

HISTORY OF THE PARALEGAL DIVISION OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS

1989 - 1990

The Board, the Legal Assistants Committee of the Bar, and paralegal educators met for Forum VIII in San Antonio. The topic of the meeting was "Evaluating the Competency Level of the Paralegal Student and the Program."

Liaisons to the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc. (NALA), the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA), Texas Alliance of Paralegal Associations (TAPA), Texas Association of Legal Secretaries (TALS), Texas Young Lawyers Association (TYLA), the Legal Administrators Division, Texas Association of Paralegal Educators (TAPE), and the Legal Assistants Committee of the Bar were appointed.

An Ad Hoc Committee was formed to compile a digest of historical data collected to date regarding certification which is to be used by the Board to determine future action on the certification issue. A draft of the digest was to be completed by May 1990.

A special committee was created to compile a list of benefits of membership in the Division. A compilation of this data was then published in the Newsletter.

The Public Relations Committee updated the text of the Division's brochure and published it in a new format. Attorney/legal assistant dinners in participating districts continued to be sponsored by the Division and local associations.

The Professional Development Committee sponsored seminars in Midland, El Paso, and Amarillo on Procedure Skills in conjunction with the Secretary of State and local court personnel. All were well attended. The committee received confirmation from the Bar MCLE Department that it will record CLE credits for Division members for CLE functions which have been approved by the MCLE department and will provide a transcript of such recordation at a cost of \$5.00.

The ad hoc membership committee appointed to investigate and present recommendations regarding guidelines for processing membership applications presented its report advising the Board that it could not define the terms "substantive" and "law related legal work" anymore precisely than they are currently defined without the Board determining the direction it wants membership criteria to take. The membership application was changed to permit legal assistants who are employed in Texas, not "reside" in Texas, to be eligible for membership if they meet the other criteria required, including attestation by a Texas attorney. Additionally, the ad hoc membership committee was charged to draft a position paper setting out the policy guidelines for determining whether an applicant for membership qualifies as a legal assistant under the adopted definition.

A search was conducted for an executive director to be retained on a part-time contract employee basis. There were 112 applications received for the position. The executive committee met to review the applications and selected nine applicants for interviews. These applicants were interviewed by the executive committee and three applicants were selected to be interviewed by the full Board. Norma Hackler of Austin was retained by the Board on a part-time contract labor basis as the Division's first Executive Director.

Pamela Young, Chairperson of the Annual Meeting Committee was named Outstanding Committee Chairperson for her stellar performance in planning the Annual Meeting in Dallas. Through this committee's efforts, a number of corporate sponsorships were obtained offsetting many of the expenses and numerous door prizes were contributed. An orientation was held for committee chairpersons and directors and a Former Chairperson's breakfast was held which were new convention activities. Also, a Forum entitled "Make My Day" was held featuring star performances by Texas Supreme Court Justice Nathan Hecht, Federal District Judge Jerry Buchmeyer, and Bar President Darrell Jordon, among others. Each was brought forward to hear the charges against them for legal assistant abuse and entered their plea. They were then shown a videotape in support of the charges against them and allowed to respond to the charges. Each was found guilty by Judge Buchmeyer. Other seminars included: "Star Wars Technology in the Law Office," "Preparing and Organizing the Ultimate Trial Notebook: The Team Approach," "This is Not the Team Jerry Jones Built," "The Stress of Success," and "How to Survive Employment by a Lawyer." Donald S. Akins of Hildebrandt, Inc. was the guest speaker for the Annual Meeting Luncheon and Dale Hansen, a local sports announcer, was the special guest speaker at the Welcome Reception. Registrations for the events broke past records and were as follows: Seminars - 319; Luncheon - 155; and Annual Meeting - 169.

Kathleen Rubinstein, Chairperson of the Elections Committee, received a Special Recognition Award for her contributions to this committee and the Division in setting up the procedures for bylaw amendments to be voted on by mail.

A new procedure was approved by the Board to elect committee chairs prior to the Annual Meeting so that they can attend orientation at the Annual Meeting and get their committees off to a start at the beginning of the new fiscal year. Additionally, the Board elected Board Officers for the next fiscal year at the Spring meeting to provide a smoother transition.

Division membership reached 2,043 during June of 1990.

**Legal Assistants Division
Board of Directors
1989 - 1990**

Officers:

Chair:	Cathrue Benoit
Chair Pro Tem:	Denise Kee Lindgren
Treasurer:	Linda Manning
Secretary:	Jan Soderman
Parliamentarian:	Marge McAuliffe/Sharyn Aust

Directors:

Joanna O. Rondeau	District 1, Place 1
Lynn McBee	District 1, Place 2
Michele M. Boerder	District 2, Place 1
Linda Mock	District 2, Place 2
Sharyn R. Aust	District 3
Janet K. Soderman	District 4
Millie DeAnda	District 5
Ruth H. Bagwell	District 6
Candace Guinn	District 7
Hope Abeyta/Cindy Posey	District 8
Linda Manning	District 9
Cathrue Benoit	District 10
Denise Kee Lindgren	District 11
Marge McAuliffe/Carolyn Plummer	District 12
Linda M. Fiegenger	District 13
Glenda Shelton	District 14
Rosa Maria Garcia	District 15
Deanne A. Galloway	District 16