

MALA MOMENTS

March 2020 Edition

A publication of the Montana Association of Legal Assistants*Paralegals an affiliate of the National Association of Legal Assistants*Paralegals



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

March 2020



A case that I have been working for the past year or so recently settled. It was the kind where it was difficult not to get emotionally invested – and perhaps somewhat harmful not to be. That has led to me thinking a lot about a paralegal's role in a difficult or emotional case. We are often the point of contact for the client and giving space for that person to be vulnerable in a way that they might not be able to be with their attorney is so valuable.

There is a lot that we can do as paralegals during trial or discovery, but this specific component – the ability to connect with a client and give them the time and space to open up – is an intangible asset that may often be overlooked. Additionally, feeling personally connected to a case can be a motivator when you're working long hours, traveling a lot and missing out on time with your loved ones.

The flip side of that idea is that we must make sure we are protecting ourselves emotionally. It takes a lot of effort to listen to someone and be completely emphatic, especially when we all have challenges and obstacles we are facing in our personal lives.

I encourage you to make sure that you are taking care of yourself, particularly when dealing with emotionally challenging cases. Whether that's doing an outdoor activity you love, going to the movies, taking a yoga class or even just a relaxing bubble bath, make sure you are taking time to care for yourself. In my experience, this will allow you the strength to continue handling the tough cases.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alisia Duganz". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Alisia J. Duganz, CP
MALA President

**NOTICE OF MALA'S
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING**

Saturday, March 14, 2020

1:15 pm

Lunch provided prior to the meeting

Fairmont Hot Springs

1500 Fairmont Road

Fairmont, Montana

If you are unable to attend, be sure to complete and send in a Proxy Voting Form (Page 31) to as we will be electing officers, voting on our FY 2020-21 Budget and discussing the future of MALA.



Meeting



Montana Association of Legal Assistants*Paralegals

2020

**ANNUAL MEETING & SEMINAR
PARALEGALS AND THE SCALES OF JUSTICE**

March 14, 2020

Seminar Registration Deadline March 6, 2020

Hotel Reservation Deadline February 12, 2020

**Fairmont Hot Springs
1500 Fairmont Road
Fairmont, Montana**

5.0 CLE Credits (includes 1.0 Ethics Credit)

This is a FREE seminar to all active voting MALA members

Agenda

Saturday, March 14, 2020

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 8:00 am—8:15 am | Registration |
| 8:15 am—8:30 am | Welcome and Opening Remarks
Alisia Duganz, CP, MALA President |
| 8:30 am—8:45 am | Key-Note Speaker
Jill Francisco, ACP, NALA President |
| 8:45 am—9:45 am | Parole Overview
Greg Jackson, Esq. |
| 9:45 am—10:45 am | Working with DUI Clients
Karolina Tierney, Esq. |
| 10:45 am—11:00 am | Break |
| 11:00 am—12:00 pm | The Corruption and Ethics Game Show
MALA Seminar Committee Members |
| 12:00 pm —1:00 pm | Lunch |
| 1:00 pm—1:15 pm | Relaxation Techniques
Alisia Duganz, CP, MALA President |
| 1:15 pm—2:30 pm | MALA Meeting |
| 2:30 pm—2:45 pm | Break |
| 2:45 pm—4:45 pm | Drug Endangered Children Training
Natalé Adorni, Program Manager, MLEA |
| 4:45 pm—5:00 pm | Closing remarks
Alisia Duganz, CP, MALA President |

Annual Meeting Sponsors

As sponsorships and donations continue to come in daily, we would like to take the time to acknowledge the following Sponsors for their generous donations to date:

Platinum—\$500

Goetz, Baldwin, Geddes, PC
Axelberg Mediation & Arbitration, PLLC

Gold—\$300

Browning, Kaleczyc, Berry & Hoven, P.C.
Rocky Mountain Law Partners, P.C.

Silver-\$200

Jeffrey Court Reporting

Bronze-\$100

Axilon Law Group, PLLC
Clark Form Law Offices, PC
Worden Thane, P.C.
Garlington, Lohn & Robinson, PLLP
Wall, McLean & Gallagher, PLLC
Collection Bureau Services, Inc.

If you or your firm would like to sponsor MALA's 2020 Annual Meeting and Seminar and help MALA celebrate 28 years of its dedication to promoting educational, professional and ethical standards including CLE seminars, CP/ACP testing preparation and mentoring programs for paralegals and legal assistants in Montana, please send a check to: MALA, ATTN: Annual Meeting, P.O. Box 9016, Missoula, MT 59807-9016.



Vice President Report

By Helen Hauerwas



Current Membership Numbers:

Active Members:	137
Associate Members:	15
Student Members:	2
Total:	154

Welcome to all our new members who recently joined MALA. We are excited to have you as members of our organization. We currently have 11 potential new members that we are waiting for the necessary attestations, payment, or approval from our Membership Committee. The Membership Committee consists of myself, Amanda Hewitt and Samantha Seidensticker.

As a reminder, when you are renewing online the fee is \$26.00 but if you are renewing by mail the membership fee is \$30.00.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our Annual Meeting scheduled for March 14, 2020 at Fairmont Hot Springs. The Annual Meeting is a great opportunity for you to gain some CLE credits and to mingle with other paralegals and attorneys from all over Montana. Please make sure to take some time to soak in the wonderful hot spring and enjoy the views. See you there!!!

If you have any questions you can email me at helen@bjornsonlaw.com or send an email to mala@malanet.org.

Volunteers needed!!!

If it weren't for the dedication of our members, Officers and Committee members, MALA would not be making a difference in providing continuing education for paralegals, legal assistants and attorneys; providing professional development opportunities for paralegals to advance their careers, or the general education and promotion of the paralegal profession. Be sure to volunteer on a committee in 2020-21 and keep MALA going strong into the future.





Treasurer's Report
November 2019—February 2020
By Terry Hale, ACP



Montana Association of Legal Assistants

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY
 November 1, 2019 - February 24, 2020

	TOTAL
Revenue	
Advertising Revenue	200.00
CLE	0.00
2019/18 - December	480.00
2019/20 - November	679.00
2020/03 Annual Meeting	55.00
Total CLE	1,214.00
Membership Dues	290.00
Non Profit Income	850.00
Sponsorship	2,500.00
Total Revenue	\$5,054.00
GROSS PROFIT	\$5,054.00
Expenditures	
ACP Scholarship	500.00
Assumed Business Name Renewal	20.00
Bank Charges	90.75
CP Review Course	735.50
GoTo Meeting	51.98
Membership Promotion	45.00
Post Office Box Rental	92.00
Quickbooks	270.00
Wild Apricot	202.20
Total Expenditures	\$2,007.43
NET OPERATING REVENUE	\$3,046.57
Other Revenue	
Interest Earned	2.24
Total Other Revenue	\$2.24
NET OTHER REVENUE	\$2.24
NET REVENUE	\$3,048.81

Montana Association of Legal Assistants

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As of February 24, 2020

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
MT Assoc of Legal Assistants Checking (XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX king)	7,662.26
MT Assoc of Legal Assistants Savings (XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX ings)	17,750.39
Total Bank Accounts	\$25,412.65
Total Current Assets	\$25,412.65
TOTAL ASSETS	\$25,412.65
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Total Liabilities	
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	21,626.90
Retained Earnings	376.51
Net Revenue	3,409.24
Total Equity	\$25,412.65
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$25,412.65



MALA's Quarterly Meeting Minutes

By Velvet Truzzolino



MALA QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING

Friday, December 6, 2019 – 12:02 PM

Telephonic

Officers:

President – Alisia Duganz, CP
Vice President – Helen Hauerwas
Secretary – Velvet Truzzolino
Treasurer – Terry Hale, ACP
NALA Liaison – Amanda Hewitt - Absent
Montana State Bar Liaison – Kathy Clark, CP
Parliamentarian – Samantha Seidensticker

1. Call to Order – 12:02 PM

2. Officer Reports/Discussion:

Vice President - Helen Hauerwas – Membership Report: As of the December newsletter, there are 132 active members; 14 associate members; and two (2) student members, bringing the total membership to 148. There are 4 or 5 currently in the process of being approved as members. We are currently growing. There were 129 Members in 2018 and 119 Members in 2017.

