

PERSPECTIVE

Volume 37, Issue 1

Summer/Fall 2019

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Sarah M. Robinson

I bid farewell to the 2018-2019 Term of our Association and say "Hello there!" to the 2019-2020 Term.

I am excited to announce that three new members have joined the **PANJ** Board this year as Trustees at Large-**Melissa Acosta**, **Melissa Cannella**, and **Jessica Resnick**. Melissa Acosta is an independent paralegal who founded Melissa Acosta Freelance Paralegal Services, LLC. Melissa Cannella has been a paralegal for a little over two years following her graduation from Fairleigh Dickinson's paralegal program. Jessica Resnick is also a Fairleigh Dickinson alum who has worked in the real estate field for nearly 5 years and has graciously offered her assistance to the Newsletter Committee. **Welcome ladies to the Executive Board!**

If you haven't already heard, there are two new benefits of membership in the Association. **Anchor Rubber Stamp** is now offering free standard shipping on website orders of \$25 or more for **Notary supplies** for all **PANJ** Members and the **New Jersey Law Journal** is now offering all **PANJ** members discounted subscriptions. All **PANJ** Members can visit the Forum to access the link for discounted subscriptions. If you haven't registered for the Forum, visit the Home Page on www.NJPara.org for instructions.

The Association sponsored two seminars presented by the New Jersey State Bar Association-2019 LGBTQ Rights Annual Update at the Law Center in New Brunswick on March 16 and Child Custody on March 23 at the Crowne Plaza in Fairfield. Though **PANJ's** Executive Board goes on vacation during July and August, two Executive Board members, Kerry Mackey, CP and Joanne Haffeman, are attending the NALA Annual Conference and Expo in Arizona on July 11, 2019.

They will have the opportunity to network with other paralegal associations from all over the United States, market **PANJ** at the



Affiliate Showcase Event and discuss issues affecting the paralegal profession nationwide.

During this term, the Executive Board nominated Kandi Monceli, ACP, for NALA's Affiliate Award and Affiliated Associations Outstanding Contribution Award. For those who did not personally know Ms. Monceli, she held numerous offices on the [PANJ](#) Executive Board, served as co-chair on the Paralegal Committee for the New Jersey State Bar Association and sat on the Supreme Court Committee on Paralegal Education and Regulation, which developed and proposed a licensing scheme for paralegals in New Jersey. She was later appointed to an Ad Hoc Committee on Paralegal Regulation to fulfill the charges issued by the New Jersey Supreme Court regarding paralegals in its final determination on licensure. Kandi was also instrumental in coordinating the Annual New Jersey Paralegal Convention for over 20 years before her retirement in 2017. Her dedication to the paralegal profession in New Jersey will be commended at NALA's Conference on July 11. For more information about NALA, see "NALA News" in this edition by Christine Principe, CP, [PANJ's](#) NALA Liaison, along with PANJ's Annual Report and Addendum to NALA in June, 2019.

Included in this edition of *Perspective* are Messages from the incoming Co-Chairs of the Special Paralegal Committee of the New Jersey State Bar Association, Laurie Robinson and Yolanda Berry. If you wish to join NJSBA's Special Paralegal Committee, feel free to reach out to Laurie and Yolanda directly for the upcoming meeting schedule. The Special Paralegal Committee meetings take place at the Law Center in New Brunswick.

If you were unable to attend the Saturday Seminar at Union County College in March and/or the March, May or June dinner meetings, articles are included by guest writers Linda Armenti, Lisa London, John Williams and Jaclyn McConville

Dorota Ferraro was nominated for [PANJ's](#) Member Spotlight! "Meet" her in this edition and say hello to her in person at the next dinner meeting!

[PANJ](#) is looking for authors! "*The Unconventional Paralegal Thinking Out of the Box*", is a column dedicated to helpful tips, tricks and skills not frequently mentioned in continuing legal education courses but still necessary and practical in every day paralegal work. Vincent Ascolese, a seasoned paralegal and board member of the [Annual New Jersey Paralegal Convention](#), has submitted his thoughts for the last few newsletters. Fellow Paralegals, I invite you to frequently submit constructive content for the column that would benefit our colleagues. Content and/or questions can be directed to Info@NJPara.org.

[PANJ](#) is looking for new dinner meeting locations in [Bergen County](#). The location must offer a private room available on September 10 2019 or November 13, 2019 from 5:30 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. that can comfortably fit up to 30 people and is suitable for either a dinner buffet or plated three course meal including beverages. As a non-profit, [PANJ](#) makes every effort to secure professional locations that can accommodate the Association's limited budget in order to keep dinner meeting costs affordable for all attendees. Please email Info@NJPara.org with potential locations that may fit the Association's budget. If your firm is willing to participate and is equipped to host an upcoming dinner meeting, please contact Info@NJPara.org.

Finally, a little necessary housecleaning. As a member of PANJ, if you have not already executed a Photograph Release, it is included in this edition. Please execute same and return via regular mail or email to Membership@NJPara.org.

Enjoy your summer and see you again in September!

If you wish to contribute to upcoming editions of Perspective, please submit your pieces for review to Info@NJPara.org.

If you know a vendor who may be interested in advertising their product/service in the Perspective or at an upcoming dinner meeting, have the vendor contact Info@NJPara.org.

Are you seeking employment?

Make sure you check out the **Job Bank**. New positions are being added regularly.

Don't miss out on a potential great opportunity!



Registration is OPEN!!

Visit:

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Is private certification at risk?

Bills have been introduced in numerous states that would impact certification and licensure. For example, had it not been amended, a bill proposed in Louisiana would have prohibited the use of the term “certified” by an association’s members who pass its certifying exam or go through its process for certification unless state law otherwise permits certification. According to the Professional Certification Coalition, 60 bills have been introduced nationwide affecting private certification. Such bills could gravely impact NALA’s certifying exams. PCC says it will monitor the bills regarding government certification versus private certification.

NALA is now a member of the Professional Certification Coalition and The Institute of Credentialing Excellence. According to PCC’s website, “[t]he Professional Certification Coalition (PCC) advocates for legislation that avoids restrictions on voluntary professional certification programs, that ensures fair evidentiary burdens for review of occupational licensing regimes that incorporate certification, and that balances important economic considerations with equally important considerations related to protection of public health, safety and welfare.”

NALA Elections

In 2017, NALA members voted for electronic voting. It’s being implemented this year for electing the Board and approving changes to the By-Laws. NALA members received an e-mail and a Voting Guide by mail providing details of the new voting procedures. Voting is currently open to July 10 at 5 p.m. C.T. Results will be announced at the July 11 Annual Meeting.

