



Law in Motion

Message from the President...
By Debbie Reber

This

past Friday, June 26th, 2009, was the celebration of Paralegal Day in California. This year we did something a little different in that we had an “after work” get together at Endless Summer located in the beautiful Santa Barbara Harbor. For those that were in attendance, I believe all of us had an enjoyable time and I, for one, was so pleased to get to know a few of the members just a bit better than just recognizing a name on the SBPA roster. Many of you who could not come due to other events previously scheduled truly missed out on an opportunity to converse, laugh and share work/life experiences with your peers. I do hope that you will be able to attend next year. We did not have a program, per se, but I believe the camaraderie and the conversation was of great benefit. It was a real pleasure to meet and greet those paralegals in our community that serve their firms/employers with such enthusiasm bringing a wealth of information, expertise and genuine interest in their field. This is truly what celebrating Paralegal Day means --- giving credit where credit is due and finding new networking possibilities within our small community. Congratulations to all you paralegals out there! You should be very proud of yourselves and what you do!

During this same time period as the Paralegal Day festivities, CAPA (California Alliance of Paralegal Associations) met in Long Beach at the Queen Mary for its Annual Conference over the weekend. I am certain that there was lively discussion and exchange of ideas all for the benefit of the paralegals in the State. As the SBPA is a member of this organization, Debra Wheels, our CAPA Secondary, attended on our behalf.

Going back a couple of months, in April, the SBPA once again was privileged to participate in the second annual Law Bowl to raise funds

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Message from the President...

By Debbie Reber

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for Santa Barbara's Teen Court during the Law Week festivities in Santa Barbara. Zodos Bowling Alley in Goleta served as the background and many teens were in attendance for the event along with the Teen Court administrative personnel, several Court personnel, representatives from the host organization, the Santa Barbara Legal Secretaries Association (SBLSA) along with the SBPA. SBPA sponsored a lane with the financial backing and support from Mullen & Henzel, LLP. We had t-shirts designed for our team again this year by our own Sandra Biesinger's mom, through her business, Shirts 'N Gifts. The SBLSA presented the proceeds of the event to the Teen Court director, Eduardo Cué, which came to a grand total of \$2,000.00. We were all very proud to be able to participate in such an event and hope that many more SBPA members will turn out for the event next year. For more information on Santa Barbara's Teen Court, please click on the following link: <http://www.cadasb.org/en/fighting-back/teencourt.html>

With the downturn in the present economy, it was a joy to be able to attend and take part in the Law Bowl. Many organizations, individuals as well as businesses, are suffering greatly due to the present situation across the country. We as an organization have been very fortunate to increase our membership substantially over last year at this time and that only shows how important this organization can be and is to you as members. We still seek to attract more paralegals (employed or unemployed) who are currently working or have worked in the Santa Barbara area, but have just not found their way to joining our organization. So, it's up to you to spread the word and encourage others to join. One of our best benefits of belonging to the SBPA is the ability to secure those needed MCLE credits. If you have to secure them on your own, they can be a significant cost to you and/or your employer.

The SBPA in conjunction with all of the other paralegal associations across the state, serve as a network to assist other paralegals in finding jobs, answering questions, and providing needed support. We are part of the backbone of our firms without which our attorneys would have a much more difficult and time consuming process in their practice. This was one of the reasons for our Paralegal Day get together ---- to find out just in what areas of law each other practice. Like objects attract and thus paralegals in the same field of law can glean information from each other through simple exchanges of conversation.

As I've indicated in prior messages, we truly seek everyone's opinion and ideas for programs for MCLEs. There is a wealth of information in Santa Barbara --- excellent speakers and topics that have yet to be explored. You are our eyes and ears and your suggestions are what enable us to have topics that are timely and relevant to all topics of law. Even though some programs do not encompass your particular area of law, we should never feel too secure in our surroundings to think that we can't benefit from being educated in other areas of law. It makes a person grow and widen their horizons. Don't get complacent and feel like there's nothing left to learn. You just never know what's around the corner!

Our next MCLE luncheon will be in September and will cover the topic of "**E-Discovery**". We hope to have a large group as I know that this topic is of value and interest in all areas of law. Please be certain to check the web site for dates and times of this presentation. You will also be receiving information via email as the time draws closer.

September will also be the time for presenting our slate of candidates for the various Board positions for 2010. Yes -- I said 2010. It's hard to believe that it's right around the corner. I would

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encourage all of you to think about volunteering for a position and let one of the Board members know of your interest. We have a very active and enthusiastic Board this year and I feel certain that with new individuals joining their ranks, it can only become better. The Board's function is not to "do" everything for the SBPA --- their function is to elicit the assistance from the membership at large. It doesn't take an inordinate amount of time, either --- but the time invested is certainly worthwhile and satisfying. Please feel free to contact any of the Board members to ask them questions on what it is they actually are expected to do. You might find that it's something that you would be interested in and could bring your talents to the organization for its betterment. We hope to hear from you!!