Secretary – Velvet Truzzolino – The prior September 20, 2019 Minutes were published within the December Newsletter. Velvet Truzzolino did not directly receive corrections or additions to the Minutes and no corrections were presented during the meeting. Terry Hale, ACP moved to approve the Minutes as published and Kathy Clark, CP seconded the motion. With no objections, the September 20, 2019 Business Meeting Minutes were approved as published within the December newsletter.

Treasurer – Terry Hale, ACP – Both the statement of activity and statement of financial position through the end of October 2019 were published in newsletter. Within the statement of activity there is an entry for job materials which is a CP review book which will be changed. There were no questions from members regarding the Treasurer's Report or the correction she will be making to the report, although Terry Hale, ACP can be contacted anytime with questions. Alisia Duganz, CP moved to approve the Treasurer's Report once revised as indicated by Terry Hale, ACP. The report is now set for audit and can be reviewed at any time by anyone who would like to do so.

NALA Liaison – Amanda Hewitt - Alisia Duganz, CP announced Amanda just passed her first part of the CP exam. Amanda had reported changes to the CP exam within the newsletter as the exam is now open to students.

Parliamentarian – Samantha Seidensticker – Received six (6) proxies.

3. Old Business:

501(c)(6) Status - Alisia Duganz, CP announced MALA's 501(c)(6) nonprofit status has now been approved and Terry Hale, ACP will submit the documents to MALA's accountant.

Membership/Paralegal Survey for Montana – The survey will include questions related to compensation, billing rates, employment history and responsibilities, etc. Drafting of the survey has begun and the Board is researching different ways to administer the survey, hopefully online.

4. New Business:

Seasonal Giving or Outreach - Alisia Duganz, CP presented the idea, asking for suggestions for local Montana charities or organization MALA could look at supporting in 2020 to donate to financially.

MALA Annual Meeting Sponsorship – MALA is looking at increasing sponsorship levels from three (3) to four (4) with different rates. In the past, there was a bronze, silver and gold level although there were several firms that donated above-and-beyond the gold sponsorship amount and some firms have indicated an ability to contribute more without knowing whether that was an option. The new drafted sponsorship letter identifies bronze at \$100, silver at \$200, gold at \$300 and platinum at \$500, with the option of “other” to allow the firm to choose the amount they are willing to contribute, whether the amount is less than \$100 or more than \$500. There will also be an increase on what is offered for each level. The letter will be sent out in January as this is how MALA is able to offer the annual meeting CLE for free to its members. There were no questions on this topic.

Annual MALA Meeting - Saturday, March 14, 2019 at Fairmont Hot Springs.

Upcoming Seminar - December 18, 2019 brown bag with Mark Wilmar on key ways and strategies to listen or process information.

5. Announcements:

Annual MALA Meeting - Terry Hale, ACP – we will be voting on MALA's annual board members so if anyone is interested in running or nominating someone, now is the time to let MALA know. MALA will also be looking for members to sign up for committees to volunteer their skills, whether it would include helping with the newsletter, writing articles or even finding speakers for the brown bag seminars, members are able to sign up at the annual meeting if interested.

6. Discussions:

None.

7. Adjourn – 12:19 PM

Terry Hale, ACP moved to adjourn the meeting and Helen Hauerwas seconded the motion.



NALA NEWS

By Amanda Hewitt
NALA Liaison



NALA Conference 2020 is set to take place July 9-11 in Atlantic City, NJ.

Early Bird Registration is open until May 15, 2020.

If you haven't attended it a NALA Conference yet, I would encourage you to do so. It is a wonderful experience. If you have concerns about talking to your employer about getting the time off or maybe asking them to pay for your trip, please reach out. I'd be happy to talk to you.

NALA has also created a "Convince Your Boss Letter" to help facilitate those conversations with your employer. You can find the letter at: <https://www.nala.org/conferences/nala-conference-expo>.

We hope to see you all in Atlantic City!



Established in 1976, the CLA /CP (Certified Legal Assistant/Certified Paralegal) program has enabled the profession to develop a strong and responsive self-regulatory program offering a nationwide credential for all paralegals. Today over 15,000 paralegals have achieved this esteemed credential.



2020 NALA CONFERENCE & EXPO JULY 9-11

ATLANTIC CITY, NJ



THIS YEAR AT CONFERENCE

- 32 EDUCATION SESSIONS
- 14 HOURS OF CLE CREDIT
- 400+ PARALEGAL PEERS
- 30+ EXHIBITORS
- 45TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION BANQUET

**EARLY BIRD
RATES**

\$575
MEMBER

\$628
NONMEMBER

\$215
STUDENT

\$101
THURSDAY
ONLY

REGISTER ONLINE AT WWW.NALA.ORG

 **NALA**



**NEW
CERTIFIED PARALEGALS**

MALA MEMBERS WHO HAVE ACHIEVED THE
CERTIFIED PARALEGAL DESIGNATION
FROM NALA:

**MICHELLE HARELSON, CP
RACHEL BUCHNER, CP
DARRELL GEIST, CP**

CONGRATULATIONS ON A
JOB WELL DONE!!!!!!





CP
CERTIFIED PARALEGAL

ACCREDITED

Certified Paralegal Program Receives Accreditation from the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA)

On April 30, 2014, The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) granted accreditation to the NALA Certified Paralegal program for demonstrating compliance with the NCCA Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs.

NCCA is the accrediting body of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence. The NCCA Standards were created to ensure certification programs adhere to modern standards of practice for the certification industry.

The NALA Certified Paralegal program joins an elite group of more than 120 organizations representing over 270 certification programs that have received and maintained NCCA accreditation.

More information on the NCCA is available online at www.credentialingexcellence.org/NCCA.

Information describing the Certified Paralegal program is available at www.nala.org/certification.aspx.



**THE ASSOCIATION OF
LEGAL ASSISTANTS • PARALEGALS**



NALA



Advanced Certified Paralegal

**Advance your paralegal skills with
our specialized self-study courses.**

- ▶ Learn at your own pace, with one year to complete the course.
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- ▶ Self-Study courses include a PDF e-Book.
- ▶ The new interactive format includes many activities to engage learning.