As a NALA Affiliate, the PANJ Board has an interest in NALA’s Board and the PANJ Board trusts PANJ’s members, NALA members and NALA non-members, have an interest as well. Below are links to the candidates for Affiliated Association Director and Secretary and for the Board. I hope you’ll take a few moments to review this information and let me know if you have any comments concerning the potential candidates. You can send your comments to me before July 10 at NALALiaison@NJPara.org.

<https://www.nala.org/articles/2019-board-candidate-elections>

Candidates: 2019 NALA Affiliated Association Director and 2019 NALA Affiliated Association Secretary

Ready to earn some quick and easy CLE hours! Effective January 1, 2019, Certified Paralegals can earn three CLE hours for writing an article of 1,000 words or more for *Findings and Fact*. If the article is co-authored, CLE hours will be credited on a pro-rated basis.

Also, beginning with the September/October 2018 *Findings and Fact* issue, NALA members can earn one hour of CLE credit for reading five designated articles in one issue and successfully completing a follow up test. The CLE credit must be submitted within one year of publication. Up to two hours of CLE credit will be available each year. A maximum of five hours of CLE will be available per five-year certification period. The Jan/Feb 2019 digital issue of *Findings and Fact* is available now. How easy is this?!

NALA Conference

NALA's annual Conference and Expo is taking place on July 11-13 at the Westin Kierland, Phoenix, Arizona. It's such a great event; if you're able to attend, I'd urge you to go. You won't be disappointed. Thirteen hours of CLE hours are available from over 30 sessions. There's something for everyone.

It bears repeating - occasionally review NALA's website to see what discounts are available to members. Also, check out their complimentary webinars available to NALA active members and few other webinars available to us as an affiliated association.

Membership

NALA's membership dues are slightly increasing for 2019. The new rates are \$140 active members; \$115 associate members and \$115 sustaining members.

CP Exam and CP Stats

February and April are upcoming CP Skills Exam testing windows.

In addition to their books available in 11 areas of the law, NALA has recently released its official Certified Paralegal Exam Fundamentals book. As a reminder, NALA also hosts a closed group on Facebook for those studying for the CP exam. Check out their website for details.

NALA's latest CP numbers are as follows:

219	CPs in NJ
33,159	Total number of Certified Paralegal candidates examined
19,595	Total number of candidates certified through December 7, 2018
8,575	Total number of active Certified Paralegals through October 24, 2018

Christine A. Principe, CP is PANJ's NALA Liaison. Questions in connection with local NALA certification exam study groups should be directed to Christine at NALALiaison@NJPara.org





Paralegal Association of New Jersey
P.O. Box 142 • Caldwell, NJ 07006
NJPara.org
Info@NJPara.org

ANNUAL REPORT TO NALA

JUNE 2019

BACKGROUND

In 1982, The Legal Assistants Association of New Jersey, Inc. (the “Association”) was formed to promote the paralegal profession and provide continuing legal education to the paralegals in New Jersey. As the term “legal assistant” evolved to include legal support staff not necessarily performing the duties of a paralegal, the members of The Legal Assistants Association of New Jersey, Inc. voted to change the name of the Association. On May 15, 2007, the Association became known as “Paralegal Association of New Jersey, Inc.” (“PANJ”).

BOARD

PANJ’s term begins each September and elections are held in May. Most of the nominees have accepted their positions. As of today, the following persons have accepted their positions and will be sworn in at the June 11, 2019 installation dinner:

♦President	Sarah Robison
♦Vice President	Nazmia Abadrabo
♦Recording Secretary	Jennifer Ciaburri
♦Corresponding Secretary	Michelle Mando
♦Treasurer	Carol Snyder
♦NALA Liaison	Christine Principe, CP
♦Trustees at Large	Nyree Benitez
	Allison Long
	Ivette Torres
	Jennifer Smith
	Jessica Resnick
	Melissa Acosta
	Kerry Mackey, CP
	Joanne Haffeman

Several PANJ members are associate members of the New Jersey State Bar Association and serve on the Special Committee on Paralegals.



MEMBERSHIP

PANJ's membership currently stands at 173 active members as follows:

Membership Class	Number of Members	Annual Dues
Regular	110	\$50
Associate	17	\$30
Student	29	\$30
Sustaining	11	\$75
Lifetime	5	\$0
Honorary	1	\$0
TOTAL	173	

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

PANJ strives to add membership benefits for its members to take advantage of. The most recently added benefits are a discounted subscription fee to the *New Jersey Law Journal* and free standard shipping on orders of \$25 or more on notary supplies from Anchor Rubber Stamp. Additionally, InvisiScope Solutions offers PANJ members discounted career coaching packages including resume writing and interview tips.

PANJ continues to team with the Paralegal Education Group (PEG) to provide active PANJ members with discounted access to PEG memberships for individual on-demand CLE courses, including courses relative to NALA's certifying exam.

The Association publishes a quarterly newsletter, *Perspective*, to provide the membership with useful up-to-date information. The Board has undertaken efforts to expand the coverage contained in the newsletter, which now includes a feature article, summaries of dinner meetings, a member spotlight and a column entitled The Unconventional Thinking Paralegal ~ Thinking Outside the Box which offers helpful tips, tricks and tools to make a paralegal's job easier.

The Association maintains a Job Bank which is accessible only to Association's members. It currently has around 5 new job postings.

In addition to discounted pricing for dinner meetings, members can purchase a Season Pass to take advantage of additional savings for dinner meetings.

Lastly, PANJ has a bi-annual Sweepstakes for its regular, associate and student members for the reimbursement of NALA's exam fee. The next drawing will take place at the September 2020 dinner meeting.

DINNER MEETINGS AND SEMINARS

PANJ hosts dinner meetings during most months of its term. The dinner meetings include a networking opportunity for a half hour before the start of the actual meeting. The following seminars were presented during its 2018-2019 term:

- September 2018 Professional Certification and the NALA Certified Paralegal Exam
- November 2018 An Odds and Ends Real Estate Review: Deeds and Their Purposes; Bulk Sale; FIRPTA and the Mansion Tax
- January 2019 Trademarks, Patents and Paralegals
- March Minimizing Risk by Drafting a Concise Contract
- April 2019 Expungements – What You Don’t Know
- May 2019 The Government’s Use of Data Analytics, Its Impact on Litigation and Changing the Role of Paralegals.

At the June 11, 2019 installation dinner meeting, the topic will be education law.