As always, I encourage you to interact with your fellow paralegals here in Santa Barbara. Reach out to those individuals who may not yet belong to the SBPA and encourage them to join. New blood and new ideas keep the organization fresh and vital. Please feel free to contact me anytime with your suggestions or thoughts at dr@ppplaw.com.

*Deborah L. Reber, President, Santa Barbara
Paralegal Association*

2009 CALENDAR

<p>JANUARY</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">X</p>	<p>FEBRUARY</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">X</p>	<p>MARCH</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">X</p>
<p>APRIL</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">X</p>	<p>MAY</p> <p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">X</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JUNE</p> <p>26— HAPPY HOUR in honor of Paralegal Day at Endless Summer, 5pm-7:30 pm (members only)</p> <p>27- Paralegal Day</p> <p>27- CAPA Conference: Treasures of Success, hosted by OCPA (Queen Mary, Long Beach)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">JULY</p> <p>3- Independence Day (Court Holiday)</p> <p>8-11—NALA's 34th Annual Convention in the Gaslamp District of San Diego</p>	<p>AUGUST</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SEPTEMBER</p> <p>7- Labor Day (Court Holiday)</p> <p>15- SBPA Luncheon—E-Discovery (ethics) to be held at the Santa Barbara College of Law</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">OCTOBER</p> <p>12- Columbus Day (Court Holiday)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NOVEMBER</p> <p>11- Veteran's Day (Court Holiday)</p> <p>17—SBPA Luncheon—Herb Fox on Preserving Your Client's Right to Appeal</p> <p>26- Thanksgiving (Court Holiday)</p> <p>27- Day after Thanksgiving (Court Holiday)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DECEMBER</p> <p>25- Christmas (Court Holiday)</p>

Top Twenty Beliefs Guaranteed to Stall Your Career By Chere B. Estrin

It's just plain and

simple. There's no magic about it. I didn't make these up and I have no doubt that someone who feels stuck in their career has at least one of these beliefs hanging around.

The mind is so powerful that what you tell yourself, even if it's just a feeling and not vocalized, can either hinder or support your success. No one reaches the top levels by accident. I don't care how many times you've told yourself that successful people were just, "in the right place at the right time." There's no such thing. People who were lucky made their own luck. People who were in the right place at the right time simply took advantage of their situation – for the good.

In the award winning movie, *Million Dollar Baby*, there was a sign that showed up in scene after scene. You couldn't help but notice it. For some reason, it resonated with me.

"Winners.....what losers....." I realized that this adage applied to every profession and

that applicable quotes to live by were comforting, supportive and eye-opening. Words are very powerful, so much so that what you tell yourself, even in jest, becomes your truth.

Let's examine what I think are the top twenty beliefs that can stall you career:

NUMBER 1. You're afraid to leave the office even for a day. You can't learn about anything new in the field because you're tied to the office 24/7.

NUMBER 2. The way your job is, is the way it's supposed to be. You're not supposed to ask for more. But something tells you if you were to look back on past assignments you've had over the past year or so, you might find out you've had different cases but same type of assignments. In fact, you've done basically the same assignment on 12 different cases. You haven't a clue as to how to get more sophisticated assignments.

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NUMBER 3. Go to a seminar???? You must be crazy. First of all, the firm won't pay for it. You're certainly not going to reach into your own pocket. You have that Kate Spade bag to buy. Second of all, it's the firm's responsibility, not yours, to provide training. Never mind that California paralegals are required to have continuing legal education. But a nagging thought keeps entering your head...just how long will a firm pay a senior paralegal to do entry-level work?

NUMBER 4. You think you need to leave the paralegal field to live your dream. Doesn't everyone perform routine and repetitious work in this job?

NUMBER 5. You are convinced there is no upward movement in the paralegal field. In fact, once you reach "senior paralegal" you have capped out. Unless, of course, you want to be an attorney and we all know where that will lead.

NUMBER 6. You don't think you have a

career dream. Some people keep their career dreams locked up inside and never see it, or don't allow themselves to find it. You think you're one of them.

NUMBER 7. You are afraid of failure, rejection, or being seen as different if you follow the career path you really want. We are all afraid of something. But you allow your fears to keep you from getting what you want in your career. In fact, truth be known, you're paralyzed.

NUMBER 8. You don't believe you can make enough money living your career dreams. Never mind that this is the biggest obstacle that keeps people doing work that they don't find appealing or exciting. You say, "the work is not that bad," or you're "getting paid a lot," more than you could make being in a job you love.

NUMBER 9. You think you are destined to live a less than fulfilling career, and as a result, you do not take action towards achieving your

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career dreams. In fact, if asked, you're not really sure what that action might entail.

NUMBER 10. You don't think you have the time to get the training you need. Somehow other people learn about new court rules, e-discovery and the Sarbanes-Oxley Act but you just don't have the time. You are so caught up in the rush of today's world, you don't think you have time to add one more thing to do in your career.