ACP AREAS INCLUDE:

BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS

CRIMINAL LITIGATION

DISCOVERY

E-DISCOVERY

FAMILY LAW

LAND USE

REAL ESTATE PRINCIPLES

TRIAL PRACTICE

To see a full list of courses available, visit www.nala.org.



Montana Association of Legal Assistants*Paralegals

Certified Paralegal and Advanced Certified Paralegal Scholarship Criteria

To promote the Certified Paralegal (CP) and Advanced Certified Paralegal (ACP) designations, each fiscal year MALA will award the following:

Five scholarships of up to \$475.00 to be used exclusively for obtaining the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) CP credential; and

Five scholarships of up to \$300.00 to be used exclusively for obtaining the NALA ACP credential.

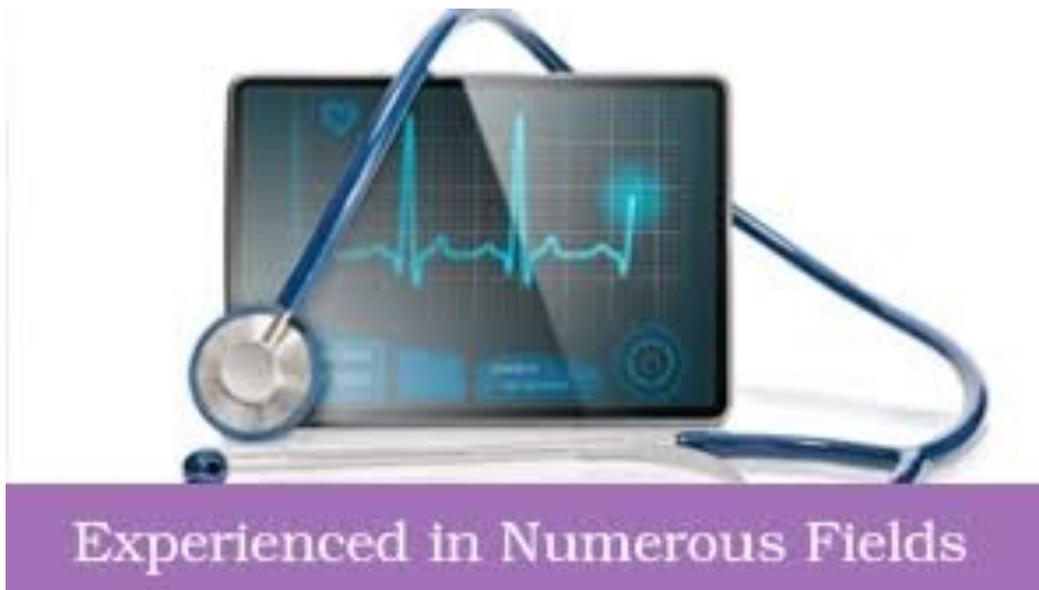
The Professional Development Committee will review CP and ACP scholarship applications, and award these scholarships on a first-come, first-serve basis throughout MALA's fiscal year (April 1 to March 31). Scholarships will be presented at MALA's quarterly telephonic business meetings and at the Annual Meeting. Scholarship recipients will be notified of the date and time when their scholarship will be awarded and must either be present at the meeting to accept the scholarship or write a letter of acceptance to be read at the meeting.

For full criteria and Applications see website at www.malanet.org.

word scramble with clues

- 1 ealywr _____
A person whose job is to guide and assist people in matters relating to the law.
- 2 plraeagal _____
A person who is trained to help a lawyer by doing research, office work, etc.
- 3 cturo _____
A formal legal meeting in which evidence about crimes, disagreements, etc., is presented to a judge and often a jury so that decisions can be made according to the law.
- 4 uJdge _____
A person who is in charge of a trial in a court and decides how a person who is guilty of.
- 5 Defednatn _____
A person in a law case who is accused of having done something illegal.
- 6 ilaPntffif _____
A person who sues another person or accuses another person of a crime in a court of law.
- 7 sitnwse _____
A person who sees something happen especially a crime.
- 8 Peoicl _____
The people or the department of people who enforce laws, investigate crimes, and make arrests.
- 9 ritenrogation _____
To ask (someone) questions in a thorough and often forceful way.
- 10 entervwii _____
A meeting at which people talk to each other in order to ask questions and get information: such as.
- 11 jumdnegt _____
An opinion or decision that is based on careful thought.
- 12 pittnioe _____
A document signed by a large number of people demanding or asking for some action from.
- 13 glvea _____
A small hammer that someone (such as a judge) bangs on a table to get people's attention in a meeting or in a court of law.
- 14 jistecu _____
What is right and fair.
- 15 ateegmenr _____
Deal.
- 16 vmctii _____
A person who has been attacked, injured, robbed, or killed by someone else.
- 17 opinnio _____
A belief, judgment, or way of thinking about something.
- 18 sheearcr _____
Careful patient study of a subject in order to discover or revise facts, theories, principles, etc.
- 19 dvecosiry _____
The process of finding information, a place, or an object, especially for the first time.
- 20 trusoceion _____
The act or process of holding a trial against a person who is accused of a crime to see if that person is guilty.

The Unique Role of Legal Nurse Consultants in Litigation



Experienced in Numerous Fields

Have you ever interacted with a member of the opposing counsel's team and noticed the designation "legal nurse consultant," or "LNC," after their name? Did you wonder what that individual's role was or even what uniquely qualified them to be a legal nurse consultant? A legal nurse consultant is a registered nurse and a unique member of the litigation team. Legal nurse consultants bring their health-science education and clinical expertise to bridge the gap between healthcare and medically related issues in the litigation process. The primary role of a legal nurse consultant is to evaluate, analyze, and render informed opinions about the medical issues, delivery of healthcare, and resultant outcomes in the context of applicable legal standards.

Legal nurse consultants work in collaboration with attorneys, paralegals, and others involved in the legal process. The legal nurse consultant's scope of practice does not include the practice of law or the functions of paralegals.

Professional nursing education and experience set the legal nurse consultant apart from other members of the litigation team. Just as nursing is firmly established as a separate profession apart from medicine within the healthcare field, so too is the role of the legal nurse consultant in the legal profession. Confusion about the specific roles, capabilities, and functions of the legal nurse consultant may arise because, in some settings, tasks assigned to the nurse may overlap with those of paralegals. Although many legal nurse consultants have acquired knowledge of the legal system through consulting with attorneys and attending legal seminars, legal education is not a prerequisite to the practice of legal nurse consulting—an important distinction between the legal nurse consultant and the paralegal. The particular legal nurse consultant's role, however, may include a general working knowledge of the relevant substantive and procedural law and regulatory guidelines impacting the legal nurse consultant's casework. This is especially important for legal nurse consultants working on mass tort or environmental contamination claims.

History of the Legal Nurse Consultant Role

No one knows exactly when nurses first gained recognition as legal nurse consultants since nurses have practiced as informal legal consultants to attorneys for decades. For more than 30 years, legal nurse consultants have acted as collaborators, strategists, and educators by offering support in medical-related litigation. As the specialty has evolved, so too have the practice areas where legal nurse consultants apply their skills.

During the 1980s, with the progression of nursing malpractice litigation, nurses were increasingly sought to opine on the standards of the nursing practice. Through the process of serving as expert witnesses, it became clear to attorneys that nurses were uniquely qualified to assist them in a myriad of ways outside of the courtroom.