In addition to the dinner meetings, PANJ presented a Saturday Seminar at Union County College geared towards paralegal students. The topics covered were:

- Ethical Process Service and Investigation in the Digital Age
- Resume Writing, Interview Tips and the Benefit of a Career Coach
- Applying Your Paralegal Skills to “Real” Life and Alternate Careers

NJ PARALEGAL CONVENTION

PANJ participates yearly in the New Jersey Paralegal Convention. Many of PANJ’s Board members are instrumental in planning the Convention and sit on the Convention Board. The 2018 Convention was held on October 26, 2018. The Convention provides a full day of educational opportunities. Topics included:

- Parental Alienation:
- Discovery
- LGBTQ: Gender Identity and The Law
- Client Interview & Discovery
- Insurance Coverage & Settlement Packages UIM/Pip
- Aspects of Trial
- Employment – Employment Introduction & Harassment in The Workplace
- Wills, Trust and Estates
- E-Filing in NJ State Court
- Day in The Life of a Paralegal
- Job Interview and Resume Writing
- Ethics & Professional Responsibility for Paralegals

A vendor hall was open during the Convention for the attendees to check out a variety of products and services to make their job easier. Vendors included title companies, litigation support companies, copy services, process servers, investigators, court reporters, financial services, corporate document filing and retrieving services and legal publishers.

As years past, the Governor of New Jersey declared the day of the Convention “Paralegal Day”.

PANJ is currently working with the NJ Paralegal Convention to plan the 2019 Convention scheduled for October 25, 2019,

MARKETING

In addition to maintaining a booth at the NJ Paralegal Convention, the Association also sponsored tables at the NJ State Bar's Family Law Symposium and its Child Custody Seminar. Brochures and applications were distributed to attorneys attending the seminars to introduce or reintroduce them to PANJ and to recruit paralegals they may employ.

Board members also participated in a panel discussion at Mercer County Community College and the 6th Annual End of Year CLE Symposium presented by NJ Legal Training Academy.

PANJ's board members visited the paralegal program at Montclair State University to share with the paralegal students what it's like to actually work as a paralegal and to introduce them to PANJ and NALA, explaining the benefits of joining a local and national association.

PANJ's Social Media Committer has worked diligently to increase its presence on Facebook and LinkedIn. PANJ has 690 followers on Facebook and 69 on LinkedIn.

MISCELLANEOUS

PANJ recently amended its by-laws to include an honorary membership classification to bestow upon those who have contributed meritorious service in the furtherance of the paralegal profession and goals of the Association.

PANJ bestowed an honorary membership upon Kandi Moncelsi, ACP, a former PANJ President and board member, and nominated her for NALA's 2019 Affiliates Award to recognize her for her significant involvement in and contribution to PANJ for almost 30 years. Ms. Moncelsi was also Co-Chair of Garden State Alliance and President of its successor of the NJ Paralegal Convention for 6 years.

PANJ is excited to be sending two board members, JoAnne Hoffman and Kerry Mackey to NALA's 2019 Convention and Expo. JoAnne and Kerry will also be participating in the Affiliates Showcase.

PANJ is so thrilled that NALA is coming to New Jersey in 2020 and is looking forward to supporting Board members' attendance and promoting the Convention and Expo to New Jersey's paralegals.

Respectfully submitted

Paralegal Association of New Jersey, Inc.

By: *Christine Principe*

DATED: May 31, 2019

CHRISTINE PRINCIPE, CP
NALA Liaison



Paralegal Association of New Jersey
P.O. Box 142 • Caldwell, NJ 07006
NJPara.org
Info@NJPara.org

ADDENDUM TO
ANNUAL REPORT TO NALA
JUNE 2019

BOARD

PANJ's term begins each September and elections are held in May. Since the submission of PANJ's May 31, 2019 Annual Report to NALA, there has been a slight change in the election results. Below is the final outcome of the election. The following persons have accepted their positions and will be sworn in at the June 11, 2019 installation dinner:

♦President	Sarah Robison
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♦Recording Secretary	Jennifer Ciaburri
♦Corresponding Secretary	Michelle Mando
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	Ivette Torres
	Jennifer Smith
	Jessica Resnick
	Melissa Acosta
	Kerry Mackey, CP
	Joanne Haffeman

Respectfully submitted

Paralegal Association of New Jersey, Inc.

By: *Christine Principe*

CHRISTINE PRINCIPE, CP
NALA Liaison

DATED: June 10, 2019

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The Paralegal Association of New Jersey
is pleased to announce the election results for the
Executive Board for the 2019-2020 term.

**All Board positions will become
effective June 1, 2019.**

President: [Sarah M. Robinson](#)
Vice President: [Nathmia Abedrabo](#)
Recording Secretary: [Jennifer Ciaburri](#)
Corresponding Secretary: [Michelle Mando](#)
Treasurer: [Carol Snyder](#)
NALA Liaison: [Christine A. Principe, CP](#)

Trustees at Large:
[Melissa Acosta](#)
[Nyree Benitez](#)
[Melissa Cannella](#)
[JoAnne Haffeman](#)
[Kerry Mackey, CP](#)
[Jessica Resnick](#)
[Jennifer Smith, ACP](#)
[Ivette Torres](#)

EXECUTIVE BOARD & COMMITTEE DIRECTORY – 2018-2019 TERM

EXECUTIVE BOARD:

PRESIDENT

Sarah M. Robinson

Info@NJPara.org

VICE PRESIDENT

Nathmia Abedrabo

CORRESPONDING

SECRETARY

Michelle Mando

RECORDING SECRETARY

Jennifer Ciaburri

TREASURER

Carol Snyder

NALA LIAISON

Christine A. Principe, CP

NALALiaison@NJPara.org

TRUSTEES AT LARGE

Melissa Acosta

Nyree Benitez

Melissa Cannella

JoAnne Haffeman

Kerry Mackey, CP

Jessica Resnick

Jennifer Smith, ACP

Ivette Torres

COMMITTEES:

JOB BANK

Michelle Mando

JobBank@NJPara.org

MEMBERSHIP

JoAnne Haffeman

Membership@NJPara.org

SOCIAL MEDIA

Allison Long

Michelle Mando

SocialMedia@NJPara.org

NEWSLETTER

Jennifer Smith, ACP

Jessica Resnick

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Ivette Torres

PROGRAM PLANNING

Kerry Mackey, CP

Lawrence Constance

ELECTION

Lawrence Constance

NJ STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

PARALEGAL COMMITTEE

Yolanda Barry – Co-Chair

Laurie Robinson – Co-Chair

Nyree Benitez

Lisa St. Clair

Nathmia Abedrabo

Sandra C. Csaposs, CP

JoAnne Haffeman

Danielle Knoell, ACP

Sarah M. Robinson

Dorothy Secol, CLA

Carol Snyder

Jennifer Smith, ACP

Ivette Torres

COLLEGE ADVISORY BOARD

MEMBERS

Nyree Benitez:

