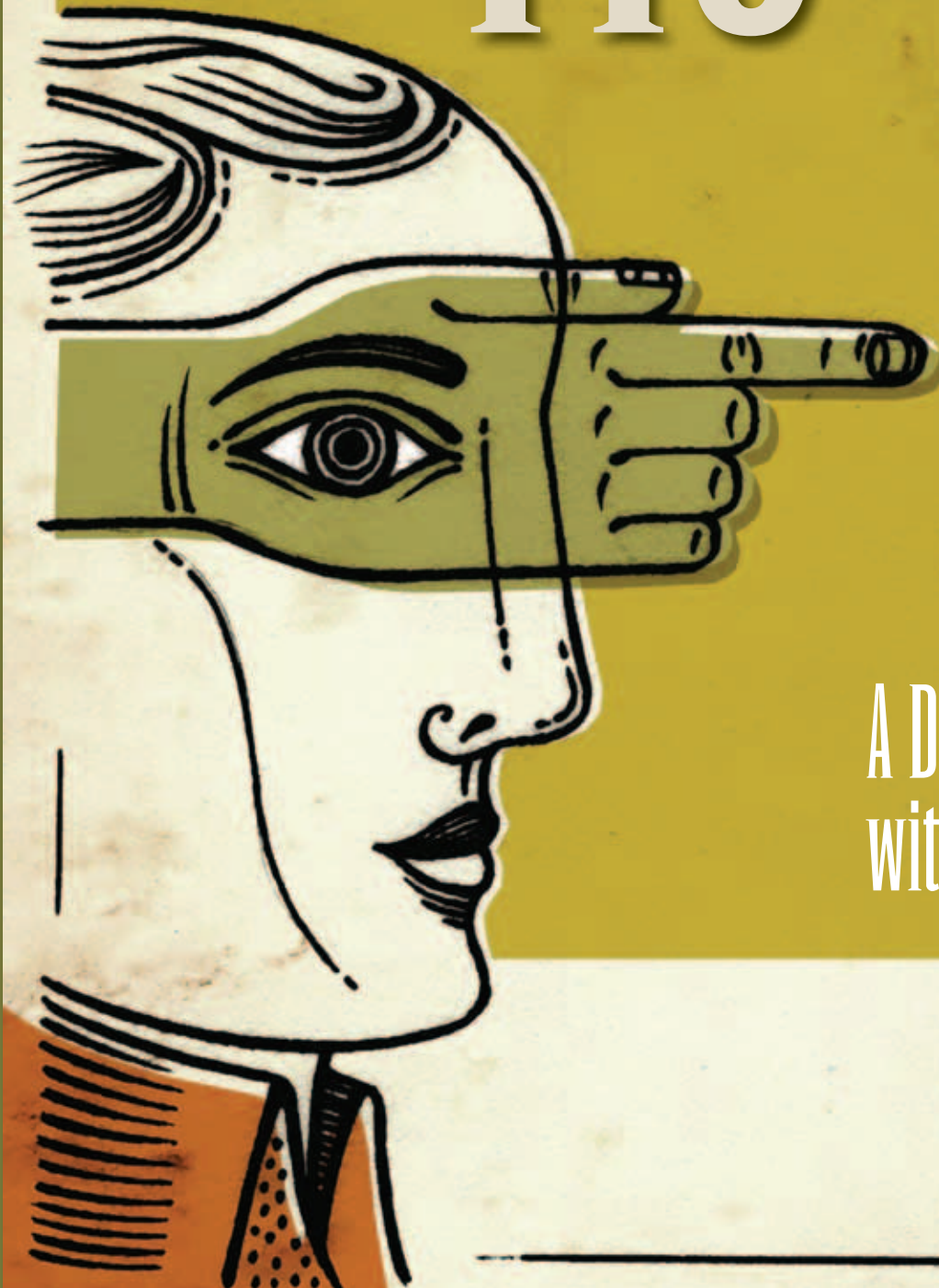


SPRING 2012 VOL. 17 NO. 4

# TPJ

*Texas Paralegal Journal*



A Division  
with a Vision

## TEXAS ADVANCED PARALEGAL SEMINAR

A Three Day Multi-Track CLE Seminar

sponsored by the Paralegal Division State Bar of Texas



# TAPS 2012

A Direct Flight to

# First Class CLE



- Network with paralegals across the State
- Earn up to 14 CLE Hours
- Career Advancement through education
- Professional development opportunities
- Visit the Exhibit Hall
- Wednesday Welcome Social, Thursday Networking Social, and Friday luncheon

**October 3 - 5**  
**Crowne Plaza Hotel**  
**Addison, TX**

**Register at [txpd.org/taps](http://txpd.org/taps)  
in June 2012.**

# PRESIDENT'S *Message*

by Susan Wilen, RN, President, Paralegal Division

**T**his issue of the Texas Paralegal Journal is all about you....it is about what you have accomplished this year, what you have been recognized for this year, and what has been important to you this year. It is about your heart, and your mind, and your back.