NUMBER 11. You still believe if you work hard, someone is sure to notice. No sense tooting your own horn. In fact, that's bragging and nice girls and boys don't do that sort of thing. I know that for a fact. My mother told me. Over and over and over.

NUMBER 12. You don't think you deserve to be happy in your career because so many people are unhappy in theirs.

NUMBER 13. You are not ready. It requires a significant investment in yourself to get

your career turned around, and sometimes we are not ready. You're not willing to look at what's holding you back and reach for the stars. Frankly, it's just too esoteric.

NUMBER 14. You remember what it's like to feel confident but you haven't felt that way in quite some time. You tell yourself it goes with the territory.

NUMBER 15. You hear rumors that your colleagues got bigger raises than you did. You're certain that's because your department always receives the least amount of increases. Besides, experienced people can't expect big raises these days.

NUMBER 16. There is a constant chatter in your head that's always telling you what you CAN'T do. You chalk that up to being around negative people.

NUMBER 17. You're bored but that's not your fault.

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NUMBER 18. The words like joy, happiness, motivation, and success are part of someone else's life.

NUMBER 19. Someone else, not you, gets interesting, exciting assignments. You're certain it's the attorneys you've been assigned to. They just "don't get it" when it comes to paralegals.

NUMBER 20. You're stuck and you know it.

The truth is you are not battling your circumstances; you are battling your excuses, beliefs, and your reasons why you cannot have what you really want in your career. You have done such a great job convincing yourself that your career wishes will not be granted, or the next level cannot be obtained, that this has become your reality. You need to tell yourself another story.

If any of the twenty beliefs to stall your career look even remotely familiar, you need to

reshape your thinking and your perspective and your career options can be unlimited. But don't expect to do this alone. No one can. If you are tired of listening to your excuses, and are ready to have a career you love, it is time to say "YES" to your career success. Go out there and do what you need to do to have the success you deserve. Law firms do not pay paralegals for what they DON'T know. They pay them for what they do know. But that information can get old very quickly. Once the firm finds out your level of expertise, it automatically expects you to keep refilling and renewing the information. Firms constantly look for paralegals to have new and fresh input into their jobs and their careers. Paralegals who succeed are those who constantly increase their knowledge base. Paralegals who refuse to learn new information to advance their careers get stuck, stalled and mired in the mud. I've never heard of a paralegal getting an out-of-this-world raise for

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old information.

Some years ago, there was a theory going around about people who had a fear of succeeding. It was easy to point towards pop psychology, fad syndromes and well-meaning parents as the reason why someone didn't "quite" make it. Today, people are a little more practical.

Successful professionals are those who haven't refused to take advantage of the knowledge tools that have practically been handed to them. Very few of the many, many successful people I have met in my life say that they go to work, come home, go to work again without ever going to a seminar; getting on the internet; networking with other paralegals or finding out up-to-date data about what's going on in their careers. They read, read, read. They join associations; take online courses; join listservs; and soak up as much information as they can find. They go out of their way to find out

what's working for other paralegals. And above all, they stay motivated.

Common sense tells us if we spend two-thirds of our week working hard, it's got to be at something we love. Don't be part of the Twenty Beliefs list. Do yourself, your family, your loved ones and your firm a favor. Get motivated. Get going. You'd be surprised how much power you actually have over your career if you would just take the reins yourself. It's up to you to create your own success. Making our jobs an adventure in life we are passionate about and really love, starts and ends with us. Get off the list and onto success. Do it now. The worst that can happen is you find a whole new world of joy in your work awaits you. Not bad, if you ask me.

By Chere B. Estrin

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LAWBOWL 2009



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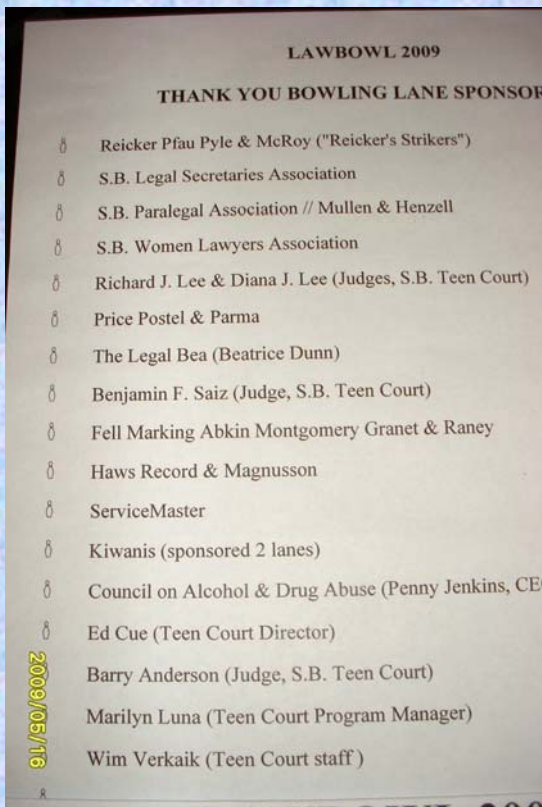
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Membership Chairman