Mercer County Community College

JoAnne Haffeman:

Essex County Community College;

Middlesex County Community

College; Raritan Valley Community

College; Union County Community

College

Jennifer Smith, ACP:

Berkeley College

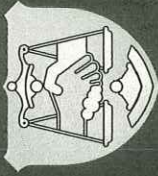
Union County Community College

Ivette Torres:

Berkeley College



For more
information about
the Board go to
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NAME	BASED IN	PROFILE ONLINE AT	PHONE	DATES†	NAME	BASED IN	PROFILE ONLINE AT	PHONE	DATES
Robert E. Bartkus	Florham Park	www.njmediators.org/robert-bartkus	(973) 635-6300	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	John F. Gelson	Little Silver	www.njmediators.org/john-gelson	(732) 919-1044	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hon. Raymond A. Batten	Haddonfield	www.njmediators.org/raymond-batten	(856) 795-2121	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bonnie Blume Goldsamt	Hackensack	www.njmediators.org/bonnie-goldsamt	(201) 487-1622	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Elliot M. Baumgart	Up. Montclair	www.njmediators.org/elliott-baumgart	(973) 744-4000	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sheryl Mintz Goski	Florham Park	www.njmediators.org/sheryl-goski	(973) 520-8520	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Katherine Benesch	Princeton	www.njmediators.org/katherine-benesch	(609) 375-2603	<input type="checkbox"/>	Roger B. Jacobs	Roseland	www.njmediators.org/roger-jacobs	(973) 226-6663	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Steven J. Blumenthal	Williamstown	www.njmediators.org/steven-blumenthal	(856) 581-4134	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Laura A. Kaster	Princeton	www.njmediators.org/laura-kaster	(609) 921-0095	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hon. Peter F. Boggia	Clifton	www.njmediators.org/peter-boggia	(973) 470-0800	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hon. John Keefe	Red Bank	www.njmediators.org/john-keefe	(732) 224-9400	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hon. John M. Boyle	Westfield	www.njmediators.org/john-boyle	(908) 233-6800	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hon. Virginia Long	Lawrenceville	www.njmediators.org/virginia-long	(609) 895-3335	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jennifer L. Brandt	Springfield	www.njmediators.org/jennifer-brandt	(973) 912-9292	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Robert E. Margulies	Jersey City	www.njmediators.org/robert-margulies	(201) 333-0400	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hon. Thomas Cavanagh, Jr.	Tinton Falls	www.njmediators.org/thomas-cavanagh	(732) 733-6200	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Suzanne M. McSorley	Lawrenceville	www.njmediators.org/suzanne-mcsoley	(609) 987-6663	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Theo Cheng	Princeton Jct.	www.njmediators.org/theo-cheng	(917) 459-3669	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Peter L. Michaelson	Rumson	www.njmediators.org/peter-michaelson	(732) 758-6500	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hon. Benjamin Cohen	Somerset	www.njmediators.org/benjamin-cohen	(908) 333-6208	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lewis Pepperman	Lawrenceville	www.njmediators.org/lewis-pepperman	(609) 895-7260	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hon. Harriet E. Derman	Warren	www.njmediators.org/harriet-derman	(908) 757-7800	<input type="checkbox"/>	F. Peter Phillips	Montclair	www.njmediators.org/peter-phillips	(973) 509-9667	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
N. Janine Dickey	Bridgewater	www.njmediators.org/janine-dickey	(908) 295-7900	<input type="checkbox"/>	Terri Reicher	Wayne	www.njmediators.org/terri-reicher	(973) 865-1069	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hon. Peter E. Doyne	Hackensack	www.njmediators.org/peter-doyne	(201) 489-9110	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hon. Joel B. Rosen	Cherry Hill	www.njmediators.org/joel-rosen	(856) 488-7716	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hon. William A. Dreier	Bridgewater	www.njmediators.org/william-dreier	(908) 252-4372	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hon. Anthony Sciuto	Fort Lee	www.njmediators.org/anthony-sciuto	(201) 585-9111	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neal Eisenman	Roseland	www.njmediators.org/neal-eisenman	(201) 612-4444	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hon. Marguerite Simon	Springfield	www.njmediators.org/marguerite-simon	(973) 379-4200	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hon. Mark B. Epstein	New Brunswick	www.njmediators.org/mark-epstein	(732) 545-4717	<input type="checkbox"/>	Richard H. Steen	Princeton	www.njmediators.org/richard-steen	(609) 895-0071	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Dennis A. Estis	Iselin	www.njmediators.org/dennis-estis	(732) 476-2512	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hon. Barbara Wecker	Newark	www.njmediators.org/barbara-wecker	(973) 643-3700	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hon. Michael Brooke Fisher	Avalon	www.njmediators.org/michael-fisher	(856) 332-7741	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hon. Deanne Wilson	Mendham	www.njmediators.org/deanne-wilson	(908) 879-2013	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

† Indicates if Available Dates calendar is activated

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www.NJMediators.org

* The National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals is an association of attorney mediators and arbitrators who have substantial experience in the resolution of commercial and civil disputes. All members have been recognized for their accomplishments through the Academy's peer nomination system and extensive attorney-client review process. Membership is by invitation-only and is limited to individuals who devote a substantial percentage of their professional efforts to ADR practice.

To access our FREE National database of 900+ ADR attorneys, visit www.NADN.org/directory and select preferred state.

For more information about the NJ Academy, please visit www.NJMediators.org/about

Minimizing Risk by Drafting a Concise Contract

By: Lisa London – Cottrell Solensky, P.A.

Our March meeting, held at Berkeley College was lead by Patricia Greer, Esq who is also Chair of Legal Studies at Berkeley.

Ms. Greer gave us a concise overview of the wide and diverse variety of contracts that are used, each with their own unique purpose and designed to protect both parties in a legal binding agreement.

She explained the basic elements required for contract formation. First, there is the acknowledgement that one party offers to enter into an agreement while another party accepts the terms of the offer. There must be "consideration" which is something of value received or promised, designed to convince a party to agree to the deal. Both parties must be competent to enter into the agreement, which identifies their contractual capacity. The purpose of the contract is to accomplish a goal that is legal and not again public policy. The apparent consent of both parties must be genuine and the agreement must be in whatever form the law requires.

She explained that the effect as to the intent of the parties as expressed in their agreement, identifies the key to contract interpretation. Intent is generally ascertained objectively by consideration of the words used by the parties in the agreement, the actions of the parties pursuant to the agreement and the circumstances surrounding the agreement.

It is also critical to consider the rules of interpretation. There is no place for ambiguity when it comes to contracts. If the language is unclear, it will be up to the court to determine and give effect to the parties' intent. When the language in the body of the contract offers multiple interpretations, any ambiguity will be construed against the drafting party.