But it is also about what the Division has offered you this year. The Districts have provided more than 50 hours of CLE this year, some very elementary and some very advanced. Webinars and on-line CLE continue to provide CLE to paralegals that are not able to attend local CLE presentations.

There were 250 attendees to TAPS in



North Fort Worth last October who had the opportunity to accrue 14 hours of CLE from a cadre of 60 speakers, individuals versed in over ten different specialty areas of the law. And we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Division, realizing how far we have come from 1981.

We celebrate the more than 20 Ambassador presentations throughout the State, bringing Paralegal Division leaders to paralegal gatherings and schools. We are fortunate that we have so many capable leaders who are willing to give of their time and expertise, simply because they still are passionate about the Division.

We also celebrate the e-group, and its wonderful members, for all the guidance and support that is so generously shared between its participants. The scope of questions is mind-boggling, but the information is invaluable. I have heard some members express their reluctance to join the e-group because they fear a flood of inbox activity, but it is an invaluable tool when you need information quickly. And if the topic is something about which you know nothing, your delete button is your friend.

Lastly, I hope you notice all the smiles of our members. The Division is an extraordinary way of meeting new people, making new friends, and doing work that makes a difference. We are "A Division With A Vision"....and lots of heart.

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# TPIJ

## Texas Paralegal Journal

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An outstanding opportunity to learn ...  
and have fun

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# EDITOR'S *Note*

By Heidi Beginski, Board Certified Paralegal, Personal Injury Trial Law, Texas Board of Legal Specialization

"Ideas won't keep. Something must be done about them."—*Alfred North Whitehead*

"I want to put a ding in the universe."—*Steve Jobs*

**Y**ears of work by the Legal Assistants Committee (now known as Paralegal Committee) of the State Bar of Texas and Bar staff led to the establishment of the Legal Assistants Division (now known as Paralegal Division) on October 23, 1981. Their efforts were in response to the growth and development of the paralegal profession. Establishment of the Division was the first such action by any state bar association in the country.

Today, the PD works harder and provides more to its members than ever before. Here's a small sampling of what's going on – check us out!

**Annual Meeting 2012**—The Annual Meeting of the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas will be held in Houston, Texas at The Houston Club on Friday, June 15, 2012 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. This year's theme is: A Tradition of Championing Texas Attorneys.

**Profiling the Paralegal Profession Video**—The Paralegal Division, in conjunction with The University of Texas at El Paso, has created a video, "Profiling the Paralegal Profession", which describes the profession and how attorneys can most effectively use the skills of paralegals. The video is eligible for .5 hours of MCLE accreditation in the area of Law Office Administration to its viewers and is now available for viewing, at no cost.

**TAPS 2012**—The Texas Advanced Paralegal Seminar (TAPS) is in Dallas, Texas at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Addison, TX from October 3 – 5, 2012. Mark your calendars now!! You don't want to miss this event, which is themed "TAPS: A Direct Flight to First Class CLE."

**PD Webinars**—The Paralegal Division offers webinars throughout the year. PD members receive a discount as a member benefit. Watch for details on upcoming webinar events on our website! These webinars are a great way to get some low cost CLE.

**PD Blog**—The Paralegal Division Blog has launched. We are excited to bring you another way to stay current on all of the events and benefits that the Paralegal Division brings you. Please visit the Blog at <http://blog.txpd.org/>. A link to the Blog is also found on the PD website, [www.txpd.org](http://www.txpd.org). To access the Blog, scroll to the bottom of the Home Page and click on the PD Blog button is on the left hand side.

**PD Job Bank**—PD has a Job Bank that is accessible by only its members. Job postings are for positions throughout the State of Texas. Members may post jobs for their firms and corporations through this site, free of charge.

**PD Serves as Statewide CLE Depository**—All CLE offered to Texas paralegals through PD's 15 districts and approximately 32 local paralegal associations in Texas, as well as other legal associations and private CLE vendors, are now submitting CLE events to PD for placement on its website CLE Depository. There are over 150+ events routinely listed for attendance. The listing is searchable by location or key word such as "family law" or "discovery."

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SPRING 2012

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The *Texas Paralegal Journal* is published four times a year as a service to the paralegal profession. A copy of each issue is furnished to the members of the Paralegal Division as part of their dues.