The American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants (AALNC), founded in 1989, is dedicated to the professional enhancement and growth of registered nurses practicing in the specialty of legal nurse consulting, and the advancement of the nursing specialty. The AALNC published the first edition of its *Scope of Practice and Standards* in 1994, which guides the legal nurse consultant's practice and professional performance. Certification for the legal nurse consultant subspecialty was developed by the American Legal Nurse Consultant Certification Board (ALNCCB), and the first Legal Nurse Consultant Certified (LNCC) certification exam was offered in 1998. The LNCC credential is the only legal nurse consultant certification recognized by the American Board of Nursing Specialties (ABNS) and the Accreditation Board for Specialty Nursing Certification.

In 2006, in collaboration with the American Nurses Association (ANA), AALNC updated the *Scope & Standards of Practice for Legal Nurse Consulting*. With this collaboration, the ANA officially recognized legal nurse consulting as a specialty practice of nursing.

Working with Legal Nurse Consultants

As a rule, lawyers look for case consultants who can translate complex issues into clear, simple terms understandable by the legal team, juries, and judges. Attorneys consult with legal nurse consultants because of their expertise in nursing and healthcare. Legal nurse consultants apply their education and experiential background to the medical-legal issues in each case-evaluating and presenting complex medical information in a way that provides the litigation team with a greater understanding of the facts found in the medical record, providing these valuable services at a lower cost than a physician consultation.

Legal nurse consultants are appreciated not only for their ability to simplify the facts found in the record, but also for their ability to call attention to information that may have been omitted or falsified, protocols that were not followed, and possible "behind the scenes" considerations. Legal nurse consultants understand the nuances of the complicated healthcare system and can pick up on subtleties in the medical records that a non-medical professional might not. Typically, the more medically complex the case, the more a legal nurse consultant can contribute.

While the characteristics of each legal nurse consultant vary with respective experience levels and practice opportunities in general, successful legal nurse consultants possess unique core competencies, and consideration should be given to the following factors when soliciting nurse consultant services:

- Registered nurse with at least five years prior clinical experience
- Strong work ethic and high ethical standards
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision and direction
- Willingness to accept responsibility for seeing projects through to conclusion
- Strong analytical skills; ability to express opinions logically and coherently
- Effective communication, teaching, and interpersonal skills
- Strong problem-solving skills
- Good organizational skills and ability to prioritize pending work projects
- Proficiency in medical literature searches and internet research
- Proficiency in computer programs such as Word, Adobe, Excel, etc.
- General working knowledge of the laws applicable to medical cases

Course-Based Credentials versus Specialty Certification

In most professions, certification in one's area of expertise is the "best practice" methodology, and typically signifies a higher level of proficiency within a respective specialty practice. According to the ABNS, certification is the formal recognition of the specialized knowledge, skills, and experience demonstrated by the achievement of standards identified by a nursing specialty to promote optimal health outcomes. As awareness of the unique expertise of legal nurse consultants grows, more firms are requiring them to demonstrate experiential and educational achievements beyond entry-level competency. Certification in legal nurse consulting, although not required to practice within this specialty area, may soon become a key selection criteria considered by attorneys when soliciting the services of legal nurse consultants.

A general online search revealed upwards of thirty legal nurse consultant educational courses available nationwide. Many of these programs offer their participants various course-based "certifications" and "credentials" upon completion of the curriculum. However, only the ALNCCB maintains an experience-based certification examination in legal nurse consulting and offers the only certification accredited by the ABNS. Examination and certification through the ALNCCB is available to licensed registered nurses with a minimum five years clinical experience, and an additional 2,000 hours of legal nurse consulting practice in the three years prior to taking the certification exam. Candidates achieving the minimal requirements for certification and successfully passing the required examination are granted the designation of Legal Nurse Consultant Certified.

The Legal Nurse Consultant and Nurse Expert Witness

In general, significant differences exist between legal nurse consultants and nurse expert witnesses. Many legal nurse consultants work "behind the scenes," either in-house or independently as consulting experts, providing an informed, cost-effective view on what can be highly specialized and complex medical issues. All work generated by the legal nurse consultant is considered privileged and confidential attorney-work product, and therefore is not subject to disclosure in discovery. Legal nurse consultants working behind the scenes do not typically offer expert testimony at depositions or at trial, and, consequently, remuneration for their services is less than nurses providing expert consultation.

Although nurse expert witnesses may engage in activities like those of the "behind the scenes" legal nurse consultants, it is also expected they will be willing to testify should the need arise. Nurse expert witnesses who testify in nurse malpractice claims possess experience and training like that of the plaintiff or defendant they are representing, and typically will have been practicing in a similar clinical environment contemporaneously to the event in question. Over the past few decades, expansion of the traditional role of the testifying nurse has provided for a greater recognition by the court that the professional most appropriate to define the nursing standard of care is a nurse. As such, many, but not all, nursing malpractice cases require testimony by a nursing expert witness to establish the standard of care.

Employment and Practice Areas

As a liaison between the legal and healthcare fields, legal nurse consultants practice in a variety of environments. Increasingly, many legal nurse consultants are self-employed and work from home, allowing for a flexible schedule and continued full or part-time clinical practice. Independent legal nurse consultants contract directly with entities handling medical-legal matters and bill hourly for their services. An in-house legal nurse consultant is typically a staff member of a law firm, insurance company, healthcare organization, or governmental agency, and their role varies greatly depending upon the size of the employer, the nature of the work, and the employer's familiarity with the services legal nurse consultants can provide.

Legal nurse consultants provide support in medically related litigation and other medical-legal matters in a variety of practice areas including medical negligence, personal injury, product liability, worker's compensation, toxic torts and mass tort class actions, fraud, abuse and regulatory compliance, criminal law, elder law, and life care planning.

Given the frequent changes in healthcare, it is likely that the list of practice settings for legal nurse consultants will continue to grow.

Embracing the Entire Legal Community

As the field of legal nurse consulting has grown, so have the opportunities for participation within the legal community, as bar associations and professional legal associations offer associate membership opportunities for legal nurse consultants. In June 2002, the West Virginia Bar Association invited legal nurse consultants to join the organization as associate members, becoming the first statewide bar association to create a special membership category for legal nurse consultants. Citing enhanced collegiality and an overall positive impact on membership, the WVBA encouraged other bar associations to follow suit in expanding associate memberships. Currently, opportunities for legal nurse consultant membership within the bar exist in several local, county, and state bar associations, including California, Florida, New York, Tennessee, Washington, and West Virginia.

The American Association for Justice accepts legal nurse consultants as paralegal affiliate members when sponsored by an AAJ member.

In 2014, The American Bar Association's Health LawSection announced it had entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the AALNC, setting forth the organizations' common objectives regarding the education of legal and nursing professionals, and stating that they will work together to collaborate on programs and other initiatives where a mutual interest is present. This partnership is important to both organizations for the education and professional development it can provide their respective members.

