board, and we wish her the best! Gene Weber has graciously agreed to run for Secretary at our annual election. Thank you Gene! We are still looking for someone to fill the Committee Chair for the Fundraising Committee and the Continuing Education Committee. If you have ever given thought about becoming more active in CPPA, now is a great time to start!

Thank you to all of our members – you are the best part of CPPA! I look forward to continuing working with all of you. If you have any suggestions, I would love to hear from you. I wish you all a safe, happy, and healthy 2022!

Kathryn Greene

CPPA President



Paralegal Day Word Scramble

By WordMint

- 1.) MAUTN _____
- 2.) AHYEIRDS _____
- 3.) AIGHVGNNTS _____
- 4.) OIBRFNSE _____
- 5.) WCRSOEACR _____
- 6.) IKPNUPM _____
- 7.) LAPPE EIRDC _____
- 8.) EXNIQUO _____
- 9.) TBRNEEIAH _____
- 10.) TSVRHEA _____

The first person who e-mails all of the correct answers to ksheriff@cognettlaw.com will win a prize.

Good Luck all!

A
DREAM
written down with a date becomes a
GOAL
A goal broken down into steps becomes a
PLAN
A plan backed by
ACTION
makes your dreams
REALITY

BECOME A PENNSYLVANIA CERTIFIED PARALEGAL!

Did you know...

Pennsylvania has a certification program for paralegals, the Pennsylvania Certified Paralegal (Pa.C.P.) certification?

There are currently over 150 Pa Certified Paralegals

Pennsylvania Certified Paralegals must meet educational and employment standards

Pennsylvania Certified Paralegals can bring more value for clients, by assisting with the legal work which, in the absence of paralegals, would normally be completed by an attorney, at a higher cost

Pennsylvania Certified Paralegals hold themselves to the same professional and ethical standards as attorneys

Pennsylvania Certified Paralegals bring education, experience and value to lawyers and law firms across Pennsylvania

Visit www.keystoneparalegals.org for more details on the Pa.C.P. certification and how you can earn yours.

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Vendor	Katelyn Helman
Outstanding Paralegal....	Sharon Manton, Tammy McLaughlin, Mary Kerns
Military Outreach	Chelsea Garcia Ortega, Megan Beissel

PACE QUESTION - The automatic stay stops lawsuits, foreclosures and all collection activities against the debtor the moment the petition is filed and remains in place until:

- A. The bankruptcy is finalized
- B. The first thirty days
- C. Until the debtor has had the opportunity to receive a fresh start financially
- D. During the pendency of the bankruptcy action unless exceptions are invoked due to BAPCPA rules.



"And while the lawyers argued, the King's paralegals got all the real work done."

IN THIS NEW NORMAL, WE CAN CHOOSE WHAT WORK CONDITIONS ARE BEST FOR US

The novel coronavirus pandemic changed the way many employers approached work flexibility

By Catherine Wright, Pa.C.P.

Remember when working from home was a wonderful, every-once-in-a-while option offered by employers, and not a requirement? Our colleagues might say they were “working from home,” and we smiled knowingly. What a difference 18 months makes, right?

I remember the weekend in March 2020 that we received an email from the co-chairs of my department at McNees Wallace & Nurick telling us we were not permitted to return to the office in Harrisburg until further notice. We were, in essence, locked out.

When I went for a very quick foray into the forbidden territory to gather some necessary work items for my guest-bedroom-turned-home-office, I remember walking onto my floor thinking that it looked as if everyone stopped what they were doing very suddenly and just left. It was eerie.

I went back to the office willingly six months later in September when we were given the green light to return, and I am finding it interesting to learn of my colleagues’ decisions about whether they will also resume office work or if they will continue working from home. Some love working from home and have no immediate plans to return

to their office. Others, including me, find the office a better place to get work done.

Personally, I prefer the more finite separation between work and home that returning to the office affords. When I work from home, it feels as though that separation is a gray area and the two daily experiences blend together.

As we have all seen, there are many ways to create a workable separation between work-life and home-home when they are both at the same location. In this new normal, we can pick what works best for us based on our needs.

To deal with the stress of either option — working from work or working from home — stretching and yoga is my preference to calm my mind and relax my body. At McNees, we are fortunate to have a coworker lead us through chair yoga and meditation. Walking and running are also more regular methods for me to expend nervous energy, clear my mind, and relax my tense muscles. Hopefully, we are all finding ways that work for us to relieve stress. The National Paralegal Reporter magazine has published some very good articles on how to manage during this time. They are well worth the read.

Keystone Alliance Welcomes New Member

The Keystone Alliance of Paralegal Associations (the “Alliance”) is happy to announce that the newest member association is the Family Law Paralegals of Pennsylvania (FLPP). The membership of FLPP brings the total member associations of the Alliance to nine, and includes the Chester County Paralegal Association (CCPA), Central Pennsylvania Paralegal Association (CPPA), Delaware County Paralegal Association (DCPA), Lehigh County Paralegal Association (LCPA), Lycoming County Paralegal Association (LyCPA), Montgomery County Paralegal Association (MCPA), Philadelphia Association of Paralegals (PAP), and Pittsburgh Paralegal Association (PPA). Welcome FLPP!