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DEADLINE FOR SUMMER 2012 IS AUGUST 3, 2012

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# Texas Advanced Paralegal Seminar

**T**he Texas Advanced Paralegal Seminar (TAPS) is a three-day CLE event held on an annual basis and is sponsored by the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas.

Each year, TAPS is held in a different Texas city [e.g., 2011—Fort Worth; 2010—Austin; 2009—League City; 2008—San Antonio; and 2007—Addison].

The first TAPS (at that time known as LAU) was held in San Antonio in 1999, making this year's TAPS the 13th year that the seminar will be held. This event is marketed to paralegals across the State of Texas and offers up to 14 hours of CLE over three days. There are approximately 60–65 speakers each year with five tracks of substantive legal topics presented from 9:00 am–5:00 pm daily. Each year, approximately 250 paralegals from across the State of Texas attend TAPS. In addition to the CLE, attendees are treated to two socials and an attendee luncheon. There is an exhibit hall on Thursday; each attendee that visits with all 40 exhibiting companies represented is eligible for one of three cash prizes of \$500 each.

During the 2011 TAPS, the Paralegal Division celebrated its 30th Year Anniversary with fantastic speakers and a dinner atop the Texas Motor Speedway. The featured keynote luncheon speaker was **Roland Johnson**, Past President of the State Bar of Texas, and Partner, Harris, Finley & Bogle, P. C., Fort Worth. Mr. Johnson's presentation was titled: *Where You Are Now Is Nowhere Compared to Where You Can Go! Pearls of Wisdom and Reflection from a Past President*. Mr. Johnson's presentation included the history of the Paralegal Division and the long road paralegals have traveled over the



years. Mr. Johnson is a proven leader in the Texas legal community. He served as president of the State Bar of Texas for 2009–2010. Mr. Johnson has been repeatedly honored for his professionalism and legal knowledge. He was named Sustaining Life Fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation. He served as board member of the State Bar of Texas from 2003 to 2006. In 2006, he was named Outstanding Third Year Director of the State Bar of Texas. In 2005, the Texas Wesleyan University School of Law presented him with the Distinguished Adjunct Faculty Award.

2011 TAPS speakers included **John G. Browning**, Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith, LLP, Dallas whose topic was *When the Jury Box Becomes Pandora's Box—Dangers of the Online Juror*. Mr. Browning gave a very funny yet informative twist on the issues lawyers are faced with by today's new juror, a juror who comes to the courtroom with ideas on the case at hand due to the internet and social media. Today's jurors can't resist the urge

to share the information they have been made privy to and even ask their friends on Facebook and through blogs how they should vote. Jurors are also researching via the internet the legal concepts and questions being presented to them in the courtroom. He provided information on these problems and what is being done to prevent jurors from surfing the web and Tweeting or using Facebook to correspond with their friends and colleagues about the case on which they are serving as a juror. He also provided some tips for attorneys and paralegals to find out more about prospective jurors through the internet and social media. **Richard T. Robinson**, Manager of Technology, Gardere Wynne Sewell, LLP, Dallas presented *eDiscovery, Social Media and Related Internet Legal Issues*. Mr. Robinson discussed the new rules governing social media and e-Evidence. He covered the growth of electronic evidence due to the increase in social media, how social media is affecting the cases that lawyers get and even the selection of juries in some high profile cases, retaining and finding electronically stored information.

2010 TAPS speakers included **Ranelle M. Meroney's**, attorney with Chamberlain McHaney, whose presentation explained the magnitude of *Medicare, Medicaid and the SCHIP Extension Act* by defining the rights of reimbursement and how it is managed by those in the personal injury arena. Although these amendments are arguably complex, her presentation helped many to understand the functions and fundamentals of a very challenging area of law. Her explanations were concise, straightforward and will assist many of us in our efforts to comply with these very complicated laws. **Judy Kostura**, attorney

with Judge, Kostura & Putman, P.C., gave a presentation on *Subrogations and Liens in Personal Injury Cases*, explored the state and federal statutes and cases on the topic of subrogation from the plaintiff's view point. The material was easy to follow and well structured. She included examples of cases and her paper enabled a better comprehension of the framework of subrogation. She was very informative in her presentation and captured attendees' attention with her humor. The overall presentation was engaging and colorful. Many people appreciated the depth and detail of her paper.