Elizabeth Seidel, SBPA
First Vice President of
Membership

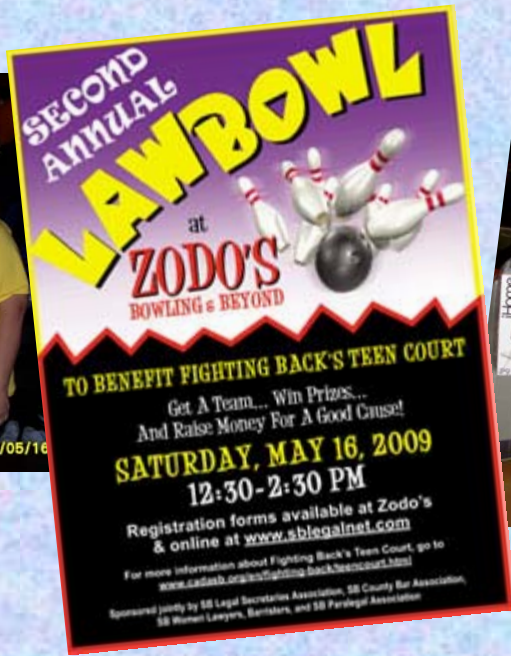


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NEWS RELEASE

Los Angeles Superior Court
Los Angeles County
www.lasuperiorcourt.org
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

Responding to Fiscal Emergency, Los Angeles Superior Court to Close One Day Per Month

Action Takes Effect Wednesday, July 15, 2009
Some Limited Services To Be Maintained

Responding to the deepening statewide financial crisis, the Los Angeles Superior Court announced today that it will shut down nearly all of its operations and furlough employees one Wednesday per month, beginning July 15, 2009.

Implementation of the furlough plan, however, may not be enough to avert employee layoffs and, eventually, closure of entire courthouses if the budget climate does not improve markedly by the beginning of the 2011-2012 fiscal year. The one-day per month Court closure is expected to save \$18 million per year.

The Court faces an estimated budget shortfall of nearly \$90 million for the coming fiscal year—nearly double the amount in the most recent budget crisis that erupted in 2002, which ultimately resulted in closure of 29 courtrooms and layoffs of more than 150 employees.

Under a plan approved last week by the Court's judicial leadership, if the fiscal situation continues to deteriorate, the jobs of a quarter of the Court's 5,400 employees could be eliminated within the next four years. There would be reductions in courthouses and courtrooms in operation throughout the county.

"We face a serious crisis with immediate impacts that can be blunted, but not avoided," said Presiding Judge Charles W. (Tim) McCoy. "We learned from our experiences of 2002 through 2004. Over the intervening years, we have accumulated modest reserves that will enable us to soften the pain of these cuts for at least the first year of the new crisis. Unfortunately, we anticipate this difficult budget environment will remain with us for four years.

"We cannot allow denial, false hope or wishful thinking to cause us to drift through the crisis. We should expect things will grow increasingly difficult before they begin to get better. We must, and will, remain masters of our own destiny to the extent possible."

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"The public must realize that the state's fiscal situation means we cannot actually solve the budget crisis we face" said John A. Clarke, the Court's executive officer/clerk. "The best we can do is to minimize the pain these cuts will inflict. No one—most of all the Court—is happy about this."

McCoy noted that today's announcement of the effective closure of the entire court one day a month comes on an Election Day on which voters are deciding the fates of six budget-related ballot propositions.

"Even if all of these measures pass, there would be no discernable, immediate improvement in the Court budget situation," McCoy said. "We know that reducing and eliminating court services will cause all of our stakeholders—from customers with traffic tickets to lawyers with court dates—great inconvenience. Our objective is to give these constituencies as much time as possible to prepare for the furlough program when it begins on July 15. We know that every day of advance warning of these closures is important to our customers."

State court leaders are also considering one-day-per-month furloughs and other steps to respond to the financial crisis. McCoy noted that the Los Angeles Superior Court plan is being implemented even though the Judicial Council of California has not yet announced any statewide court closure or furlough plan. "We are the largest and most complex court system in the United States," McCoy said. "You cannot suddenly bring a system like ours to a halt. This must be orderly and planned and that takes time."

Details of the Los Angeles Superior Court closure/furlough program include these:

- The court system will close on the third Wednesday of each month, affecting about 600 courtrooms and bench officers and more than 5,000 employees who work in 50 separate courthouse facilities.

- While most courthouses will be closed, some courthouses will necessarily continue to be open, with full security protection to serve the needs of county agencies like the District Attorney, Public Defender, Alternate Public Defender, Probation Department, City Attorney and Child Support Services Department, whose operations are located inside courthouses and are unaffected by the furlough. A few courthouses also house offices of the Los Angeles County Registrar/Recorder, which will also be unaffected. These non-court operations see thousands of customers per day and employ hundreds of people.