CONGRATULATIONS CATHY WRIGHT CPPA'S 2021 OUTSTANDING PARALEGAL

Almost every year since 1994 CPPA has named one deserving paralegal Outstanding Paralegal of the Year. This individual is selected by our Outstanding Paralegal Committee who combs through the nominations of very worthy candidates to select just one. This year's very deserving winner was Cathy Wright, Pa.C.P.

Cathy has been a paralegal for 31 years, the last 19 of which she has spent at the law firm of McNeese Wallace & Nurick, where she works in the Corporate & Tax and Real Estate Groups. Cathy's employer has described her as "an enthusiastic supporter of the paralegal field, inspiring others to enter the profession." Cathy's dedication to the paralegal profession has been demonstrated not only through the quality of her work, but also her involvement in paralegal associations and her mentoring of a new generation of paralegals. Cathy is an integral part of the McNeese family.

Cathy has been involved with CPPA for many years and is currently its Membership Director. She has also been CPPA's Primary Delegate to the Keystone Alliance for several years. She most recently served as the Alliance's President from 2018 to 2020. In addition to these official roles, Cathy sits on numerous committees for both groups and is always there to lend a helping hand to whomever needs it. Cathy also plays a role in teaching the next generation through her position as an adjunct professor at Rio Salado College where she has worked since 2012.

Additionally, Cathy is an avid community volunteer. She volunteers regularly for the Dauphin County Bar Association's Law Week activities and Mid-Penn Legal Services custody clinics. She is a member of her church choir and has assisted with LifeTeen teen ministry. She also participates in walks and runs for charities near and dear to her heart.

CPPA President Katie Greene presented an unwitting Cathy with her award during CPPA's Paralegal Day Virtual Social. She surprised Cathy and a few of her McNeese colleagues at her home live during the social.

Cathy's employer summed it up best - "There is no denying that Cathy is fond of the legal industry, her job at McNeese, and the individuals that she works with daily. She followed her passion and succeeded, and more importantly, she has led others to grow in their careers. Cathy is an outstanding paralegal and person and deserves the recognition of CPPA's 2021 Outstanding Paralegal." We couldn't agree more! Congrats Cathy on a well-deserved award.



Lady Justice

It has recently been brought to my attention by HR that I have too much accrued PTO (paid time off) and need to “use it or lose it” by the end of the year. To some, this is ambrosia. For me, it leaves a bit of a bitter taste in my mouth. In this edition, we will tackle the conflicting messages I’m sure we all receive about how we use our company-provided time off.

Whether the time is lumped as PTO, or separated into sick and vacation leave, we all have a certain amount of compensated time away from the office. It’s part of our compensation package; it’s part of the perks; it’s so we don’t want to kill each other, our bosses, or our clients.

Before we dig too deep into this, I’ll first acknowledge that we ALL know that one staff who abuses their PTO. Who conveniently is sick after Sunday night football, Wednesday night poker, and every Friday before a long weekend. That one individual who screws us over because they HAVE to have that beach vacation every Christmas and we’re stuck behind. I’m not talking about THAT office Karen.

I’m instead talking about those of us who put the office first (and by the end of this edition, may decide we shouldn’t). Where you feel like you’ve been run over by Icarus’ flaming chariot and still go to the office because there is work to be done. You plan a trip away and yet Hermes’ message finds its way to the pool or beach and you respond to it anyways.

I spoke with one of my colleagues about this very topic. Her response was this:

As a long-time employee, I know everyone wants to feel important/useful in their workplace. There comes a point when the pressure is put on some to keep “giving” when others do not. I accumulate a lot of vacation time and usually carry over 90 hours (which is the max I can carry over) every year. It is very frustrating to see employees taking every Friday off or getting vacation at any time they want to take it. When I ask, calendars have to be checked, other staff vacation time needs taken into account (even

though I have seniority and may have asked first) or being told that’s not going to work, can you work out other dates or only take a couple of days, not a whole week? I’ve been called on the phone when out to ask where a file might be or do I remember... If I’m not at my desk or in the office, I can’t help. Right now I have 73 hours I have to use before the end of the year or they’re gone (and I’m still carrying over). I actually have used vacation time for medical appointments just to use some of it up. Today I’m going to Staples to buy a laptop so I’ll be able to keep up with email when I take next week off (it actually got approved). And yes, I do feel guilty when I take vacation and see that there are RE closings, etc. I don’t have much back-up when it comes to my work and when I see what was done, it’s part of the reason I don’t want to take off.

This “long time” employee is on the verge of retirement and has been with the firm for longer than the lifespan of her fellow colleagues that are getting PTO approved before her. Her dedication to the profession has basically led to an abuse of her good nature, hard work, and commitment. At what point did our culture associate “usefulness” in the workplace to being reachable at all times?

I myself have had those calls about where to find a file while on vacation. The fact that I can say “Third file from the left, 6th piece of paper back” is a sad commentary on how well organized I am and how little effort others put in. And even worse, let’s talk about the calls and texts I received during my grandmother’s funeral. Should I have answered? No. Would I have felt bad if I ignored? You bet. Should I have felt bad? NO. A thousand times, NO.

There comes a point when you need to put your foot down, bring your voice up, and set boundaries. This is OUR time off, given by the company and earned through working. I don’t need to justify my sick time. I don’t need to justify if I use a day for mental health. I will not give any employer the right to abuse my time to the point where I FORFEIT

part of my benefits. Would you forfeit 10% of your salary to prove your dedication to the job?