2009 TAPS speakers featured **Jonathan Gould, Ph.D.**, and **Jay Flens, Ph.D.**, traveled across the country (from North Carolina and Florida) to make their two-session presentation to us. Drs. Gould and Flens also presented at the State Bar's Advanced Family Law Seminar that past summer in Dallas, and are considered to be the "gurus" of child custody, having devised the 2.2.5 visitation schedule. Their presentations were informative and entertaining. It truly says something regarding the quality of information we are presenting, when renowned speakers from across the country are willing (at

their own cost) to appear and present to the Paralegal Division. Dr. Gould commented afterwards that they were in a room full of bright women and men, and our participation regarding exchange of information was exceptionally insightful, and truly made them feel as if they were able to provide us information that would be useful in the future. **Elaine Lowenkron** of Attorney Resource traveled to League City to provide the attendees with classes on Power Point and Excel for 2007. The classes were very helpful and gave numerous tips and tricks for the use of these two programs for optimal use in a firm's legal practice.

In addition to distinguished speakers at TAPS, the Paralegal Division offers attendees time to get acquainted. There is a Wednesday Welcome Social that is attended by the attendees, guests and all of the representatives of the exhibiting companies. This first night social gives the attendees a chance to wind down from a busy first day and greet new and old acquaintances. The Welcome Social is viewed as a chance to get together and, perhaps, go to dinner that evening with fellow attendees.

On Thursday evening, the attendees

are treated to an off-site social with dinner and fun. There is entertainment and special time together. Each year, the Thursday social is planned around the "theme" of the event. A sampling of Thursday events have been riding race cars at Texas Motor Speedway in Fort Worth, an elegant formal dinner at the Delaney Vineyards in Grapevine, a night at Esther's Follies in Austin, a dinner water cruise in League City, a fun night at Cibolo Ranch with a cowboy riding demonstration in San Antonio, and a night of bowling, billiards, and miniature golf at 300 Dallas. Don't miss what is in store for everyone in 2012 (October 3-5) in Addison!

As always, there are door prizes for attendees, giveaways by the sponsoring vendors in the exhibit hall, opportunities to network with colleagues, and, of course, the best legal education you can attend in Texas.

The 2012 TAPS will be held in Addison on October 3-5, 2012. Access detailed information at [www.txpd.org/taps](http://www.txpd.org/taps) to discover what is planned this year. Registration begins on June 15. This is one event you don't want to miss.

## TAPS 2012 Scholarship

Two (2) educational scholarships will be awarded to PD members for the upcoming 2012 Texas Advanced Paralegal Seminar (TAPS), a three-day CLE seminar, the PARALEGAL DIVISION of the State Bar of Texas. Below are guidelines for applying for this scholarship.

1. The Recipient must be a member (or apply for membership) of the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas.
2. To apply for a TAPS scholarship, the applicant is required to give a written essay on the following: **How has Membership in the Paralegal Division helped you in recognizing the importance of CLE?** The essay must be two (2) pages in length and double-spaced.
3. To apply for a TAPS scholarship, the applicant is required to provide two (2) personal references, which describe the applicant's involvement in the paralegal profession.
4. Financial need shall be a contributing factor, but not a requirement. However, if two or more applicants are tied in meeting the criteria for the scholarship, financial need shall be the determining factor.
5. Recipient(s) are required to volunteer a minimum of three hours on-site during the event.

To apply, go to [www.txpd.org](http://www.txpd.org), choose 2012 TAPS Scholarship Announced under NEWS on home page. Complete the application and submit (no later than July 25, 2012).

# Standing Committees

**E**ach year the Paralegal Division Board of Directors appoints members to serve on the various committees of the Paralegal Division. The Paralegal Division sends a call to each member of PD and asks for their assistance in serving this great organization. The list below details the Standing Committees of the Paralegal Division. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please contact your District Director (see email addresses on page 1 of this publication). **OR** you may go to [www.txpd.org](http://www.txpd.org); sign into the Members-Only Area of the PD website and choose "Volunteer."

1. **Annual Meeting.** This committee shall plan the Annual Meeting of the general membership of the Division. The Chair and Board Advisor of this committee each year shall be from the District in which the Annual Meeting will be held the following year.
2. **Continuing Education.** This committee shall be composed of at least one eligible (Active) member from each District who shall chair a subcommittee of three to five eligible members of the Division in the respective District. This committee shall be responsible for planning and presenting at least three hours of continuing legal education in each district per year. The committee shall also implement and manage an online continuing legal education program. The Continuing Education Committee shall also implement and monitor compliance with the six-hour mandatory continuing legal education require-

ment in conjunction with the Membership Committee.