Conclusion

Legal nurse consultants have carved out a niche in the legal world by providing invaluable, cost-effective expertise in medical-related litigation. Legal nurse consultants possess a unique understanding of healthcare issues and trends, and their services should be considered by individuals whose law practice requires even a basic knowledge of healthcare science and practices. For more information visit the American Association of Legal Nurse Consultants Web site at <http://www.aalnc.org>. To locate a legal nurse consultant or nurse expert in a specific geographic location or by area of expertise, visit the LNCLocator at <http://www.aalnc.org/page/lnc-locator>.

Alicia Davis, RN, LNCC is president and CEO of ALN Consulting, LLC in Nashville, Tennessee. She has over 20 years of clinical expertise in out-patient and in-patient services, telenursing, and healthcare management. She has worked over 15 years in the legal nurse consulting industry. ALN Consulting is comprised of a team of highly specialized medical-legal consultants dedicated to providing unsurpassed litigation support services to the legal community.

[Originally published in Paralegal Today Magazine.](#)

Tuscan Mac & Cheese



RECIPE

Ingredients:

8 oz. Macaroni
2 Tlb. Butter
3 tsp. minced garlic
2 Tlb. All-purpose flour
2 1/2 C. Heavy cream
1 tsp. Italian seasoning
1/2 C. shredded Italian blend cheese
1—12 oz. jar roasted red peppers (drained and chopped)
1 C. packed baby spinach leaves
1/3 C. diced mushrooms
Kosher salt
Ground black pepper

Directions:

In a large pot of salted boiling water, cook pasta according to package directions until al dente. Drain and return to pot.

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, melt butter. Stir in garlic until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Sprinkle flour over butter and stir until thickened. Gradually whisk in heavy cream until smooth.

Season with salt, pater, and Italian seasoning. Stir in shredded cheese until melted, then add pasta to skillet and stir to combine.

Add roasted rep peppers, spinach leaves, and mushrooms. Stir until spinach is tender. Add salt and pepper if needed.

Serve immediately.

CORNER

MALA LIBRARY

CLE TITLE	DATE	SPEAKERS	MEDIA TYPE	CLE HOURS	COST	TOTAL ORDER
CLA/CP Prep Seminar:						
<u>2003</u>						
Administrative Law	6/19/2003	Edward Hayes, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 10.00	
<u>2007</u>						
Judgment & Analytical	3/8/2007	Terry Hale, ACP	DVD	1	\$ 10.00	
Ethics	3/8/2007	Tom Stanton, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 10.00	
Criminal Law - Copy 1	3/8/2007	Tom Stanton, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 10.00	
Criminal Law - Copy 2	3/8/2007	Howard Toole, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 10.00	
Probate & Estates	3/8/2007	Matthew Thiel, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 10.00	
Ethics - Copy 1	3/9/2007	Shane Vannatta, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 10.00	
Ethics - Copy 2	3/9/2007	Shane Vannatta, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 10.00	
Business Organizations	3/9/2007	Tom Stanton, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 10.00	
Contracts	3/9/2007	Tom Stanton, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 10.00	
Stress Management	6/1/2007	Terry Halstead, ACP	DVD	1.5	\$ 10.00	
Ethics: Conflicts of Interest	12/17/2007	Tom Stanton, Esq.	DVD	1.5	\$ 10.00	
<u>2011</u>						
Open Meeting Law	3/26/2011	Rob Stutz, Esq.	DVD	1.5	\$ 10.00	
Federal Litigation: A Paralegal's Perspective - Copy 1	5/6/2011	Deborah Ethridge, ACP	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	
Federal Litigation: A Paralegal's Perspective - Copy 2	5/6/2011	Deborah Ethridge, ACP	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	
Update on New Rules of Civil Procedure and Uniform District Court Rules - Copy 1	11/4/2011	Shirley Faust, Deputy Clerk of Court	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	
Update on New Rules of Civil Procedure and Uniform District Court Rules - Copy 2	11/4/2011	Shirley Faust, Deputy Clerk of Court	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	

CLE TITLE	DATE	SPEAKERS	MEDIA TYPE	CLE HOURS	COST	TOTAL ORDER
<u>2012</u>						
MT Supreme Court Appeals (A). Format and Abigail J. St. Lawrence, Esq. Form Requirements (B). Briefs (The Good, the Bad, and the Grammar), Writs?, and E-Filing in Federal System (C). Changes in Rules of Appellate Procedure	1/20/2012	(A). Christine A. Whethern, Esq. (B). Scott Peterson, Esq. and Katie Ranta, Esq. (C). Ed Smith, Clerk of MT Supreme Court	DVD	3	\$ 45.00	
Water Rights for Paralegals: Basic Principles; Ownership, Regulation, and Changing a Water Right; and Application Permitting Process	2/24/2012	Abigail J. St. Lawrence, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	
Proofing and Editing - Copy 1	3/23/2012	Annette Brown, ACP	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	
Proofing and Editing - Copy 2	3/23/2012	Annette Brown, ACP	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	
Service of Process - Copy 1	4/20/2012	John Nowakowski, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	
Service of Process - Copy 2	4/20/2012	John Nowakowski, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	
<u>2013</u>						
Client Intake	1/28/2013	Sabrina Holstein and Mark Lancaster	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	
Notary Rules and Updates	6/25/2013	Lori Hamm, Secretary of State, Notary Services	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	
<u>2014</u>						
Advice v. Information and MT Supreme Court Self Help Program	1/7/2014	Erin Farris	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	
Secretary of State Seminar	6/10/2014	Joe DeFilippis, Secretary of State	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	
Depositions Summaries and Court Reporting	7/15/2014	Katie Huso, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	
Blue Sky Laws: Basics for Paralegals	7/6/1905	Alan H. Aronson, Esq./Lorman	DVD		\$ 15.00	
Corporate Recordkeeping Techniques for Paralegals	5/7/2014	Alan H. Aronson, Esq./Lorman	DVD		\$ 15.00	
<u>2015</u>						
ALWD Legal Citations	7/15/2015	MALA Stacey Gordon, Director of UM Law Library	DVD		\$ 15.00	
Legal Ethics	8/12/2015	?	DVD	1	\$ 15.00	

CLE TITLE	DATE	SPEAKERS	MEDIA TYPE	CLE HOURS	COST	TOTAL ORDER
<u>2016</u>						
Guardian Ad Litem	3/14/2016	Brock Kolar	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
Service of Process; Rules and Procedures	4/13/2016	?	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
Judgment Collection	6/9/2016	Michael Moore	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
Criminal Law: Taking the Defensive Side - Copy 1	7/13/2016	Terry Hale, ACT	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
Indian Law	8/10/2016	Melissa, MT District Attorney	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
Montana Wrongful Discharge from Employment Act Essentials	11/22/2016	David C. Berkhoff, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
<u>2017</u>						
Ergonomics	6/1/2017	Mark Rosenleaf, ARM	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
LLLT Limited License Legal Technicians	7/1/2017	Paula Littlewood	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
E-Discovery	8/9/2017	Dorothy Schuch, ACP	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
New CP Exam	8/30/2017	Terry Hale, ACP	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
Subpoena Practice	Brown Bag	Mark Lancaster, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
<u>2018</u>						
Fitness to Proceed	1/24/2018	Bowman Smelko	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
Real Estate for Paralegals	2/13/2018	Patrick Beddow, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
The Medium is the Message: Form & Style Tips for preparing Polished & Professional legal documents	Brown Bag	Terry Hale, ACT	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
Mediation in Montana	10/24/2018	Tracy Axelberg, Esq.	DVD	1	\$ 20.00	
Residential Landlord Tenant Law	11/14/2018	Daniel Cahalan, Esq.	sharefile	1	\$ 20.00	