It's also sometimes necessary to point out to our attorneys that it's impossible to take our time off if they don't approve it or make too many demands. I confronted HR about my "use it or lose it" time: How and when am I supposed to use my PTO when I was assigned the work of one person who quit and two who are out on medical leave at the same time?

I will admit, I have tried to show my dedication and loyalty by planning sick days. I've found days on the attorney schedules that are light, and packed multiple appointments into that day to be convenient to all. But sometimes, I have to remind myself, "If I was genuinely, suddenly sick, would the office fall apart?" Almost always, the answer is no, meaning I should feel no guilt. (Again, we are not talking about those who avoid tasks and call in sick to make others cover something due! That's another issue and edition.)

As demonstrated by my coworker, sometimes the stress of returning to a mess wasn't worth the time off! That means that we, as staff, need to back each other up. I will do my best to cover while you have your PTO and return without stress. I will hope you return the favor.

Please feel free to share with me your stories, frustrations, questions! I would love future topic ideas: CPPALadyJustice@gmail.com

I remain faithfully yours

- Lady Justice



INTERVIEW OF LISA WILLIAMS

1. When did you become a paralegal and what made you decide to enter into the profession?

Response: I started working in the criminal justice system when I was fresh out of high school, first in the Clerk of Court's Office and then, beginning in 1992, in the Adams County Office of the Public Defender, where I still work today, both as a paralegal and as office manager. Over the years, I learned so much about criminal law practice that it seemed a natural step, professionally, to become a certified paralegal.

2. What have been your biggest challenges as a paralegal?

Response: The attorneys I work with are great, but they often need me to complete tasks, such as preparing briefs for filing with appellate courts, on very short notice. Additionally, it is the nature of Public Defense that we need to very quickly open files and interview defendants in order to be prepared for a court appearance only a day or two away. Our small office opens about a thousand new criminal cases a year, so I need to be constantly attentive to court dates and deadlines.

3. What do you feel your greatest strengths are as a paralegal?

Response: In the office, my greatest strengths are attention to detail (a must for a paralegal) and my ability to communicate clearly and efficiently with attorneys and clients. Where I am strongest, perhaps, is in my ability to put clients at ease. Many of our clients are charged with a crime, like a DUI, who have never been in the criminal justice system before and they are upset and afraid. Just explaining the process and remaining respectful and compassionate goes a long way in criminal defense work.

4. What advice would you give to others who are thinking of entering the profession?

Response: Being a paralegal is very rewarding, both in the camaraderie with the attorneys I work with, and in the help I am able to give clients who are often at a critical and stressful juncture in their lives. But don't enter this field without a strong work ethic, an ability to write clearly, good attention to detail and a readiness to work under pressure.

5. What was the funniest or oddest thing you have had to do in your job?

Response: We had a client who was arrested and put in jail who was worried sick about his cat who was left behind with no one to care for him. I called around to our client's neighbors and finally was able to find someone to care for "Snowball" while our client was incarcerated. It was a tremendous relief for our client.

6. What is the thing you are most proud of with your job or your career?

Response: I am able to treat clients with compassion and respect even when our clients have been charged with horrible crimes. I believe that a person's life should not be wholly defined by the worst thing he or she has ever done. I have worked on two death penalty cases and other cases where this is sometimes a challenge, but I believe I can find something redeeming in everyone, something that still connects this person with the rest of society.

7. If you had to do it all over again, would you still be a paralegal? If not, what other profession would you have wanted to try?

Response: I have had a rewarding career as a paralegal, but I always suspected I would make a fine attorney!

8. Where do you see the paralegal profession in five years?

Response: Technology has brought so many changes over the course of my career. From the days of typing on a typewriter, with copies to paper files, we are now practically paperless, scanning and emailing, electronically filing motions and increasingly utilizing video-conferencing. A paralegal has to keep up with the law, but also has to be constantly learning new ways of communication, storage and research in the face of constantly changing technology.

9. Do you have a motivational quote?

Response: "The best way to predict your future is to create it." Abraham Lincoln

MOVIE TIME

Guess which movie the following quote is from

“I want to tell you a story. I'm going to ask you all to close your eyes while I tell you the story. I want you to listen to me. I want you to listen to yourselves. Go ahead. Close your eyes, please. ”

Answer found on page 27

CPPA IS LOOKING FOR YOU!



We are in need of a volunteer to fill our

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND FUNDRAISING CHAIR POSITION

If interested – please reach out to Dave Gruver
at DGruver@JLFplanning.com or 717-516-5815

PENDENTE LITE

(pen-den-tay lee-tay) adj. Latin for awaiting the litigation (lawsuit). It is applied to court orders (such as temporary child support) which are in effect until the case is tried, or rights which cannot be enforced until the lawsuit is over.

Shedding Light on CPPA's Annual Outstanding Paralegal Award

By Vicki A. Bolinger, RP

Each year, CPPA gives an award to a paralegal who exemplifies characteristics of an outstanding paralegal worthy of recognition for her/his talents and dedication to this profession. This is not an easy task when you consider just how many worthy paralegals there are in our association. The mere fact that you joined CPPA shows that you have dedication to the profession and are seeking opportunities to learn and grown to be better at your job.