3. **Elections.** This committee shall be composed of at least one active member from each District and shall fulfill the responsibilities set forth in these Standing Rules and the Bylaws. This committee will be concerned with the process of elections for Directors and with the process of balloting on proposed amendments to the Bylaws and shall assure compliance with the guidelines for each such process.
4. **Membership.** This committee shall be composed of at least one active member from each District and shall fulfill the responsibilities set forth in Section II of these Standing Rules. This committee will be concerned with qualifications for membership and the criteria to be used in determining eligibility, and shall promote membership and growth within the Division.
5. **Professional Development.** This committee will assist in various projects for enhancing the professional development of Paralegals. This committee shall also monitor any bills introduced in the Texas legislature which would affect the paralegal profession and members of the Division, and shall be prepared to inform the general membership of the pros and cons of any such bills. This committee shall also monitor nationally the following: (a) articles published regarding the activities and profession of Paralegals; (b) legislative action regarding the activities and profession of Paralegals; and (c) court cases relative to the ethical considerations in the use of Paralegals and any other relevant information regarding the activities and profession of Paralegals. This committee shall recommend to the Board any legislation which it deems to be in the best interest of the general membership of the Division; and it shall recommend to the Board the dissemination to the general membership of the Division of any national articles, legislative action or court cases which it deems appropriate.
6. **Public Relations.** This committee shall be composed of at least one eligible (Active) member from each District. This committee shall study and develop various means to better inform the legal profession and the general public about the Paralegal Division, Paralegal profession, and shall nurture positive relationships with local and national associations of paralegals and other associations throughout the country.
7. **Publications.** This committee shall be responsible for reviewing and submitting various items for publication in the *Texas Paralegal Journal*. It shall also study and recommend to the Board any other publications which will be beneficial to members of the Division and shall also be responsible for soliciting articles from as many members as possible.



# Committees

The Paralegal Division salutes its 2011–2012 Committee Volunteers. Thank you is not enough because without YOU, the Paralegal Division would not accomplish its goals. Members of the PD's Committees are the strength of this organization.

## **Bylaws and Standing Rules Committee**

Kristy Ritchie, Parliamentarian, Chair (San Antonio)

## **Continuing Education Committee - Online CLE and Webinars**

Rhonda Brashears, CP, TBLS, Chair (Amarillo)

## **Continuing Education Committee – District CLE**

Sheila Milbrandt, Chair (Beaumont)  
Jane Barron, Member (Beaumont)  
Ginger Gage, Member (Longview)  
Sandi Gamblin, TBLS, Member (Denton)  
Edna Garza, Member (McAllen)  
Patti Giuliano, Member (San Antonio)  
Kimberly Hennessy, CP, Member (Odessa)  
Mary Mitchell, Member (Amarillo)  
Sonya Peres, Member (Alvin)  
Vanetta Murphree Peterson, Member (Houston)  
Mariann Porter, Member (El Paso)  
Michele Rayburn, CP, TBLS (Fort Worth)  
Virginia (Ginger) Smith, TBLS, Member (Austin)  
Leigh Steinberg, Member (Irving)  
Sheila Veach, Member (Lubbock)  
Janette Ybarra, Member (Austin)

## **Elections Committee**

Gloria Porter, Chair (Denton)  
Priscilla Brooks, Member (Denton)  
Peggy Dieter, CP, Member (El Paso)  
Shandi Howard Farkas, CP, Member (Amarillo)  
Darla J. Fisher, Member (Midland)  
Claudette Gordon, Member (Fort Worth)  
Javan Johnson, ACP, TBLS, Member (Longview)  
Kathie Jean Keys, PP, PLS, Member (Corpus Christi)  
Angie Laird, ACP, Member (Beaumont)  
Melanie Langford, CLA, Member (San Antonio)  
Meyon Lawson, CP, Member (Irving)  
Koreen Mefferd, Member (La Feria)  
Jennifer Fielder Meiners, Member (Austin)  
Paulina Nguyen, Member (Houston)  
Sonya Peres, Member (Alvin)

## **Membership Committee**

Jennifer Washington, Chair (Austin)  
Tonya Brothers, Member (Houston)  
Jan Bufkin, CP, Member (Lubbock)  
Mariela Cawthon, CP, Member (Dallas)  
Cindy Dunn, RP, TBLS, Member (Fort Worth)  
Sharon Heinaman, Member (Corpus Christi)  
Misti Janes, TBLS, Member (Amarillo)  
Penny Keller, Member (Austin)  
Melanie Langford, CLA, Member (San Antonio)  
Rachel Magdaleno, Member (El Paso)  
Mary McDowell, CP, Member (Midland)  
Audrey Moore, CP, Member (Houston)  
Martha Ramirez, Member (McAllen)  
Pamela Snavelly, CP, Member (Denton)  
Shannon Watts, TBLS, Member (Longview)  
Sharon Wornick, Member (Silsbee)

## **Procedures Manual Committee**

Joncilee Davis, ACP, Chair, PD President Elect (Dallas)