CLE TITLE	DATE	SPEAKERS	MEDIA TYPE	CLE HOURS	COST	TOTAL ORDER
2019						
Summary Judgment for the Paralegal	7/24/2019	Robert K. Baldwin	sharefile	1	\$ 20.00	
The MT Notary - Fundamental & new laws	8/21/2019		sharefile	1	\$ 20.00	
Oders of Protection	10/16/2019	Natale R. Adorni	sharefile	1	\$ 20.00	
Title	Copyright	Author(s)				
Administrative Law & Procedure	1996	Elizabeth C. Richardson	Book			
Constitutional Law	1991	Jerome A. Barron & C. Thomas Dienes	Book			
Family Law: The Essentials	2004	William P. Statsky	Book			
NALA Manual: A General Skills & Litigation Guide for Paralegals and Legal Assistants, 4th Edition	2005	NALA, Inc.	Book			
NALA Manual: A General Skills & Litigation Guide for Paralegals and Legal Assistants, 5th Edition	2010	NALA, Inc .	Book			
Litigation and Trial Practice for the Legal Assistant, 5th Edition	2001	Roderick D. Blanchard & Robert S. Blanchard	Book			
Ethics and Professional Responsibility for Legal Assistants		Therese A. Cannon	Book			

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Big Case, Small Firm

Leveraging Technology to Handle Complex Cases



While describing my current position as an eDiscovery specialist to a former attorney colleague, he replied, "Wait, you can do the thing, with the emails?" He is a partner in a small boutique law firm with limited staff and, for the most part, handles cases that do not require intensive electronic data collection. That is, his cases do not require this now, but, regardless of practice groups, small firms in any niche should be prepared to litigate cases that require collection of electronic data.

What happens when your boutique firm is up against an AmLaw100 goliath firm with seemingly unlimited resources at its disposal, including numerous contract reviewers, several paralegals supporting the litigation, an IT department, and, more often than not, an entire arsenal of eDiscovery attorneys and vendors? If you are still trying to figure out how to "do the thing, with the emails," your firm, and your client, are already behind the ball.

Technology can be a great equalizer in litigation. With the right technology, a small firm is evenly matched with the biggest law firms. Selecting an eDiscovery tool that works from both a case management and cost perspective will allow your boutique law firm to leverage its technology to the benefit of your firm's cases, clients' satisfaction, and, ultimately, the firm's bottom line.

Consider Outsourcing Data Collection

The best time to consider eDiscovery needs is at the beginning of a case,

during the planning and collection phase. At this stage in litigation, it is most prudent to interview records custodians, analyze the type of electronic data of which those custodians are in possession, and determine the best method to collect that data. Consulting early with an eDiscovery vendor and/or a forensic collection company – and understanding the benefits of using one tool versus another – avails your firm of the expertise needed in the initial planning stages of handling electronic discovery. Depending on the vendor, a project manager might be utilized to speak with the various custodians and investigate the type of data that exists and needs to be collected. This usually entails email collection of internal documents stored on hard drives, and, possibly, archived information in additional locations. After identifying the documents to be collected and from whom, the eDiscovery vendor can assist with the actual collection, keep track of the chain of evidence, and implement proper quality control measures to ensure that all data to be collected was obtained and that no data was corrupted or otherwise lost in any extraction or exchange. This can be a time consuming and error prone

step in the initial electronic discovery process; by outsourcing these tasks, firms save time and money while obtaining a high quality return.

Choosing an eDiscovery Solution

After collection, the data should then be imported to an eDiscovery software platform. The most common platforms are “on demand” software, also known as “Software as a Service (SaaS)” or “cloud-based,” such as Lexbe, Nextpoint, Cloud 9, and Logikull. There are also “on-premises” solutions such as Concordance, Summation, iPro, and Relativity that are hosted on a firm’s own server. For a small boutique firm, an on-demand solution can be a great bargain by providing a platform that can be accessed from anywhere at any time and is supported by a customer service team. On-demand software solutions usually have no limitations on the number of users and are usually more cost effective than on-premises solutions, as they can often be purchased on a per case basis – usually by the gigabyte – and then cancelled when the case is finished. On-premises solutions, on the other hand, often require expensive per user licenses which are installed on local machines networked on the firm’s own server, making it difficult to work from home or when travelling. Both on-demand and on-premises solutions generally offer the same basic tools, so firms need to analyze the features they are most concerned with and compare the cost benefit of each.

Early Case Assessment and Data Culling

After the data is uploaded to the platform, reviewers begin the early case assessment stage and start working with the documents. During this phase, the eDiscovery software allows reviewers to quickly and inexpensively reduce the collected electronic data to include only documents germane to the case. Before any real work is done on the documents, eDiscovery software is used to apply deduplication to the documents, which will automatically identify duplicative documents in the database that can be excluded from review. Like deduplication, a feature called deNIST eliminates system files and other file types that have low probability of having any usable data. These file types can be suppressed and deleted from a database, saving reviewers more time by eliminating documents with no probative value. Next, reviewers will typically cull electronic data by date ranges, custodians, and keywords to reduce the number of documents in the case.

In addition to the early case analysis, the processing stage of reviewing electronic data will accurately and quickly process the electronic data that was collected to prepare for review and production of the documents. eDiscovery software platforms support most native file types: Outlook email (pst, msg), Microsoft Office Suite files (Word, Excel

“Technology can be a great equalizer in litigation. With the right technology, a small firm is evenly matched with the biggest law firms.”

PowerPoint), Web (html), Images (jpg, png, tif) and most other common native files, including container file (e.g., pst, zip, rar) & email (msg) attachment expansion. This processing step will then generate an index of the documents, making them fully OCRd and searchable, which significantly reduces manual review time. During this processing stage, the eDiscovery software will also automatically extract any related metadata and make it fully searchable, exposing fields such as “date last modified,” “bcc,” “date created,” etc. These fields provide powerful information in litigation and are lost without using an eDiscovery software platform.

In addition to processing the client’s native documents, an eDiscovery platform is immensely helpful in reviewing incoming productions from opposing counsel. If a small firm is up against a large firm, there is little doubt that the small firm will be on the receiving end of a standard eDiscovery production. These productions vary, but are typically in the form of single page TIFF images with load files, pdfs, and/or native files. Leveraging the technology of an eDiscovery platform when receiving these types of production will be invaluable, as it will allow for quick uploading and indexing of documents, making them easy to search and review – which is crucial with a boutique firm’s limited staff and firm pretrial deadlines.

Document Review – Coding and Methodologies

Once the documents are processed, they then need to be reviewed and coded in preparation for production. The goals of document review are:

- 1) Coding documents accurately, quickly, and cost effectively;
- 2) Carefully identifying responsive, privileged, and attorney’s-eyes-only documents; and
- 3) Searching, identifying, and issue coding key documents to aid in preparing for future briefs, hearings, and ultimately trial.