The members of the Outstanding Paralegal Award Committee have the unenviable task of selecting each year's recipient. The committee is made up of three associate members, Sharon Manton, Mary Kerns and Tammy McLaughlin. Only voting members are eligible to receive this award, so the committee is made up of associate members in order to make the selection process fair and impartial.

According to Sharon Manton, they begin the selection process by sending nomination forms to the supervisors/employers of the members. This form (see included) asks employers to nominate candidates whom they feel have demonstrated a commitment to the profession, produced quality work and has noteworthy paralegal skills. They ask for ways in which a candidate has not only met but exceeded these criteria. Over the years, the form has been modified in order to help the committee learn more about a potential candidate and pick someone who is truly worthy of being recognized for their efforts.

In discussing this process, Ms. Manton advised that CPPA has an amazing collection of talent. Each year there are "several strong nominations". The committee reviews each nomination carefully and eventually carves it down to two possible candidates. Then they start the process of deliberating as to who each feels exemplifies the values and work ethic of a CPPA Outstanding Paralegal. The committee members have an open dialog as to the most-worthy candidate. As such, having a lot of detail in the nomination is extremely helpful in this process.

Ms. Manton was asked if there is certain criteria that carries more weight than others and she advised that the process is not that rigid. They do not choose a recipient based upon whether she or he is credentialed, the area of law they practice in or the number of years in the profession. Rather they look at the totality of the candidate. Did he or she go above-and-beyond that year in helping to solve a work problem, or did they volunteer with a charity? Did the candidate contribute in some way which had a positive effect on the outcome of a trial or project? The committee reviews and considers all facts contained in the nomination.

While the OPA committee is ultimately happy with the selection they make, they are also heartbroken for all of the well-deserving candidates who are not chosen. But the mere

fact that a supervisor or employer thought the paralegal's contribution that year was worthy of consideration and took the time and effort to nominate the paralegal is really the brass ring. Whether she or he is selected, that paralegal should feel a great honor by the nomination. Not every paralegal rises to the challenge of being outstanding in her/his field. That fact of the nomination is extraordinary in and of itself. This is why the committee takes the time to send out letters to congratulate those who were nominated. It is the OPA committee's way of encouraging the nominees to keep up the good work and to be proud of their efforts. The committee is happy to see someone nominated more than once. A nominee not selected in a given year may very well be chosen as the recipient in a subsequent year.

This article would not be complete if I didn't share with you the interview of 2021's Outstanding Paralegal Award recipient, Catherine Wright. When asked how she felt when she learned that she was this year's recipient, Ms. Wright explained that she was very surprised. She knew she had been nominated but was not expecting to be the recipient. Despite the fact that the Paralegal Week celebration was held virtually, several co-workers decided to meet at Ms. Wright's home for dinner and to watch the on-line celebration. When CPPA President, Katherine Greene showed up at Ms. Wright's front door with a bouquet of flowers, she was quite shocked.

When asked what she thinks makes for an Outstanding Paralegal, Ms. Wright responded that in our profession, one must be flexible, have a good attention to detail, and be able to come at a project from more than one direction sometimes. "You have to be ready to shift gears quickly, and you need to make each of your clients feel that they are the most important" explained Ms. Wright. She went on to say that our jobs can be a juggling act sometimes, and you have to have good common sense. "The attorneys count on us to keep things in a forward motion, and to be able to pick up on important details". But one should never do this job with the expectation of being named as Outstanding Paralegal. You do a good job because you love what you do. You don't want to let the client or your boss down. You want people to respect your abilities as a professional and the knowledge you have accumulated over the years.

I asked Ms. Wright if she had any further advice for our members, she said to "go to work every day ready for anything, leave the drama at home, and do your job to the best of your ability". In addition to your work at the workplace, "helping others outside of work is also a great way to be outstanding, and it gives [you] so much satisfaction". Pro bono opportunities "abound in the legal field and there are so many opportunities to help others."

If you have any questions about the Outstanding Paralegal Award process, or if you have any suggestions on how to make this program even better, please feel free to reach out to me at VBolinger@postschell.com or Sharon Manton @smanton@dauphinc.org.

CPPA's Participation in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve "Toys for Tots" Campaign

By: Cathy Sheaffer, RP, Pa.C.P.

During the months of November and December 2020, CPPA once again supported the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Campaign by collecting new, unwrapped toys from its members.

In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, I was still able to coordinate with the following paralegals and law firms identified below as toy donation drop off sites:

- Tara Shade with Johnson Duffie
- Cathy Sheaffer with Lavery Law
- Cathy Wright & Linda Eshelman with McNeese, Wallace & Nurick
- Paulina Thomas with Tucker Arensberg



I would like to give a special thank you to all of the volunteers and their respective law firms identified above for assisting me with the collection of toys and allowing CPPA to place toy donation boxes within their offices.

Through the wonderful generosity of CPPA's members and the law firms located above, CPPA collected and donated over 250 new, unwrapped toys. These toys will be given to underprivileged children located in our immediate area who may have not experienced the joy of receiving a present this holiday season.

Finally, on behalf of CPPA, I want to thank all of you who contributed to Toys for Tots. This is such a good cause as it brings a little joy to those less fortunate than us at a time of year when we should all share a little happiness, especially with the children. Happy Holidays!