- Clerk's offices, juror services and nearly all courtrooms will be shut down. Drop boxes will be in place to serve customers wishing to file court papers.

- Judges will work, beginning today, on adjusting their calendars to postpone or move all scheduled court dates on affected Wednesdays for the entire fiscal year.

- A few designated courtrooms will also be available to handle emergency matters.

- The limited number of employees required to work on closure days will be furloughed on other days.

- Supplementing these steps, the Court has imposed a so-called system-wide "hard"—or mandatory—hiring freeze.

- The Court will make \$16 million in other ongoing expenditure reductions, largely by cutting services and supplies, restricting travel and other means.

Today's announcement responds to a fiscal analysis that projects Court deficits in Los Angeles to total \$89.9 million in FY 2009-10, rising to \$118.3 million in FY 2012-13. These shortfalls amount to about 10 percent of the Court's operating budget of more than \$900 million per year.

Because nearly half of the Court's funding is for specific statutory purposes, discretion in how and where to make cuts is very limited. Nearly 86 percent of the Court budget is for personnel. If the current situation remains unchanged, by the end of FY 2012-13, as many as 1,300 jobs—or 25

percent of the workforce—could be eliminated. Should that occur, entire courthouses would have to be closed and Court services massively scaled back.

McCoy emphasized, however, that no specific decisions about facility closures have been made—either in terms of timing or when such shutdowns might occur. Such drastic steps are unlikely to become necessary in FY 2009-10, but could have to be addressed as soon as sometime in late FY 2010-11 or early in the following fiscal year.

Although the Court anticipates beginning the 2009-2010 fiscal year with as much as \$90 million in reserves, the overall fiscal plan must spread use of this money over an expected four-year crisis period. Depleting the surplus quickly might avert some immediate effects of the crisis, but future years would see even more dire cuts. The bulk of the reserve balance will, however, be utilized in the first two years in an effort to limit adverse impacts on the court system beyond those presently contemplated and, at the end of two years, leaving the court with a small annual balance and a far more adverse situation likely ahead.

Additional details of the closure plan will be posted on Court's Web site, www.lasuperiorcourt.org. This information will be updated continuously. Customers should continue to check the Web site regularly for new postings.

Why Should You Be Certified?

By Vicki Voisin, ACP

The issue of certification has long been debated. Here a few questions I'm frequently asked:

- I graduated from a paralegal program, why should I sit for a certification exam?
- I have a paralegal certificate from a university, doesn't that make me 'certified'?
- I have a good job and several years of experience, how will being certified make a difference?
- What will those letters after my name really do for me?

I wholeheartedly support the certification process for paralegals and believe that it is an important professional goal. **Please consider the following points:**

Having a certificate does not mean you are certified. A *certificate* is issued upon completion of an educational program, at which time you are *certificated*. *Certification* involves passing an examination established by a sponsoring organization that usually has specific requirements of education and experience for persons taking the exam. Upon completion of the examination, you are *certified*.

The American Bar Association defines certification as 'a process by which a non-governmental agency or association grants recognition to an individual who has met certain

predetermined qualifications specified by that agency or association.'

I am certainly not minimizing the importance of completing a paralegal program and obtaining your certificate or your degree. In fact, I view paralegal education as essential. I am merely pointing out that there is an additional step you can take that will increase your professional profile. That step is *certification*.

Credential = credibility. Certification is a voluntary process and is not a prerequisite for paralegal employment. However, certification gives you credibility. It demonstrates that you have the knowledge base and the skill required to pass the examination. It may also make you more marketable and may increase your income potential.

Certification takes you off the level playing field. Graduation from a paralegal program (and, thus, being *certificated*) is the primary avenue by which people enter the paralegal profession. If everyone has a certificate, how is a potential employer to judge the best candidate for the job?

Think about it, two paralegals standing side by side with the same certificate from the same school and the same amount of experience. How can one be distinguished from the other? The

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Why Should You Be Certified?

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answer is certification. The certified paralegal demonstrates that he or she is a multi-skilled professional with diverse knowledge and effective communication skills

Certification gives paralegals an avenue for self-regulation. The issue of licensure for paralegals is old news...it's been discussed to the nth degree for more than a quarter century. Paralegals work under the supervision of a licensed attorney and do not provide their services directly to the public. For this reason, they do not need to be licensed.

Also, licensure says a person is 'qualified' to do work. It does not demonstrate advanced knowledge and skills. An example is a hair dresser (and I have the highest regard for my hair dresser, believe me!). Hair dressers are allowed to enter the profession when they are licensed by a state agency. The license does not say they have fantastic skills, it only says that they can perform the services. The certification credential is awarded to people who prove their advanced knowledge and skills by meeting the standards of the credentialing organization.