Small firms have the added stress of limited staff to review the documents, so ensuring the platform provides features to speed up the review of documents is key to being able to run a case through review with limited man power. It is also important to obtain adequate training on the software to understand the platform’s review features to eliminate any problems before the production deadline. An eDiscovery platform enables reviewers to quickly identify responsive and privileged documents. Bulk coding of privileged documents based on name and keyword searches will reduce substantial time from the total review. Reviewers can also create custom fields specific to the individual case issues, thus increasing coding capability. This aspect is especially helpful when preparing for depositions, drafting briefs, and organizing documents prior to hearings and trial.

There are several methodologies that can be used when reviewing documents in an eDiscovery software platform that are dependent on various factors; review methodologies should be determined by the case size, type, and budget.

In a linear review, reviewers read, review, and code documents one at a time. Large firms typically use contract attorneys to handle this type of review.

A keyword search review uses keywords to identify responsive and privileged documents. This particular review process is often iterative and depends on the reviewer’s understanding of the contents of the documents, company jargon, and ability to form accurate Boolean search commands.



“Leveraging the technology of an eDiscovery platform will be invaluable...”

While sometimes maligned, with proper use and testing, keyword search review can be as accurate as any other methodology.

Technology Assisted Review (TAR) – sometimes also called computer assisted review – is the process whereby expert reviewers manually review a seed set of documents and provide input to eDiscovery tools in order to train predictive coding algorithms that will automatically code the remaining documents. After this is completed, users will generate and review control sets to evaluate the results.

Simplifying Privilege Review and Record Production

When review is complete, the next stage of discovery is the production stage. Discovery software seamlessly produces documents in many formats, allowing users to have confidence in their productions without the hassle of putting them together manually and spending time checking for inadvertently produced privileged documents. One of the key advantages of using eDiscovery software is the ability to turn around productions very quickly to maximize review time while staying ahead of deadlines. These platforms offer flexible production options, including the ability to produce documents that conform to all industry and court standards, such as the type of production (either single page TIFF vs. PDF), the inclusion of standard load files (opt, dat, lfp, etc.), and the output of most common metadata fields required by standard ESI discovery orders, and fields that may be negotiated or discussed by attorneys in a 16(b) conference. Finally, built in quality control and validation procedures safeguard against inadvertent production of privileged documents.

Adding to the appeal of the production capabilities, some platforms also offer an automatically generated privilege log based on the coding applied to documents during review. These logs can be customized to include any custom fields created to designate special privilege specifications, and can include as much or as little information as needed. One of the most tedious tasks about document production is creating the privilege log, but with the tools available in eDiscovery platforms, small firms can breathe easier knowing that the first steps to creating that log are automated and available for editing.

Preparing for Trial

Finally, after producing documents, preparing for hearings and then trial will be much faster with the help of an eDiscovery platform than doing it on your own. Again, for many of the same reasons, the filtering capabilities, searching power, custom coding, and ability to annotate documents from the platform will significantly reduce the time spent on planning and preparing for briefing schedules related to hearings and the various deadlines related to pretrial motions and trial. Platforms such as Lexbe allow for dynamic fact and issue time lining, which is a powerful way to organize a brief or present a demonstrative exhibit. Users can run reports by deponents, date ranges, or any custom coded issues, and, by uploading transcripts, users can implement key document highlighting and annotation to prepare their supporting evidence and deposition designations ahead of trial. If the case makes it all the way to trial, many platforms also allow for documents and timelines to be exported to Trial Director, Verdict, and other presentation programs, cutting back on additional

time spent building the case from scratch in a different interface.

With the Right Technology, Small Firms Can Prevail

Overall, boutique law firms are on the rise, handling larger and more complex cases than ever. Attorneys and paralegals are working to achieve better work-life balance and also the ability to control the types of cases they want to work on, driving the appeal of forming these smaller firms. Effective boutique firms need to be “lean and mean” with limited overhead, but this does not mean they are unable to quickly and accurately push cases through their procedural postures. The boutique firm environment makes having appropriate eDiscovery tools critical for handling complex document-intensive cases. With the right technology, boutique firms are able to leverage time, expertise, and staff in order to accept and successfully manage complex cases cost effectively. □

Erin Derby, CEDS, is a Senior eDiscovery Specialist with Lexbe, LC. Prior to joining Lexbe, Derby was a litigation paralegal for over a decade for both small boutique plaintiff firms and international defense firms working in a wide range of practice groups. For questions regarding any eDiscovery topics, Derby can be reached at ederby@lexbe.com or via her LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/erinderby/>.



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NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF MALA

Pursuant to MALA Bylaws, notice is hereby given this *** day of March, 2019 that the annual meeting of MALA is to be held on **Saturday, March 14, 2020 at 1:15 p.m.** at Fairmont Hot Springs in Fairmont, Montana.

New officers for FY 2020-21 will be elected during the annual meeting. ***IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL MEETING***, please designate your choice of nominee and fill in the Designation of Proxy so another Active Voting MALA member can vote on your behalf for other matters during the business meeting.

On or before Friday, March 6, 2020, please email this form to Samantha Seidensticker at mala@malanet.org.

DESIGNATION OF PROXY

I, _____, an active voting member of MALA, hereby appoint _____, an active voting member of MALA, to serve as my proxy holder at MALA's annual meeting on March 14, 2020 in all matters except election of officers. My vote for officers for FY 2020-21 appears below.

DATED this ____ day of _____, 2020.

(original signature required)

NOMINEES FOR 2020-21 MALA OFFICERS

(candidate bios appear on the following pages)

President: **Alisia Duganz, CP**

Vice President: **Helen Hauerwas**

Rachel Buchner, CP

Secretary: **Velvet Truzzolino**

Treasurer: **Kathy Clark, CP**

Katherine "Katie" Troiano, CP

NALA Liaison: **Amanda Hewitt**

President:



Alisia Duganz, CP grew up in a small town in Southern Oregon. She moved to Montana in 2007 to attend the University of Montana School of Journalism, graduating with honors in 2011. After a stint as a small-town journalist and adjunct journalism professor, Alisia decided to switch career paths and moved to Bozeman to work as an intern at the Goetz Law Firm. Alisia quickly discovered her passion for the legal field and decided to become a paralegal. Alisia is one of around 100 certified paralegals in the state of Montana. She loves trial work and specializes in electronic courtroom presentation. Alisia has spoken at several continuing education seminars sponsored by MALA, the Institute for Paralegals and the National Business Institute. She feels strongly about mentoring and advocating for paralegals. Alisia is the current President of MALA. She is also a member of the National Association of Legal Assistants & Paralegals and the Paralegal Section of the Montana State Bar Association

Vice President:



Helen Hauerwas specializes in tax, estate planning and probate matters. Helen has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from the University of Montana with an emphasis in Accounting and Finance. Prior to joining Bjornson Jones Mungas, Helen was a paralegal with Reely Law Firm and Garlington, Lohn and Robinson. Helen also was a tax preparer for over 10 years. She has more than 16 years experience in probate and estate administration and more than 20 years in accounting, finance and tax. Helen has been an active member of MALA for more than 10 years serving as Vice President this past year and as Treasurer for two years in 2014 and 2015 as well as serving as a member of the MALA Membership Committee.