Is Paralegaling a Women's Only Club?

By Eugene Weber, *Paralegal, Pa.C.P.*

The goal of achieving parity, i.e., “equality” between men and women in the workplace has been a national/international sociopolitical problem for decades touching several key areas. Salary and sexual harassment probably most notable. Both issues are controversial in their own right, neither has a simple solution, and job equality is problematic in a wide range of fields. This includes the legal field. That is, in so far as men outnumber women. That men hold most of the positions in many law firms, at the various court levels, and in law enforcement has been a constant. On the other hand, statistics show that enrollment has significantly trended toward women at colleges and law schools. At these institutions, the enrollment of women now out paces men roughly 6 to 4.¹

For decades, the equal rights mantra “breaking the glass ceiling” rallied troops to rail against many a male academic, corporate, and political leader. Turn to the flipside of the record, and virtually no one gives a real hoot about “equality.”

This great paralegal field of ours, if underappreciated, has evolved into a respected one. Hats off to the women, who by their quality workmanship (workwoman-ship?) and persistence made it so. Women “built” paralegaling into a discipline as distinct from that of a lawyer as a P.A.’s is to a doctor. I haven’t given much thought to whether the difference in the number of women versus men in the profession shows attorney bias or it’s simply a function of men not choosing to be paralegals. Maybe it’s the former but knowing the answer doesn’t keep me awake at night.

Whatever one’s feelings about it is, from time in memoriam, the general understanding was that men ran the business world and women the domestic world. The rule does have its exceptions, in the Sciences, Medicine, Fashion, Politics, etc. In war too—think St. Joan of Arc. Then the mid-19th century came along and the “Modern” or Industrial Age, unleashing commercial growth on a level never seen up until then in human history. In its aftermath the standard, men equal business and women domestic work, changed—dramatically. From then on, machines would make the products once made by hand. At the onset of the Industrial Age, we were an agrarian

society. For the farmer change came slower, but in the cities and their peripheral suburbs, supplying an ever-growing market meant an unprecedented demand for workers. Machines did “the work,” but someone had to run them. The “machine operator” came into being. With it, factory owners quickly learned an “operator” could be a man or *woman*; until labor laws changed, even a child.

Still, except perhaps in cloth production mills, in factories and business generally, men outnumbered women. In the office building, the one place where women reigned was in the secretarial pool. I suspect this remains so. As for law firms, before there were “paralegals” there were legal “secretaries.” In its day, “telephone operators,” overwhelmingly, were women.

The 20th Century arrived. With it came the greatest war the world has yet to know, the Second World War. Men, tens of millions worldwide, called into service of their country, as a result creating an unheard-of worker shortage. Factories needed operators, and more importantly, soldiers needed weapons and machines to defeat the common monster, Nazism. In numbers previously unimagined, women filled factory after factory and offices where men once stood. This shift in labor force heralded a totally different way of life. The workplace has not been the same since.

Civil Rights captured the nation’s attention in the 1950’s and 60’s. By the 1970’s, the national focus shifted from “equality” between races to the sexes, to “Women’s Rights,” and primarily in the workplace. Stirred by academia and politically active feminists, the harp of the day was that chauvinistic man had charge of things long enough. Time to put an end to business’s “Men’s Only Club” in the same way “Whites Only” bathrooms, lunch counters, water fountains, and the like ended. It was thought that history again showed that men had made a mess of the world. Time for real change. In 1972, the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment) came to be. While it didn’t garner enough support for ratification, it didn’t matter. Like it or not, Constitutional law may not but *society* had changed.

2021 and the “Post-Modern Age,” the belief that women still have not attained full status persists. Now though a greater cause has burst onto the scene, “Equity.” So that, the question today is not if business is a *man’s* place, but

¹ Cited from memory. Sources, *Imprimus*, a newsletter published by Hillsdale College, circulation exceeding 5.5 million, and *First Things* a monthly journal, paperback subscriptions exceeding 30,000. Source for circulation numbers, *Wikipedia*.

if men of a particular *race* are “privileged.” Go deeper, privileged not just in the workplace but throughout the whole of society. In the housing market, in healthcare, education, sports, politics; name an area of civic life.

We’ve reached a point where men (women to a considerably lesser degree) of a certain race should be held twice in disdain. It is rooted in the proposition that America has an “original sin,” slavery. Indeed, while it is not a horror of one’s own making today, “Critical Race Theory” (CRT), the foundation to Equity, tells us this “sin of the father” *must* “pass onto the son.” Promoted by most of academia, activists, politicians, the media, business, and yes, the law, if not yet reached, it’s reaching wide acceptance. Today, to be opposed to “equitarian” precepts, means to be deigned an outlier or worse, racist.

If surprisingly, but thankfully, I haven’t ruffled some feathers by now, you may be wondering “What the h*** does all *that* have to do with the d*** topic?” The answer is nothing. Nothing happens in a vacuum. I felt that I couldn’t tell you about my experience as a man in a field dominated by women without some historical comparative context. Everything in our lives has a history to it. “Equity,” along with its cousin “wokeness” and its component “cancel culture,” has become 2021’s reality. Equity has a history. It’s taken hold of everything, politics, medicine, business, and yes, the legal field. It seems to drive governmental and educational policy.