Certification will do much for you personally. Ask anyone who has a credential and they will tell you that the achievement made them walk a little taller, made them feel stronger

professionally, gave them incredible personal satisfaction and increased their level of professional confidence. They set a goal and they achieved it. They took a risk and they survived it. They have the credibility that the credential provides. They literally stand out above the crowd. Their accomplishment gave them great pride. You, too, can have all that with professional certification.

One more benefit you will reap from the certification exam is the learning that takes place in the preparation for the examination. Even the most experienced paralegal will learn something new and benefit from the intense review.

Also, you will usually be required to participate in continuing education programs to maintain your certification. This requirement will help you keep up to date with changes in the profession and in the legal arena.

Further, the credentialing organization will usually set high ethical standards for those using the credential. Unethical behavior will result in the loss of the credential.

Certification may give you a 'leg up' when you're searching for a job. In today's economy, you need all the ammunition you can muster to prove that you are the person for the job. Having the certification credential behind you exhibits not only the

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Why Should You Be Certified?

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advanced knowledge I mentioned earlier, it also shows discipline, ambition, motivation and willingness to accept a challenge.

Which certification examination/ credential is right for you? That's a personal decision. Many paralegal associations provide certification examinations (ie [NALA](#), [NFPA](#), [NALS](#), and [AAPI](#)). There are also voluntary certification programs offered by some states...examples are North Carolina and Florida, but there are others. All have different structure and eligibility requirements, as well as different continuing education and re-certification requirements.

What is important is that the credentialing organization you choose is a bona fide entity, that the exam is administered under rules and regulations in accordance with governmental acts and in accordance with such issues as anti-trust and fairness.

It is essential that the organization agrees to keep applications and records confidential. It is crucial that the organization prepares an examination under the guidance of professional testing consultants, that the exam be continually reviewed for accuracy, and that it be updated on a regular basis.

Usually the certification designation is a

certification mark duly registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Claims of certified status must be verifiable...in other words, if a paralegal claims to be certified, he or she must have the credential to prove it.

Can you ethically use the credential after your name? Yes! Whether it is CLA, CP, PP, RP, AACCP, ACP, PLS, AVA, ALS, NCCP etc. you can use it. The U.S. Supreme Court has addressed the issue concerning the utilization of credentials awarded by private organizations. In *Peal v Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Committee of Illinois*, 110 S.Ct. 2281 (1990), the Court suggested that a claim of certification is truthful and not misleading if:

- The claim itself is true
- The bases on which certification was awarded are factual and verifiable
- The certification in question is available to all professionals in the field who meet relevant, objective and consistently applied standards
- The certification claim does not suggest any greater degree of professional qualification than reasonably may be inferred from an evaluation of the certification program's requirements.
- There is a qualified organization behind the certification process
- Of course, the credential cannot be used to mislead the public and represent something you are not.

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Why Should You Be Certified?

By Vicki Voisin, ACP

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How do you prepare for a certification examination? The thought of all that study may sound overwhelming. The idea of taking such a critical examination may be frightening. The key to success is in the preparation and planning. The best thing to do is to break the process into steps:

- Decide which examination you will take.
- Decide when you will take the examination
- Working backward from the examination date, block a period of time for study and determine a study schedule (I recommend three months but that is an individual decision)
- Plan how you will study and what reference materials you will need (these may be available from the credentialing organization)
- Join a study group and enlist 'study buddies' to hold you accountable
- Take advantage of preparation and educational opportunities offered by the credentialing organization, as well as your professional association. For instance, NALA offers a three-day intense CLA review course, as well as CLA preparation courses at its convention.

Your challenge: If you already have a professional credential, congratulations! If you don't, please put that at the top of your list. Follow the steps above and begin planning for the examination. You will never regret the time and effort it takes. You will always feel immense professional pride when you put those initials after your name!

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Vicki Voisin, "The Paralegal Mentor", delivers simple strategies for paralegals and other professionals to create success and satisfaction by achieving 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 publishes a bi-weekly ezine titled ***Strategies for Paralegals Seeking Excellence***. More information is available at www.paralegalmentor.com



GOVERNOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

June 27, 2009

California Alliance of Paralegal Associations

Greetings to everyone gathered to celebrate California Paralegal Day at your twenty-first annual Educational Conference.

I commend paralegals for your dedication to your profession in our Golden State. Through your efforts, you provide valuable support to attorneys and strengthen the legal field. Your expertise has had a positive impact on many across our state, and you have a crucial role in our justice system. Thank you for your outstanding work on behalf of your fellow Californians.

Please accept my best wishes for a fantastic event and every continued success.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Arnold Schwarzenegger in black ink.