Rachel Buchner, CP was born in Southern California and traveled around the world with her family until they landed in Lawrence, Kansas in 2001. She graduated from the University of Kansas with degrees in Communication Studies and Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies with an emphasis on politics. Rachel moved to Bozeman in January 2017, and became an intern for Goetz, Baldwin & Geddes P.C. in May of that year. She received her paralegal certification in December 2019 and is one of around 100 certified paralegals in Montana. Rachel is a member of the National Association of Legal Assistants, the Montana Association of Legal Assistants*Paralegals, and the Paralegal Section of the Montana State Bar Association.

Secretary:



Velvet Truzzolino is a civil litigation paralegal and office manager at the law firm of HagEstad Law Group, PLLC with 20 years of experience in the legal field. Her career began with enrollment in the ABA-approved Paralegal Studies program at the Missoula College of Technology in 2000. Upon earning her AAS degree in 2003, Velvet worked as a civil litigation paralegal for three years before enrolling at the University of Montana in 2005. While attending U.M., she interned at A.S.U.M. Legal Services working with law students to perform paralegal and secretarial duties in civil litigation, family law, criminal law, and land-lord/tenant matters. Upon graduation in 2008, Velvet earned a B.A.S. degree from the University of Montana with emphasis in Communications, Political Science and Philosophy. She then worked for a personal injury firm before finding her true passion ten years ago - using her im-

pressive organizational skills to juggle a busy defense litigation schedule with Patrick HagEstad at the law firm of Milodragovich, Dale & Steinbrenner. Velvet joined MALA in 2003, seeking a resource for education and professional development. Velvet's first opportunity to participate as an Officer on the Board of Directors began in 2018 as Parliamentarian and she graciously accepted the position of Secretary for the 2019-2020 year. Velvet is excited to continue her involvement with MALA, both as an Officer and proud Member of this Association. Born in Butte, Montana, Velvet is proud of her heritage and family-owned business of Truzzolino Tamales, leaving the cooking to her Uncle John and Aunt Janel in Butte. When Velvet is not at the office, she is a busy single mom raising her two children, volunteering time to local service organizations, and enjoying the company of her family, friends and Five Valleys Church of Christ family.

Treasurer:



Kathy Clark, CP, is from Gettysburg, Pennsylvania area. She moved to Montana where she met and married Kelly D. Clark who was enlisted in the U.S. Army. Kathy obtained her Associate Degree in Paralegal Studies in 2005, and graduated Cum Laude from Kaplan University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice in 2007. In 2017, Kathy obtained her Certified Paralegal credentials from the National Association of Legal Assistants. Over the past 24 years, Kathy has worked in the areas of criminal defense and medical malpractice. While moving around the country with her husband, she worked in legal offices gaining experience in the areas of Social Security Disability, insurance defense, workers compensation, Wills, Probate and Estate, corporate law, and personal injury. Kathy currently works as an independent contractor in her business, KLC Professional Services, Inc. Prior to working as a paralegal, Kathy had a career in the telecommunications industry where she worked for the

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in licensing, and then for private telecommunications companies. Kathy was a volunteer for the Army's family programs as an Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator, Master Trainer, and Conference Coordinator. She was also a volunteer with CASA. Kathy currently is a member of the Paralegal Section of the State Bar of Montana, the Montana Association of Legal Assistants, and the National Association of Legal Assistants. Kathy likes spending her leisure time with her husband, children and grandchildren, visiting family, traveling, "glamping" in the RV, and various outdoor activities.



Katherine "Katie" Troiano, CP is a Montana native, born and raised in Missoula, MT. After graduating from the University of Montana with a Bachelor of Arts Degree and double major in English and Anthropology, Katie moved to Columbia Falls, Montana to enjoy the Flathead Valley. She and her husband Tony have been blessed with two amazing children who are watched over by their beloved dog. Katie's first job when she moved to the Valley was for a small law firm in Whitefish. There, she climbed the ladder from Receptionist to Paralegal. She attended the National Paralegal College for a Certificate in Paralegal Studies in 2012 and is also a Notary Public for the State of Montana and an active member of the Montana Paralegal Association. In 2016, Katie passed the Certified Paralegal examination sponsored by the National Association of Legal Assistants and received her Certified Paralegal professional credentials. When not working, Katie can be found adventuring in Montana's wilderness. She and her family enjoy fishing, hiking, biking, camping, hunting and skiing whenever they get the chance.

NALA Liaison:



Amanda Hewitt is from Bermerton, WA, and attended high school in Dillon, MT. She has been a MALA member since 2015 and a State Bar member since 2016. She graduated with an Associate Degree in Paralegal Studies in 2014. After an internship at Milodragovich, Dale & Steinbrenner in 2014, she began working as a paralegal with Browning, Kaleczyc, Berry & Hoven. Amanda currently handles mostly transactional work. She also has experience in civil litigation, family law, workers comp, environmental law, estate planning, and probate. She enjoys spending time with her son. Together they enjoy outdoor adventures like hiking and kayaking. Amanda also enjoys sports, reading and cooking. Amanda has served on many MALA committees, served as Secretary and is the current NALA Liaison.

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THE ANSWER

1. Lawyer
2. Paralegal
3. Court
4. Judge
5. Defendant
6. Plaintiff
7. Witness
8. Police
9. Interrogation
10. Interview
11. Judgment
12. Petition
13. Gavel
14. Justice
15. Agreement
16. Victim



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Montana Association of Legal Assistants*Paralegals

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Please submit this form with membership renewal dues for FY April 1, 2020 - March 31, 2021 in the following amounts:

Online: \$26.00

Check/Mail-in: \$30.00

You must also complete and submit the CLE Activity Report to:

MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL ASSISTANTS
ATTN: Membership Chairman
P.O. Box 9016
Missoula, Montana 59807-9016

MEMBER NAME: _____

EMPLOYER: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: (Home) _____

(Business) _____

E-MAIL: _____

AREAS OF LAW: _____

POSITION TITLE: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

Please indicate where you would prefer to have MALA correspondence directed:

Home: ____ or Work: ____ (please check one).

Date

Member Signature



Montana Association of Legal Assistants/Paralegals

CLE Activity Report

Proof of continuing legal education (CLE) must be submitted to retain membership in the Montana Association of Legal Assistants*Paralegals (MALA), as outlined in Article IV of the MALA Bylaws. Please submit this CLE Activity Report with your membership renewal dues. A minimum of ten (10) CLE credits are required for 2019-2020.

CLE ACTIVITIES ATTENDED DURING OR TO BE APPLIED TO THE 2019-2020 REPORTING PERIOD:

Date/ Location	Course Title	Total Credits Earned			
		Interac- tive	*Other	Ethics	

***IMPORTANT: "Other" credits are limited to 4.0 per year. These include audio/video, teaching/preparation, on-line self study, and in-house courses.**

1. Totals (add amounts from the Interactive, Other & Ethics Columns): _____
2. Plus carry-over credits from last year's Affidavit: _____
3. Total of lines 1 and 2 _____
4. Less ten credits for current year requirement -10.00
5. Remainder to be carried over to next reporting year _____
(the maximum carry-over credits allowed is 20.00)

Pursuant to §1-6-105, MCA, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Date

Member Signature



Want to know more about MALA?

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PO Box 9016
Missoula, MT 59807-9016

E-mail:
mala@malanet.org

We're on the Web:
www.malanet.org