This article isn’t a mine exploration into the state of our society and how we got here. That would take a book. To be in the legal field, to be a paralegal who happens to be a man, I feel, it should at least be touched upon. Check and you’ll find regular stories in the Legal Intelligencer on “Equality” and or “Equity.” For several years (doubtless it’ll be ongoing), every issue of The National Paralegal Reporter has had a “Diversity, Inclusion and Equity” section. It devoted an entire issue to it and initiated the “Justice Champion Award” in dedication to these principles.

Am I “privileged” for having been born Caucasian and male in a blue-collar family of ten children? To earn extra money for the family during the Great Depression my father left tenth grade. A WWII veteran, afterwards he became a bus and trolley driver, his only “career.” He loved God, country, and family. He loved mankind and taught

his children to do the same. He died from bone marrow cancer at 63. My mother, truly a living saint, finished high school, and married at 20, worked at home the rest of her life, watched a son die at three days old, suffered severe depression by her late forties. A heart attack at age 67 ended her life. Four of her children attended college. Each paid their way. Afterwards, I made a career in mechanical drafting, but first started as an “Apprentice.” Four years later I became a “Journeyman.” At age 52 and two more years of college, I began a second career, paralegal. Should I be *ashamed* of my family, country, my Faith for that matter, because someone theorizes that I am “privileged?” Answer that as you feel compelled, I already know mine.

My experience in the paralegal field has been a GOOD one. I started in HACC’s Paralegal Studies program in August of 2009. It was immediately evident that I’d entered what was and is a women’s world. Naïve perhaps, I honestly didn’t know that when I’d applied to HACC. If some resented my being there, it wasn’t overt. As for me, the character my classmates showed impressed me, their solid approach to studies. Most the instructors were men, probably two thirds. Both the men and women professors though, *all* practicing attorneys. The head of the department was Mrs. Kathleen Murren, Esq. I’m deeply grateful for her guidance, professionalism, and her wide range of legal knowhow.

As for paralegaling, I can only speak as someone who’s held one job. So far, the only paralegal to join Cumberland County’s Public Defender Office (PDO). I came here after interning for an attorney in private practice. He’s also worked for the PDO for over three decades. After that internship, he encouraged me to interview with the Chief PD for an internship here. An intern for three months, six months after that, Chief Tim Clawges hired me; at first part time. Nine months later I was full time. In the ten years I’ve worked here (paid), mainly it’s been for the attorney who brought me here. He likes to say we’re “team Turo and Weber.”

I’m not only the department’s one paralegal, but among all the legal assistants and secretaries here, the only man. Their positions held by women since the office opened about five decades ago. The others were conspicuously cautious when I arrived, scrutinized me from my work approach to ethics. Over time the scrutiny subsided and

my business relationship with them grew better and stronger. Several have left for other places since.

I've tried hard to treat the attorneys and staff as I wish to be, with dignity, and to offer not just a helping hand but a useful one. Interestingly, where I've felt most out of place is with the fresh face, eager to learn and excel law school interns arriving each or every other year. A good share will stay two years. In my time here, eight out of ten interns have been women. The attorney I work with most being the exception, the other attorneys treat them differently than they do me. If there is anything I've strived for but have not succeeded at, it is being seen as they are. Where I'm a *coworker*, the interns are (future) *colleagues*. Gratefully, I've had good working relationships with several of the interns. Most though barely acknowledge my existence.

I get why the attorneys view the law interns differently. After all, one day, should they pass the Bar, they'll *be* attorneys. It's about comradery and collegiality. The extent of my knowledge and skill seems to do little to change the general attitude.

Not always the case, but where the law interns get all sorts of feedback on their work mine is kind of taken for granted. I don't really mind, much. I couldn't have lasted ten years in the PDO if my work was anything less than acceptable or better. I receive the occasional kudo for a job well done, am recognized annually on "Professional Assistants Day" or whatever the day is called, all job evaluations just fine, and I've received regular salary increases. No complaints.

No matter what contribution I've made to a successful outcome, to the attorney should go the spoils. I don't harbor any notion that I should be treated as "special." This cuts against the grain on my feelings about the grossly exaggerated emphasis on "diversity," "inclusion," and "equity." I hope to be noticed for *what* I do rather than who I am or look like.

If I wanted to be an attorney, I'd have made that choice years ago. I'm very content to be a paralegal. I'm glad to have met many of my paralegal "colleagues" through the CPPA and other paralegal associations regardless of their sex, pardon me "gender."

I haven't been given the opportunity to work with fellow paralegals. Here at the PDO, I'm it. There are the pro bono events, and on those occasions, I've felt welcomed by the "ladies." At 62, I've no intention of changing how I address others. Taught by my parents (and the good Sisters of the IHM) to address everyone with respect,

care for them some way, even if not reciprocal. We're all people, members of the species mankind, part of God's grand creation. (And please don't expect woke-ology to show up in my writing.)

Other places where I've met paralegals, CLE conferences, the attendees 80-90% women. Not a single time have I ever regretted being at one. Not only because the content and speakers were above board, but the people I shared time with, learned and grew with, strengthening our field, make the events what they are, exceptional.