It is essential that proper punctuation not be overlooked. Ms. Greer cited a case that was featured in the New York Times in February 2018, whereby a missing "comma" resulted in a \$5 million settlement in Maine. A simple oversight of an absent "comma" or "semi-colon" can completely alter the interpretation of a sentence, leading to questionable intent. These errors can become costly mistakes as evident in the case we reviewed.

Some of the different types of contracts/agreements we reviewed included Promissory Notes, Employment Contracts, Contract for Manufacture of Goods, Security Agreements, various Real Estate Contracts, Confidentiality Agreements, Bill of Sale for Goods, and a Master Use and Videogram License. We discussed some of the specific language that is unique to each of these documents.

Patricia Greer, Esq. worked in private practice before joining Berkeley College as Chair of their Legal Studies Department. Berkeley College is one of the educational institutions that offer the ABA approved Paralegal Certificate Program. You may reach Ms. Greer for more information on the college's Legal Studies programs by phone at 973-278-5400 ext 1410 or by email pbq@berkeleycollege.edu.

Lisa London, a 35 year veteran in the field of advertising, marketing and sales, shifted careers in July 2018, to embark on a new career as a Paralegal for a defense litigation law firm, Cottrell Solensky, P.A., after completing Fairleigh Dickinson University's Paralegal Certificate Program. Lisa attended several meetings of the New Jersey Paralegal Association before making her decision to switch careers, and credits members of the Association for helping her make the decision to choose FDU's Paralegal Certificate program, where she attended night school while working full time. Lisa is a single mom residing in Wayne, NJ with 2 children, Aaron 26 and Sarina 22. She looks forward to getting more involved with the Association and meeting members.

SATURDAY SEMINAR AT UNION COUNTY COLLEGE

By Linda Armenti

On Saturday, March 30, The Paralegal Association of New Jersey ("PANJ"), with the co-sponsorship of the Union County College Paralegal Club, hosted a 3.5 hour seminar for both students and paralegals

at Union County College. Those in attendance enjoyed a light breakfast while mingling and introducing themselves to each other. Sarah Robinson, President of PANJ, worked the room and made everyone feel welcome. The seminar was broken down into three different topics, all of which were very interesting and informative.

The first topic discussed was Digital Process Service. Amanda Sexton from DGR Legal was very well versed explaining how almost everything in today's society, even the process of serving legal documents, can be done via social media. Using a power point presentation, Amanda cited many cases that have used social media, i.e. Facebook, as a last means of service. Amanda explained the importance of how social media is used in lawsuits and how service can be processed internationally if both countries are participants of the Hague Convention. She also recommended how important it is when investigating a case via social media to research and investigate both the plaintiff and defendant, no matter which is your client. Metadata was also discussed as a means of technology used in investigations as well as the use of drones, GPS and how the acceptance of recordings and wiretappings vary between states.

Following Amanda's presentation was Nichole Chobin, a paralegal turned entrepreneur who kept everyone's attention as she narrated her life's story starting as a paralegal. Nichole discussed the importance of monetizing (to convert into the form of revenue) one's abilities and to use your "transferrable skills" to achieve your goals. When becoming a paralegal, the doorways to other paths open up and could be endless if you only pursue them. Nichole explained how she used the learned skills of a paralegal opening up not only one but two different businesses. She emphasized that using your "transferrable skills" is the key to your success if you persevere.

Christopher Morga from InvisiScope Solutions ended the half day seminar. Christopher is a professional career coach and he dissected preparing and writing an effective resume. A resume template was distributed amongst all. Many of the attendees had multiple questions for Christopher as he explained the "dos and don'ts" of building your resume. He did discuss the importance of networking and how LinkedIn is the most viable means of professional social media networking. He incorporated "transferrable skills" into the creation of your resume and the importance of monetizing your skills as well.

Leaving the seminar and chatting with another attendee, who happened to be a student, we both agreed that the 3 speakers were very good and were happy that we attended. We both are looking forward to the next seminar.

Linda Armenti is a paralegal, at Lyons & Associates, P.C., a family law practice located in Somerville, New Jersey. She has been a paralegal for 2.5 years and enjoys every minute of it.

PANJ VISITS MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

By: Samantha Vitone

In the afternoon on Tuesday, April 14, 2019, Jennifer Smith and I spoke to Montclair State University students currently enrolled in the university's Paralegal Program. We discussed the Paralegal Association of New Jersey (PANJ) and handed out materials about the Association. We also informed the students of other state and national paralegal associations such as the New Jersey Bar Association (NJBA) and its Special Paralegal Committee and the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA). We also invited the students to attend the Annual New Jersey Paralegal Convention (NJPC) in October.

The students were intrigued by our knowledgeable facts and helpful answers, especially when describing the duties and responsibilities of paralegals, salary possibilities, the benefits of joining PANJ,

etc. Jen and I made a great team painting a broad picture for the students and the professor of our experience and skills that being a paralegals entails.

Montclair State University's Department of Justice Studies offers an excellent Paralegal Studies Certificate Program for post-baccalaureate students. There are several admission requirements to be accepted into the program that you can find on the University's website www.montclair.edu/graduate/programs-of-study/paralegal-studies-post-baccalaureate-certificate/.

Students have the option to pick what classes that they want to take in the Paralegal program. Once a student has met the program requirements, completed 21 credit hours while maintaining a 2.75 GPA and completed a bachelor's degree, a Paralegal Certificate will be issued.

Following our presentation, the professor e-mailed Jen and I later that night, thanking us for speaking to the class and inviting us to return the next time he moderated the class. That e-mail made my day!

I am enthusiastic sharing with my colleagues and peers about the benefits of taking an active role in our profession, joining PANJ, networking and participating in continuing legal education.

Samantha is a full-time employee at Day Pitney, LLP as a Project Assistant. She works for a supporting and hardworking law firm and very much so enjoys her job position. She is always learning something new at her profession because she assists tactical projects for attorneys who work in different legal fields, human resources, marketing and the legal secretaries. She is also a part-time student in the Paralegal Studies Program at Fairleigh Dickinson University and should receive her Paralegal Certificate in October 2019. She is hoping to be a successful Paralegal once she graduates from school or be in a management position at the firm.

School Law for the "Non" School" Paralegal

By Jaclyn McConville

The Paralegal Association of New Jersey held its monthly dinner meeting on June 11, 2019 at Porzio Bromberg & Newman in Morristown. Our speakers, M.L. Fabian and David Disler of Porzio, a defense firm that represents school districts, helped navigate the audience through the ever-changing sector of education law. Education law encompasses many topics including student discipline, special education, open public records requests, tenure, and student records. While many of these topics within education law may seem straight forward, there are always the possibility of unusual cases.