Arnold Schwarzenegger

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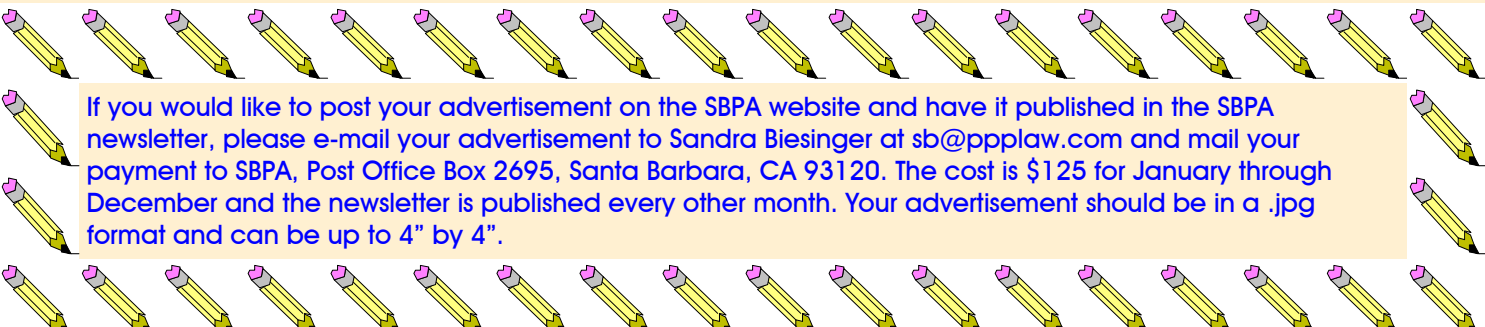
All luncheon membership meetings are held at Santa Barbara Bank & Trust, located at 1021 Anacapa Street, Santa Barbara. The cost of the catered buffet luncheon is \$18 for members and \$20 for non-members.

Please note that the cost of the luncheon is for the CLE credit and the food is gratuitous. If you would like to attend the meeting, please RSVP to Tommie (tjosephson@hardincoffin.com). Every person in attendance must pay the member or non-member fee, whether you wish to eat or not. When you make your reservation, please indicate if you would like to eat lunch.

2009 Upcoming NALA CLA/CP Testing Dates

Examination Date	Application Deadline	Late Application Filing Deadline
July 24-25, 2009	May 15, 2009	May 30, 2009
December 4-5, 2009	October 1, 2009	October 16, 2009

If you would like to post your advertisement on the SBPA website and have it published in the SBPA newsletter, please e-mail your advertisement to Sandra Biesinger at sb@ppplaw.com and mail your payment to SBPA, Post Office Box 2695, Santa Barbara, CA 93120. The cost is \$125 for January through December and the newsletter is published every other month. Your advertisement should be in a .jpg format and can be up to 4" by 4".



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 - Mary L. Theroux, ACP
- Social Networking: Not Just for Kids
 - Vicki Voisin, ACP

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Why Tweet?

By Vicki Voisin, ACP

Do you wonder why anyone would bother with social networking sites, such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn? Do you think social networking is a waste of time? Do you think that time spent on social networks has no value?

Perhaps it's the word 'social' that bothers you? 'Social' conjures up thoughts of fun and parties...of spending time on nonsense when there are too many other things to do. Social networking sites can be a lot of fun but what is incredibly valuable to all of the social networking platforms is the **social learning** that takes place.

While I participate in FaceBook and LinkedIn, Twitter is hands down my favorite. Here are a few tips that will help you understand Twitter and get on the road to social learning:

What is Twitter? Twitter is a social networking service that allows users to send messages (called 'tweets') that are 140 characters in length to their friends (called 'followers'). This 140 word format is unique to Twitter and allows for quick, informal sharing of information with people you wouldn't normally include in emails or instant messages. This expands your circle of contacts to a community of like-minded people. That community is growing by leaps and bounds...Twitter has well over 5 million users.

What does Twitter offer? Twitter can be used for both business and personal purposes. It's is a great way to keep in touch with your friends and broadcast information about what you're doing. You can always share that you're eating a PB&J at your desk (I do enjoy those posts) but I think the BEST use of twitter is for business purposes. Companies will broadcast their latest news and blogposts. Individuals will post links to their blogposts or ask for help. For instance: @CathieCummings sent this message: I just christened my new laptop by getting peanut butter on the keyboard. Any suggestions on cleaning it?

Here's another post from an attorney: Today, I found out that a paralegal had redacted ORIGINAL documents with a sharpie. (OOPS!).

There are posts and links about employment opportunities: @alisondoyle posted Who's hiring <http://bit.ly/tXeaO>.

Tips for Twitter set-up. The first step is to go to www.Twitter.com and create your Twitter account. I have four important recommendations for this process:

1) Select your username (you can have up to 15 alphanumeric characters in your user name). Sign up using your given name with no spaces or underlines, as in VickiVoisin. Unless you have a brand that will identify you (such

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Why Tweet?

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as @ExpertParalegal or @legaltypist), you must use your name or no one will be able to find you. How many people would know to look for me as @vvacp94? (Please note that @ is before every name on Twitter) Twitter will automatically check to see if the user name you've chosen is available.

2) Be sure to load a picture, too. If you don't, your avatar will be something that looks like a brown paper bag with eyes.

3) Give careful thought to your profile. Mind your manners and post a profile that will attract followers.