I've not stopped loving my mother. God grant her peace in that eternal rest of hers. I love my aunts. I love my wife dearly. I value the teachers I had in 22 years of schooling. In elementary school, *all* women. In high school none. In college, more men than women. My Faith teaches that the greatest human person to walk the earth was a woman, Christ's mother Mary. I haven't nor would disparage my professional experience working alongside women. That's half the attorneys who staff my office, and all the legal assistants and practically all the interns. I appreciate sharing a mutual interest with them, *the Law*. There's something about saying "the Law" that gives one a sense of belonging to something greater than oneself.

Has the experience been idyllic? *Nothing* is perfect. Would I want to change any of my experiences in the field? No. I've gotten lessons from it all.

Besides, who am I to say what should have been or could have been. What I've received thus far has been a blessing, no matter what, "the good, the bad, the ugly."

Did you know CPPA has a job bank? It is free to sign up. Visit the Members Only section at centralparalegals.com and complete an application. As job postings become available, you will receive an email. And, if your firm is hiring, let them know they can advertise here!

Celebrating Constitution Day



Federal Constitution

Originally written in
in the Pa. State House,
known as Independence Hall. **1787**

Required **nine of the 13 states** to become binding.

On June 21, 1788 the 9th state (New Hampshire) ratified it.
The U.S. Constitution became effective in March 1789.



First Ten Amendments (Bill of Rights) enacted in **1791.**

Amended 17 more times (27 total).

Created **three branches** of government:

- E** Executive (President)
- L** Legislative (Congress)
- J** Judicial (U.S. Supreme Court)

All inferior federal courts are authorized by Article III of the Constitution, but created by statute.

Established the **Separation of Powers, Checks and Balances** and **Federalism.**

Provides **individual rights** and **protections.**

Pennsylvania Constitution

Originally written in
in the Pa. State House,
known as Independence Hall. **1776**



Co-Authored by **Benjamin Franklin**, who was also a delegate to the U.S. Constitutional Convention 11 years later.

Amended five times, the current Pa. Constitution was **approved by the voters in 1968.**

Created **three branches** of government:

- E** Executive (Governor)
- L** Legislative (General Assembly)
- J** Judicial (Pa. Supreme Court)

Article V of the Pa. Constitution **established the Pa. Supreme Court** along with the state's **two intermediate appellate courts, trial courts** and a minor judiciary system of **magisterial district courts.**

The Pennsylvania Constitution **elaborates on issues surrounding public education, public assistance, qualifications for judges**, etc.

Provides more **rights and protections than the federal constitution.** For example, Pa. Constitution Art. 1, Sec. 8 generally provides **more protection against unreasonable search and seizure** than the 4th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.



In recognition of Constitution Day, which was on September 17, 2021, the Pennsylvania Courts released this infographic, which was obtained through the PA Courts InfoShare. PA Courts InfoShare is a monthly product of the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) that visually highlights the work of the courts with interesting data and statistics obtained through the judiciary's case management systems, interactive dashboards and other research. *Reproduction is permissible with source cited.*

5 Considerations Every Paralegal Should Make Before Moving Into A New Market

Heather Hunter leverages her experience moving from the Mid-West to Pennsylvania in this list of recommended ways to plan for a future relocation

By Heather Hunter, McNees Wallace & Nurick LLC

In November 2016, my family decided to relocate from my home state of Iowa to my husband's home state of Pennsylvania. Most of my paralegal career was spent working in Iowa and I knew there were aspects of a new job in a new state that I needed to contemplate, including factoring cost of living requirements in my salary request.

But there are other considerations that should be made when moving from one jurisdiction to another. When trying to move your career from one jurisdiction to another, you can be successful with a little planning. Here five things to add to your list, based on my experiences.

1) How does the jurisdiction operate?

Is it a truly unified court system where the top court sets the rules and local rules are designed to assist only with the logistics of navigating the local court? Or can local rules, and even judge's preferences, overrule the regulations set by the system's top court? This can be a tremendous learning curve, but one that can be overcome because we are paralegals, after all! It is something you should be prepared for and perhaps even study for while working to land the perfect job.

2) What is the market rate for paralegals?

If the cost of living in the jurisdiction to which you are moving is greater than your current cost of living, but the prevailing wage for paralegals in the market is less, you should consider whether the move makes financial sense for you. Not every situation has those luxuries, of course, but working out the finances far in advance of any offer can make the negotiation process much easier. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics can be a fantastic resource (www.bls.gov) — they have calculators and other tools to help you determine your value in the proposed market.

3) What is the culture for the use of paralegals?

Law firms are very progressive in some regions, tasking paralegals with junior associate work. Others do not recognize the full potential of a paralegal's skill set. You can find information about this by talking to members of local paralegal associations. These can be found by plugging the area you are considering and "paralegal associations" into an online search engine. You can also look on the websites for National Association of Legal Assistants (www.nala.org) or

the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (www.paralegals.org) to locate associated local chapters of their organizations.

4) What is the reputation of the potential employer?

While you are speaking with the members of the paralegal association, ask them about any firms with a reputation for being a great workplace that are hiring in the area you are considering. You may also want to search for any employer awards that the company has posted on its website — they should be current awards that the employer earned, rather than purchased. (To double check, you can usually research the award or recognition's criteria.)

Also, be sure to check the jurisdiction's licensing and Better Business Bureau for any complaints or red flags, as well as the reviews on employment websites. But remember to take these with a grain of salt.