Mr. Disler began the presentation with an example of a recent unusual case that was so bizarre, it was referenced in many late-night shows around the country and yielded many laughs from the room. Last year, the firm was involved in a case in which a superintendent was caught relieving himself on a football field of a rival high school. The firm represented the school district who employed the superintendent. After a few laughs, the presenters dove into more serious topics.

Ms. Fabian and Mr. Disler explained different types of school districts in New Jersey including local school districts, regional school districts, county vocational school districts, charter schools, private schools and private schools for students with disabilities; to name a few.

The topic of student discipline was discussed in detail and proved to be the topic with the largest amount of questions from the audience. New Jersey's Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights as well as the process of HIB violations were explained. In 2011, the Anti -Bullying Bill of Rights became effective in New Jersey requiring schools to thoroughly investigate any and all allegations of harassment, intimidation and bullying ("HIB"). The law mandates that districts employ a HIB specialist dedicated to investigating these allegations. The specialist must report their findings within ten (10) days of an incident. In order

for an incident to be deemed as a "HIB" violation, the incident must meet the following three characteristics:

- (1) the act must create substantial disruption with orderly operation of school or students;
- (2) there must be an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic as the motivating factor; and
- (3) there must be harm to a student or school property, or insulting or demanding student or group of students, or creation of a hostile educational environment.

The results of the investigation can be appealed to the Board of Education. The Board's decision can then be appealed to the Commissioner of Education and the last remedy is to appeal the Commissioner's decision to the Appellate Division. If an incident is not considered an "HIB" violation, the administration can still discipline the student(s) involved pursuant to the school district's Code of Conduct policy. Most incidents are not found to be in violation of HIB and students are disciplined per the guidelines of the district's Code of Conduct policy.

The next topic discussed was Special Education law which is a growing concern for Boards of Education across New Jersey. The Federal Law titled Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) guarantees the educational right of all children in the United States through the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The disability must "adversely affect the student's educational performance and the student is in need of special education and related services". In New Jersey, N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.5 (c) lists 14 disability categories under which students age 3 to 21 may be eligible for special education and related services. The district has a responsibility to identify a disability, determine a diagnosis and create an appropriate program. According to M.L. Fabian, the school district is not forced to maximize every student's experience—they are only required to provide the opportunity.

There are two ways that this can be achieved, through a 504 plan and an Individual Education Plan "IEP". A 504 Plan is a better option when the student can function well in a regular education environment with certain accommodations. The 504 is generally less restrictive than the IEP, and it is also less stigmatizing. Some parents request a 504 plan as they do not want their child to be classified, although in recent years this has begun to change as educational disabilities have become more frequently diagnosed and widely accepted. An IEP is a better option for students with a disability that is adversely impacting education and requires goals and objectives that need to be met to show the student's progress. Most parents prefer an IEP as there are more regulations involved.

Subsequently, if the student's parents are not satisfied with the IEP or the way that the school district is handling their child's educational needs, they can file for "Due Process". Parents can also request an out of district placement or unilaterally place their child at another school. While engaged in Due Process, the school district has the burden of proof. After Due Process is filed, the district and parents have the opportunity to mediate their case and avoid going to a hearing.

At this time, our speakers explained how to obtain records from Boards of Education. As government entities, the public may obtain copies of certain Board records by making a request through the Open Public Records Act "OPRA". According to Mr. Disler, it is easier to obtain records through "OPRA" than through discovery and these requests can be made on a rolling basis. The government entity has 7 days to respond. The request must be made to identify a "specific identifiable government record". For example, when requesting emails, you will need the name of sender or recipient, the subject of the emails, and the date range. Most requests that are denied, are deemed overly broad. There are several exceptions including student records (need release), attorney-client privilege documents, privacy information, and records related to negotiations.

Additionally, all Board of Education meetings must be made public through the Open Public Meetings Act "OPMA" (a.k.a. Sunshine Law) which mandates decision making government entities conduct their business in public. The Board, along with other government bodies, can go into Executive Session when dealing with negotiations, attorney-client privilege, pending or anticipated litigation, or personnel matters.

The topic of tenure was briefly discussed, as defense firms for Boards of Education aid in negotiating contracts, tenure and on the rare occasion, the removal of a teacher from tenure. Tenure is available for educators hired after August 6, 2012 who have been:

- Employed for 4 consecutive years; or
- 4 consecutive academic years and employment at beginning of next school year; or
- 4 academic years within a 5-year period

A teacher can only be removed from tenure due to incapacity, unbecoming conduct, and/or inefficiency.

The last topic discussed were student records. The Board of Education is required to compile and maintain student records. Student records can be requested by parents and to those with a release signed by the parents. The Board will not provide records via subpoenas.

Jaclyn McConville is a legal assistant at Callahan & Fusco, LLC in Roseland, New Jersey and currently works for the insurance defense litigation and special education departments. Jaclyn earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from James Madison University in Political Science and has been working in the field of law for 8 years.



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Member Spotlight



Dorota Ferraro
Paralegal at Law Offices of George T. Szyczak, LLC
dorotaferraro@gmail.com
www.linkedin.com/in/dorota-ferraro

Q: How long have you been a member of PANJ?

A: I have been a member for a year and a half.

Q: Why did you decide to join the Association?

A: I joined the Association to network with colleagues. I have also attended the Annual New Jersey Paralegal Convention. Experiencing what a great event that is, I joined PANJ to be able to connect with colleagues regularly at the monthly meetings.

Q: What is a typical day as a paralegal like for you?

A: I work for a sole practitioner who concentrates his practice in Personal Injury and Workers' Compensation, but also handles matters in family law, real estate, estate planning, criminal and Social Security disability so my days are almost never the same. A good start is a fresh pot of tea or coffee, depending on the day, followed by checking email and voice messages and then diving right in! My job includes opening new files, calendaring appointments and deadlines, preparing documents for real estate closings and processing litigation files including drafting interrogatory answers, Complaints, Motions and Notices and E-filing documents with the Court. I also directly communicate with clients, courts, adversaries, medical professionals and others.

Q: What do you enjoy most about the Association?

A: I very much enjoy the friendly atmosphere at dinner meetings as well as the even friendlier members which make the dinner meetings more enjoyable.

Q: What's a helpful tip for someone in our industry?

A: Be professional, courteous, and polite to everyone, as you never know when and where you might come across them again, even though it might be difficult sometimes.

The PANJ Member Spotlight highlights a different PANJ member quarterly. If you would like to recommend a PANJ member to be featured in the next Member Spotlight, submit the member's name to Info@NJPara.org.