## **Professional Development Committee**

Kristina Kennedy, TBLS, Chair (Austin)  
Michele Boerder, CP, TBLS, Member (Dallas)  
Christine Cook, Member (San Antonio)  
Michelle Iglesias, TBLS, Member (Austin)  
Gina Landingham, ACP, Member (Fort Worth)  
Sharon Wornick, CP, Member (Silsbee)

## **Professional Ethics Committee**

Ellen Lockwood, ACP, RP, Chair (San Antonio)

## **Publications Committee**

Heidi Beginski, TBLS, Chair (El Paso)  
Dora Hudgins, CPLS, CP, Member (Austin)  
Pam Knapp, Member (McKinney)  
Katrina Lea, Member (Roanoke)  
Sharon Mork, Member (Houston)  
Barbara Shields, Member (Plano)  
Elizabeth Shumaker, CLA, Member (Austin)

## **Public Relations Committee**

Mary LaRue, Chair (El Paso)  
Erica Anderson, ACP, Member (Amarillo)  
Joni Barr, Member (Plano)  
Andrea Brunson, Member (Big Sandy)  
Virginia Perales Gil, TBLS, Member (Brownsville)  
Penny Grawunder, TBLS, Member (Dallas)  
Debbie House, CP, TBLS, Member (Fort Worth)  
Mary Beth Jones, Member (Beaumont)

Janet McDaniel, CP, Member (Midland)  
Candace Norrod, CP, Member (Lubbock)  
Kristi Ritchie, Member (San Antonio)  
Stephanie Rodriguez, Member (Houston)  
Stephanie Sterling, Member (Austin)

## **AD HOC COMMITTEES**

### **Ambassador Program Ad Hoc Committee**

Patti Giuliano, Chair (San Antonio)

### **E-Group Policy Ad Hoc Committee**

Heidi Beginski, TBLS, Chair (El Paso)  
Allyson Ayton, CP, Member (Houston)  
Sandi Clarke, CP, Member (Longview)  
Lisa S. Gomez, Member (Dallas)  
Gloria Rodriguez, Member (Austin)

### **Ethics Handbook Ad Hoc Committee**

Ellen Lockwood, ACP, RP, Chair (San Antonio)

### **Membership Renewals/Spot Audit Ad Hoc Committee**

Lori Winter, CP, Chair (Dallas)

### **Pro Bono Ad Hoc Committee**

Lyla Malolepszy Elk, Chair (Sherman)  
Rhonda Haynes, CP, Member (Fort Worth)  
Stephanie Sterling, Member (Austin)

### **State Bar College Board of Directors (Paralegal Division Representative)**

Jena Parker, CP (Fort Worth)

### **State Bar College Membership Application Review Ad Hoc Committee**

Mary Morman, CP, Chair (Garland)

### **Texas Advanced Paralegal Seminar (2011)**

Debbie Oaks, Chair & PD Immediate Past President (Irving)  
Jennifer Barnes, CP, Member (Houston)  
Rhonda Brashears, CP, TBLS, Member (Amarillo)  
Patti Giuliano, Member (San Antonio)  
Penny Grawunder, TBLS, Member (Dallas)  
Javan Johnson, ACP, TBLS, Member (Longview)  
Sunnie Palmer, Member (Denton)  
Gloria Porter, Member (Denton)  
Star Moore, CP, Member (Fort Worth)  
Julie Sherman, TBLS, Member (Fort Worth)  
Susan Wilen, RN, PD President, Member (San Antonio)

### **Vendor Liaison Ad Hoc Committee**

Debbie Oaks, Chair & PD Immediate Past President (Irving)

# Member Benefits

## On-Line CLE and Webinars

**O**n-Line CLE is available to members and non-members of the Paralegal Division. Division members receive a discounted rate on all CLE purchases. The Division has numerous CLE programs in its library and it is continually being added to. Anyone can find a topic that fits into their practice area or in an area they feel they need just need to know more about.

In addition to pre-recorded on-line CLE, the Division consistently hosts live webinars on various topics. Information regarding these webinars will be sent to Division members through Division e-blasts.

If you are interested in seeing what the Division has in its on-line CLE library please visit at [www.txpd.org](http://www.txpd.org) and click on the **CLE OnLine** tab on the left hand side.

For your convenience in obtaining the required 6 hours of CLE for renewing Active and Associate membership in the Paralegal Division, Online CLE is an easy way to complete the requirement.

If you have any suggested topics or know of a great substantive legal topic presenter willing to provide a webinar, please contact the On-Line CLE Chair, Rhonda Brashears, at [CEC@txpd.org](mailto:CEC@txpd.org).