Lastly, during the interview you can ask about their employee longevity and any ongoing employee concerns they are taking steps to overcome. Remember the interview is no longer about the employer evaluating you — it is also about you evaluating the employer. These types of questions should be expected by the employer.

5) How do I get my resume to stand out from the local paralegals vying for a position?

Your resume should focus more on research, writing and any soft skills such as client management or unique organizational capabilities. I also focused my cover letter to include examples of when I had to learn something new and performed the task with exceptionality.

For example: in Iowa, the juvenile court of appeals changed from full appeals just like any other appeal to petitions on appeals. Our office was one of the first to navigate this process and the Supreme Court Clerk called the attorney I was working for to tell him that we did an exceptional job navigating the new rules and there was no need to return it for any corrections. That was valuable experience to include in my application materials because it shows potential employers that I can navigate an area that I had no previous experience in and do so successfully.

Central Pennsylvania
Paralegal Association
December 2021 Social



NOMINATION FOR 2021 OUTSTANDING PARALEGAL AWARD



Eligibility for Nomination:

1. The paralegal must be a voting member of CPPA;
2. The paralegal must be a working paralegal; and
3. The paralegal may not have been a recipient of this award within the past 10 years.

Paralegal's Name: _____

Employer (Firm/Company): _____

Regarding the paralegal you are nominating, please provide the following information to the best of your knowledge. *If available, please include a copy of the nominee's resume.*

of Years in Present Position: _____

Total # of Years as a Paralegal: _____

Specialty / Area(s) of Practice: _____

Employment Background: _____

Professional Certification: _____

Education: _____

Explain why you believe this nominee is an outstanding paralegal. Please include specific examples that will help us distinguish your nominee from others. *You may provide this information on a separate piece of paper, if preferred.*

- Commitment to the legal profession – examples:

- Quality work product – examples:

- Noteworthy paralegal skills – examples:

Continued on next page

- Outstanding qualities – examples:

- Volunteer/community-related activities:

If there is someone else, who would concur with your nomination, you may invite that individual to add his or her endorsement to your submission (see below).

If your nominee is chosen as CPPA’s Outstanding Paralegal for 2021, would you be available when the award is presented in a virtual forum sometime during the week of July 26-30 (Paralegal Week)? Yes No Unsure

If you cannot be available, who could represent your firm/company? _____

Your Name _____

Title _____

Firm/Company _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Name and Title of Additional Person Endorsing this Nomination (if applicable) _____

Thank you!

Please return completed nomination form by mail, fax, or e-mail to:

Sharon Manton
 c/o Director of Corrections’ Office
 Dauphin County Prison
 501 Mall Road
 Harrisburg, PA 17111

Fax: (717) 695-7369
 smanton@dauphinc.org

**NOMINATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED ON OR BEFORE
 FRIDAY, JUNE 18, 2021**



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

PROCLAMATION

PARALEGAL WEEK

July 26-30, 2021

PARALEGAL DAY

July 30, 2020

WHEREAS, the practice of law is a challenging and complex endeavor – one in which the rights, liberties, and safety of our citizens has been protected and preserved for centuries; and

WHEREAS, members of the bar require knowledgeable and reliable assistance to fulfill the duties of their profession. Paralegals have become an invaluable source of support in law offices, providing lawyers with a variety of skilled professional services throughout their practice; and

WHEREAS, paralegals are highly educated, trained, and experienced professionals with expertise in legal and case research, interviewing clients and witnesses, legal and correspondence writing, and other critical aspects of successful and efficient law practices; and

WHEREAS, the value of talented paralegals is often overlooked by the general public, but their worth is never underestimated by the lawyers and firms for whom they work.

THEREFORE, I, Tom Wolf, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim July 26-30, 2021, as PARALEGAL WEEK and July 30, 2021, as PARALEGAL DAY. I encourage all citizens to recognize the efforts and accomplishments of paralegals.



GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor, at the City of Harrisburg, on this thirteenth day of April two thousand twenty-one, the year of the commonwealth the two hundred forty-fifth.

Tom Wolf
TOM WOLF
Governor





IMX Medical Management Services is an Independent Medical Evaluation Company providing services on a National and Regional level. IMX has been an industry leader since 1995, and has been URAC certified as an Independent Review Organization since 2009.

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Expires 11/01/2021

Help Wanted:

Did you ever have a desire to write an article about your personal professional experiences? Do you have an interest in publishing and finding compelling and timely topics to share with others? If so, we are looking for you! Please consider volunteering with the Newsletter Committee. Our newsletter, Amicus Lex, is published four times a year. We are looking for people to help create or locate quality content for the newsletter. CPPA is proud of the newsletter, but we are hoping to improve the content with some original articles, entertaining stories, fun features and educational opportunities. If you have interest in helping with the newsletter committee, please contact Vicki Bolinger at VBolinger@postschell.com.

Answer Key:

PACE ANSWER: D. During the pendency of the bankruptcy action unless exception are invoked due to BAPCPA rules. (Further discussion on Answer – Debtors’ actions and any prior filing will bring the provisions of the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005. This could vastly affect the automatic stay by either shortening the stay period or causing it not to go into effect at all.)

MOVIE TRIVIA: Jake Brigance – A Time To Kill (1996)





Proud to honor & support the Central Pennsylvania Paralegal Association. Thank you for 35 years of dedication to the paralegal profession!



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