4) You may also set up your Twitter account so your Tweets automatically link to Facebook...this will save you lots of time.

How to post Tweets. Because your tweets are limited to 140 characters (that includes spaces and punctuation) you have to be brief and concise. There are all sorts of shortcuts you can take to get more bang for your tweet...but that could be an entire article in itself. For now, we'll stick with the basics. (Except for one tip: you can shorten any links you are using by going to www.snipurl.com or www.tinyurl.com where `http://www.paralegalmentor.com/ethical-technical-05-14-09.html` would become <http://snipurl.com/han90>)

Your first tweet or two will feel strange but you'll quickly get the hang of it. Just type in 'Am a paralegal new to Twitter and wondering why I'm here.' Hit send and there goes your tweet...the response will surprise you. Once you get the hang of it, tweet about an article, an idea, or share a link of professional interest to your targeted followers. Many tweets will offer tips or links to articles or blog posts. Watch these carefully as this is where the social learning comes into play. For instance:

@alisondoyle posts several employment-related links every day. Some tweets will ask questions and this is your opportunity to demonstrate your expertise and share information in quick bursts of wisdom.

Looking for a job? Tell your Twitter friends! A story was posted about an account manager who was laid off from her job. Within minutes of the layoff, she pulled out her cell phone and sent a tweet that said 'Needs a job.' She did this even before she told her family. Before social media, victims of layoffs would share this news with just a few close friends and their family. Thanks to social media, the newly unemployed are coming out of the dark. This can be a great way to jump-start a job search. There will be support...either emotional support or suggestions for a new job. I might add here that there are lots of job postings on Twitter...I won't vouch for them but they're there.

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Why Tweet?

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What about followers? You can search for people to follow in the Find People link at the top of the Twitter page. Type in a name and then select 'follow.' The person may or may not follow you. This is a terrific option with Twitter because if someone chooses to follow you, you do not have to reciprocate. I frequently ignore anyone whose profile is questionable or who isn't writing about anything I'm interested in reading.

You can follow topics, too. There is a search box in the right sidebar on the Twitter page. Type in 'paralegal' and all posts about paralegals will pop up. Type in 'job search' and you'll see all those tweets. From those tweets, you can select people to follow.

Here are a few suggestions for you to follow:

@VickiVoisin (of course!)

@legaltypist (virtual assistant) (who also has a great f'ree ebook Twitter 101 at <http://www.legaltypist.com/twitter>)

@DebbieLynnAVA (virtual assistant)

@ExpertParalegal (Lynne Devenny...great information and humorous posts)

@alisondoyle (terrific employment information)

@sallyannekane (with Legal Assistant Today)

@kevinhouchin (an attorney)

@breakthruguy and @mike_wesely (motivational quotes)

@NALStweet (yes, NALS is tweeting)

@lillyhill (paralegal who posts links of interest to the profession)

@Goddess_Bless (Lisa Devlin)

@MargaretAgius @CathyRibble, @CathyCummings (all Strategies subscribers...I love their posts)

@charlsye (Charlsye Smith-Diaz)

@rsylvester (a reporter who tweets from the courtroom)

@Paragate (Paralegal Gateway)

@Oprah Winfrey (do I have to tell you who that is?)

@aplusk (you get a gold star if you can figure that out ... it's Ashton Kutcher)

What does the # sign mean? The # you see before some topics is called a hashtag. Hashtags are channels that allow you to tune in to whatever signal will make Twitter useful at a given time. If you like the Food Network, you will follow #foodie or #cooking or #recipe. If you're a sports fan from San Diego, you can follow #padres. You will see all the tweets about that topic. The topics are endless.

Take a simple giant step. Now that you're all set up to tweet, you just HAVE to download Tweetdeck...until I did this, Twitter was difficult to use because tweets stream in real time. There was no way I could just sit at my desk and watch the tweets go by. Tweetdeck (a f'ree download at www.tweetdeck.com) allows you to set up ten columns and then customize those columns to fit your interests. I have a column for 'paralegal' and

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Why Tweet?

By Vicki Voisin, ACP

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another for 'probate' and another for 'law firm'...these change frequently. You can also organize your followers into groups.

My usual warning. Everything you post can be located with a simple Google search so remember that people may read every tweet you send. An inappropriate tweet (or post on any networking site for that matter) could hurt your career, cost you the job you have or take you out of the running for a new job. Don't say anything about anyone (especially your boss) that you would not say to them if they were standing in front of you.

Your Challenge. If you haven't already, it's time to see what the social media rage is all about. The key to your success is to use social media as a learning tool. Create your Twitter account...be sure to use your name correctly, upload a picture, write a positive profile...then ask yourself what you want to learn from Twitter and search for that information. This will get you off to a great start. Let me know if you have questions!

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If you are interested in serving on the board, please contact Deborah Reber. If you have comments, questions, or articles to submit for the newsletter, please email them to Sandra Biesinger. Thank you.



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