## Paralegal Division District CLE

**E**ach District of the Paralegal Division is required to present at least three (3) hours of CLE to the membership each fiscal year. Districts are also permitted to provide CLE webinar presenters to the PD Online CLE Committee Chair, Rhonda Brashears.

Each District has a Continuing Education Committee sub-chair who is in charge of providing District CLE in compliance with the required number of CLE's. The PD has two different types of CLE. The most frequently scheduled CLE is a "Brown Bag" which is held during a lunch hour at no cost to attendees and

counts as one (1) CLE credit. Districts are also permitted to hold income-producing seminars whereby attendees pay a registration fee to attend. The income-producing seminars are generally a three (3) or four (4) hour event.

By the end of this fiscal year, it is anticipated that the PD will have provided a total of 50 CLE hours to its members across the state (exclusive of online webinars).

## Ambassador Program

**D**o you have a limited speaker pool? Do you occasionally want a paralegal speaker who can talk on issues that directly relate to paralegals? If so, I encourage you to request a Paralegal Division Ambassador for your next event. Our Ambassadors are the current and past presidents of the Paralegal Division and can speak on paralegal ethics, utilization of paralegals, intellectual property, reviewing medical records, trial notebooks, e-discovery, professionalism, and a number of other topics. Also, subject to some limitations, we cover the cost of getting an Ambassador to your seminar—so it can be as easy as going to our website and sending us your request. The request form must be completed and submitted to the Ambassador Committee Chair. Go to [www.txpd.org](http://www.txpd.org), choose CLE/Events, choose "Request PD Ambassador."

## Join the PD E-Group Today!

**T**he eGroup is another way members can stay abreast of paralegal activities. The eGroup's underlying technology is an easy-to-use group email service known as a list server. The list server stores the list of "subscribed" member email addresses and handles the interchange of email messages among those on the list.

The eGroup is a way for members to share information and to get input to help address questions. Say you have a question and think the group would be resource; you could send your question to the

eGroup. Hopefully someone in the group can give you some fresh ideas about the matter. Please read more about eGroup *netiquette* by going to [www.txpd.org](http://www.txpd.org) in the Members-Only tab and selecting eGroup in the drop down menu.

Following is feedback from members on the eGroup benefit:

*This is truly awesome and an excellent tool for networking, experience and education for paralegals. Thank you for this group of exceptional professionals.*

Teresa  
Waco

*Thank you for this group!! The paralegal e-group IS the greatest thing since sliced bread. It benefits me in so many ways. As paralegals we are called upon to work in many different areas of law, some for which we may not have much, if any, experience. This group allows us to communicate, ask questions, and obtain information from paralegals who have experience in areas that we may not be familiar with. It allows us to give and receive information related to venues and jurisdictions, procedural information, computer technology, various software, not to mention the grammar lessons. It would be so much harder to do my job well without this group. I could go on and on.*

*Thank you TXPD for this group and a BIG thank you to all who participate. YOU have made me a better paralegal.*

Christine  
San Antonio

## How to sign-up (PD Members Only) PD E-GROUP

- **How do I sign up for the PD E-Group?**
- To sign up, go to [www.txpd.org](http://www.txpd.org), click on Members-Only (sign in as a PD member) and choose E-Group. There will be directions on how to sign up. **You will be required to respond to an email confirmation.** Once you have completed the registration process you will begin receiving e-mails from members of the PD.

# PD Member Awards



Joncilee Miller Davis, ACP, Dallas

## 2012 PARALEGAL GATEWAY SUPERSTAR

ParalegalGateway.com was formed in 2001. Paralegal, Jeannie S. Johnston, created the World Wide Web for Paralegal Professionals. One major goal of ParalegalGateway.com is to “continue offering support, professional information and above all, recognition to paralegals” who are making a difference in both the legal profession and their communities.

On an annual basis, ParalegalGateway.com receives nominees for its Paralegal Superstar Calendar. In 2012, **Joncilee Miller Davis, ACP**, President Elect of the Paralegal Division, was selected as one of the “superstars.” These paralegals clearly exemplify some of the best and brightest of our profession.

Joncilee M. Davis, ACP has been a member of the Paralegal Division (PD) since 1998. Joncilee will take office of President of the Paralegal Division for 2012–2013. She has previously served the PD as District 2 Membership Committee Subchair, Membership Committee Chair, District 2 Director, and Public Relations Committee Chair.