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THE UNCONVENTIONAL PARALEGAL THINKING OUT OF THE BOX

Mindfulness at Work?

By Vincent Ascolese

"Mindfulness" has been defined as the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are, what we are doing, and not be overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us" (www.Mindful.org).

Mindfulness helps me acknowledge and accept what's going on so that I more effectively work as things happen in front of me and within me. I have been meditating for 23 years. I have practiced mindfulness and meditation for over 4 years. Meditation and mindfulness have received much attention in the media although these practices are centuries old. I still have much to learn with respect to using, developing and incorporating them.

Some benefits I experience while using mindfulness at work are as follows: improved work product, less errors, increased ability to notice and correct errors, increased concentration, ability to have grace while under pressure, and increased productivity. The true benefits of mindfulness are not easy to quantify as they are soft skills.

One way to be mindful at work is to minimize the amount of total interruptions during my workday. I do this by first limiting non-work-related interruptions. For instance, I place my personal cell phone out of sight. This discourages me from checking my phone for text messages, e-mails, calendar events, social media and personal calls. I almost always have my cell phone on silent even when it is near. Non-work-related conversations at the office can also be limited. It is one thing to be cordial or social. It is quite another to be consumed by a conversation with colleagues. For me, it is nice to have a reputation as someone who keeps their head down and just does their work.

There are also ways to limit the amount of work-related interruptions or distractions. For example, I have my volume turned off on my computer speakers. My e-mail pop-ups are disabled, but I still have the incoming e-mail notification at the bottom of the monitor. I am continually working in Microsoft Outlook so I see when a new e-mail comes in. Some time management authors have even suggested disabling all methods of calendar and e-mail notifications and only checking at designated times. Attorneys have the ability to close their office doors when working on an urgent matter. Most paralegals do not have that luxury. I have learned to place my back to the opening in my cubicle, mostly so that I am not caught up in conversations.

Meditation is under the umbrella of mindfulness. "Meditation" is defined as to engage in mental exercise (such as concentration on one's breathing or repetition of a mantra) for the purpose of reaching a heightened level of spiritual awareness (Merriam-Webster). It is a formal way of practicing mindfulness, it is something that should only be practiced on personal time.

That being said, meditation and mindfulness can be compared to a disc defragmentation but for a person's brain and body. When I appropriately handle what is going on inside of me, I am better able to handle the way I react and process things happening on the outside of me. More succinctly, when I feel more at peace, I can better handle less peaceful situations.

There are very wonderful apps for smartphones to learn mindfulness and meditation. My suggestion of a great app to get started with 3 – 5 minute meditations is called “Headspace.” This app is free during an introductory period. It provides instructions for mindfulness and meditation. Another favorite app is called Insight Timer. This has been the app I use regularly for several years.

Vincent Ascolese graduated from St. John's University with a Bachelor's degree in Paralegal Studies in 1998. He has over 15 years working as a paralegal in various practice areas including: employment, commercial litigation, and general litigation. Most recently he works in practice areas including personal injury, workers' compensation and general litigation. Vincent has served on the Special Paralegal Committee to the New Jersey State Bar Association. He is an active member and is a former Trustee-at-Large for the Paralegal Association of New Jersey.

How to Serve Interstate Subpoenas

By Amanda Sexton

Eliminate the need to hire an attorney in another state to reissue a subpoena by utilizing the Uniform Interstate Depositions and Discovery Act (UIDDA). Created to facilitate easier service of process of subpoenas over state lines, the new procedure introduced by the UIDDA in 2007 simplifies deposing individuals and producing discoverable evidence.

Prior to the introduction of the UIDDA, domesticating a foreign subpoena was a convoluted process that not only took up time and money but also consumed valuable court resources.

According to the Uniform Law Commission, domesticating a subpoena under the UIDDA requires litigants to “present a clerk of the court located in the state where discoverable materials are sought with a subpoena issued by a court in the trial state. Once the clerk receives the foreign subpoena, the clerk will issue a subpoena for service upon the person or entity on which the original subpoena is directed.”

Given the variances in state rules and policies, using a process server can be extremely beneficial in expediting the timeline and accuracy of domesticating a foreign subpoena. DGR is familiar with every court clerk and has facilitated service through the UIDDA in thousands of cases. You'll save time on the research involved in locating the correct court clerk and local process, while ensuring accuracy and speed of completion with a knowledgeable vendor.

For a complete, current list of states that participate in the UIDDA check out the [Uniform Law Commission site](#).

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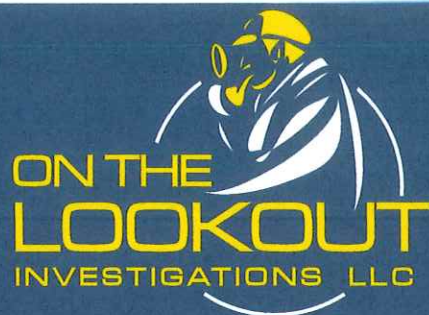
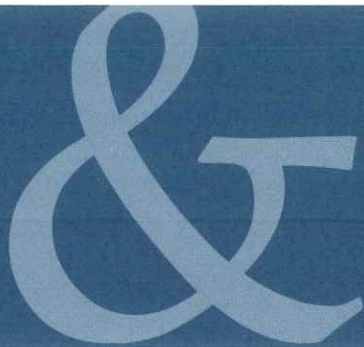
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A Message from Laurie A. Robinson, NJSBA-PC Upcoming Co-Chair.



Greetings fellow Paralegals:

First and foremost, THANK YOU for the opportunity to serve as a Co-Chair of our committee.

I am excited with the paralegal profession and I look forward to continued evolution. We have come a long way, but still have some distance to go.

As a new co-chair of the NJSBA-Paralegal Committee, I will advocate to:

- Make more continuing education courses available for paralegals and non-attorney staff;*
- Facilitate a greater partnership between the Northern and Southern New Jersey Paralegal organizations;*
- Provide training that is substantive and geared more specifically to our practice; and*
- Work to increase membership, participation, and attendance at meetings. The more chances that we get to network and learn from each other, the better we can serve our clients.*

I urge you to let me know how I can be of better service to this committee so that it is worth your investment. Remember, without our collective voices, we cannot be heard, and that means we cannot effectuate the changes we need and desire. As Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has said, "I'm a very strong believer in listening and learning from others." I need your help to make this year successful.

Oh and let's talk about the Wine and Cheese of 2019. What an awesome success, and a great turnout. If you missed it, you missed a lot! It was a pleasure meeting so many great people at the Wine and Cheese. I appreciate that so many of you graciously shared your thoughts and ideas with me. I am listening, and I will do my best.

Last, but most certainly not least, I want to thank the current Co-Chairs, Lisa St. Claire and Nyree Benitez, for their hard work and dedication to this committee, and leaving such big shoes to fill. You ladies are Amazing!

I look forward to working to enhance the paralegal profession.

Regards,

Laurie

"Fight for the things that you care about but do it in a way that will lead others to join you."

~Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Laurie Robinson works as a Paralegal at Bendit Weinstock, P.A. in West Orange, NJ.

NJparalegal.laurie@gmail.com

Message from Yolanda S. Barry, Co-Chair, NJSBA, SPC



Greetings my fellow Paralegals and Legal Professionals,

I am honored to have been nominated to be your Co-Chair for the New Jersey State Bar Association (NJSBA) Special Paralegal Committee. I accept this nomination with excitement and enthusiasm, and I look forward to serving in this role.

Many of you have concerns, comments, suggestions and ideas on how to move our committee and our profession forward and I would love to hear from each of you. Your ideas are always welcomed. I look forward to having constructive and effective dialogue with you so that we can achieve our goals.

My goal will be to work with you and for you, communicating your ideas and concerns to our NJSBA Liaison, creating and advocating for more training, more programs and more social functions. I will strive to increase our membership and I will strive to make our committee more visible. All of this cannot work without your thoughts, your ideas and most importantly your support!

I was very impressed with the turnout at our Annual Wine and Cheese reception. The event was well attended with very enthusiastic legal professionals who were also very eager to share their thoughts and ideas. The atmosphere was great, and the energy was incredible. Many of you expressed an interest in joining the committee, many would love to continue on as members and many expressed an interest in various training programs and had great ideas to keep us moving forward.

Under the incredible leadership of our current Co-Chairs Lisa M. St. Clair and Nyree D. Benitez, our Paralegal Committee achieved a lot. These Co-Chairs were instrumental in increasing membership and visibility, sponsoring and co-sponsoring many events and great programs. I look forward to building on their legacy while forging ahead with new relationships, events, programs and training that will be beneficial to all of us. I will continue to connect with our North and South Jersey Paralegal Organizations and NALA to help with our goals to evolve our committee and our profession.

I really look forward to meeting all of you at our next meeting. Although we will not have wine and cheese, we will have dinner and an incredible time with each other. I anticipate having a great year serving you along with my co-chair Laurie A. Robinson.

Sincerely,

Yolanda S. Barry, Co-Chair NJSBA, SPC



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THE GOVERNMENT'S USE OF DATA ANALYTICS, ITS IMPACT ON LITIGATION AND CHANGING THE ROLE OF PARALEGALS

By John Williams

On May 7, 2019, Professor Jacob Elberg of Seton Hall Law School presented a seminar on Data Analytics in Government Investigations to the Paralegal Association of New Jersey. Prof. Elberg explained that "data analytics is the science of examining raw data with the purpose of drawing conclusions about that information" and presented two examples of data analytics in government investigations.

The 1st example, Medicare billing fraud, described how possible healthcare provider fraud was identified from analyzing Medicare billing data. The analysis identified healthcare providers who were statistical outliers in terms of quantity of billing relative to their peers, and resulted in a settlement where a doctor and two companies agreed to pay over \$5 million for submitting bogus Medicare claims.

The 2nd example described how cell tower triangulation data was used as evidence in a prosecution of a bank robbery suspect in Perth Amboy. Prof. Elberg showed maps of the suspect's location in the period preceding the crime. Beyond these examples, Prof. Elberg described other uses of data in government investigations including using data to establish liability, establish damages, and discovery & document production.

Recently, the popularity of smart phones with built in GPS devices, and cellular carrier tracking of subscriber GPS location data, has simplified the establishment of person-of-interest location.¹

Low cost facial recognition² (a data analytic technology), facial databases³, and the ubiquity of security cameras⁴, has simplified person-of-interest identification in many cases.⁵

In legal cases involving multiple locations, such as class action lawsuits, health care fraud, or narcotics investigations, it may be useful to identify geographic patterns of physical addresses. Using a "geocoder" from the U.S. Census Bureau⁶, addresses can be geocoded into latitudes and longitudes suitable for display on an interactive map, all using no-cost data analytic tools. An example is an interactive map of all 1,901 people killed by opioids in NJ in 2016.⁷ The map can be expanded and individual points can display specific information when clicked upon.

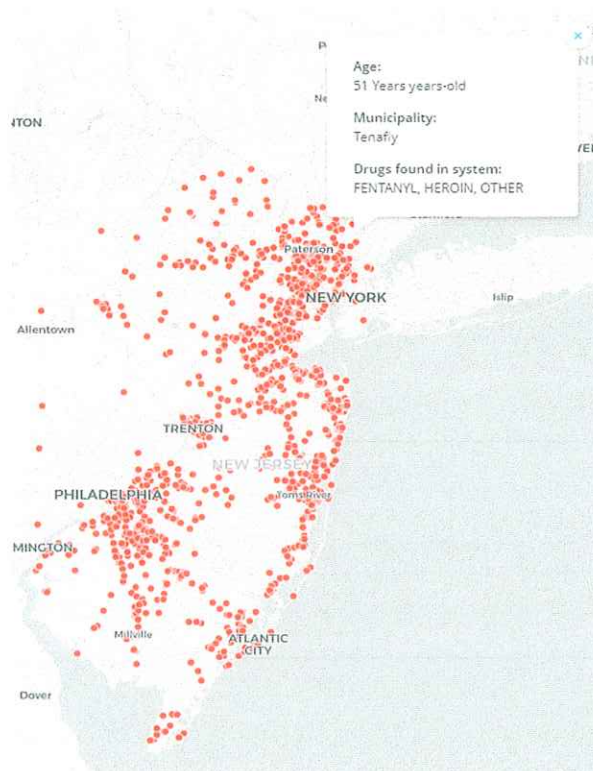


Figure 1: All Opioid Deaths in NJ in 2016

Natural language processing (NLP), a type of data analytics called machine learning, can be used for topic modeling and summarization of legal documents. Legal NLP applications can be done in-house or by data analytic vendors.⁸ Finally, Litigation Analytics, a commercial service⁹, provides “insights on judges, courts, attorneys, law firms, and case types to better develop case strategy and manage client expectations”.

Paralegals could perform data analytic functions in the of course performing research and preparing presentations. Say that a case requires summarizing data from many pages of response from an open records request, discovery or subpoena. This involves the less glamorous side analytics - getting & cleaning data, a/k/a "data wrangling", and then summarizing data in a presentation, a/k/a “data visualization”, using freely available tools such as Excel and Rstudio. Examples of data visualization are street address displayed on a static (Figure 1) or interactive map.⁷

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