Joncilee is employed full time as a paralegal for Fee Smith Sharp & Vitullo in Dallas, Texas. Her civil litigation practice areas include insurance defense, with experience in wrongful death cases. She has previously worked in the fields of intellectual property law, appellate law, family law, criminal law, commercial litigation, and toxic tort. Joncilee’s passion is to energize and rejuvenate PD members by re-igniting their passion for their paralegal career. “A substantial portion of our lives are spent at work, so it is very important to find professionally rewarding activities.” She would like to do so by promoting new skill developments and opportunities for existing members.



Toya Walker, Dallas

## FREDERICK BARROW PARALEGAL OF THE YEAR AWARD

**T**oya J. Walker, 2011–2012 District 2 Director—Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas was named the 2011 Inaugural recipient of the first annual Frederick Barrow Paralegal of the Year Award. Well-known Dallas attorney, Frederick Barrow of Littler Mendelson,

P.C., presented the award to Ms. Walker at the 2nd Annual J.L. Turner Legal Association Paralegal Section’s (“JLTLA-PS”) Holiday Luncheon and Awards Ceremony on December 1, 2011. During the luncheon, Chief Justice Carolyn Wright gave the oath of office to Ms. Walker, who was elected the 2012–2013 JLTLA-PS President.

The Frederick Barrow Paralegal Award is presented to a paralegal in the section who exemplifies a paralegal in both education and leadership qualities, mentoring to other paralegal students, professionalism, service to the community and zealous in carrying out the mission of the Paralegal Section. “She always does it with a smile and a positive attitude,” states Mr. Barrow in his introductory speech before presenting the award.

As part of her duties as District 2 Director, Ms. Walker serves as the State Bar of Texas Paralegal Division’s 2011–2012 Board Liaison for the National Association for Legal Assistants and Paralegals (NALA) and Board Liaison for the International Paralegal Management Association (IPMA).

Ms. Walker is litigation paralegal at the law firm of Chamblee, Ryan, Kershaw, and Anderson, P.C. Ms. Walker graduated *cum laude* in 1998 while earning her B.A. in Political Science from Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and completed her first year of legal studies towards a Juris Doctorate degree at Southern University Law Center prior to earning her paralegal certificate that is approved by the American Bar Association from Southeastern Paralegal Institute in 2002. Ms. Walker is an advocate of paralegals receiving adequate education, training, mentorship and job opportunities; she carries out these goals as an Advisor on the Everest College and Kaplan College Advisory Boards.





Kristina Kennedy, Austin

### **CAPA PARALEGAL OF THE YEAR AWARD**

**K**ristina Kennedy was presented with the 2011 Paralegal of the Year Award by the Capital Area Paralegal Association (CAPA) and Registered Agent Solutions, Inc. Ms. Kennedy is a family law paralegal at the Law Office of Robert R. Raesz, Jr., and she is board certified by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization in Family Law and Civil Trial Law. She is also an Advanced Certified Paralegal through the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA). She received her Bachelor of Journalism and Bachelor of Arts from the University of Texas at Austin.

Ms. Kennedy has held several positions in CAPA and has volunteered on many committees. She served as the Community Services Committee Chair for two years and served as the Treasurer on the Board of Directors for one year. She has also been a member of the Paralegal Division since 1995. She served on the Planning Committee for the Annual Meeting, and she was the co-chair for the Annual Meeting Committee. Additionally she served as the CLE co-chair, the Professional Development sub-chair, and she is currently serving as the Professional Development chair.

Ms. Kennedy is married and has two children. She enjoys volunteering and believes that community service is the best way to reach other people. She has worked with Volunteer Legal Services in their evening clinics assisting people needing family law services. She has also been a CASA (Court Appointed Special

Advocate) since 2003. She feels that she gets as much out of volunteering as she hopes she is improving lives.



Cindy Welch, Dallas

### **DAPA PARALEGAL OF THE YEAR AWARD**

**A**fter graduating from the University of Texas at Dallas School with a B.S. in Business Administration, Cindy Welch, RP® attended El Centro Community College for her paralegal certificate. Early in her career, she was employed by a group of trial consultants and a national mediation and arbitration firm. She has also worked for a Dallas firm that assisted police officers and fire fighters in legal actions relating to their employment and a defense labor and employment firm. Currently, she works for attorneys practicing in the areas of labor and employment, family law, representation of peace officers and personal injury law.

Cindy is in her tenth year as an adjunct professor, including five spent in the paralegal department of El Centro Community College. She is the author of many articles for *The Reporter* and has written for the *Texas Paralegal Journal*. Over the years, Cindy has served the Dallas Area Paralegal Association in several capacities: President, Secretary, PACE Ambassador, NFPA Primary and Secondary, and Vendor Advisor. Before being elected Region II Director in 2010, she served NFPA as CLE Co-Coordinator and as a PACE Assistant Coordinator. Cindy became a PACE Registered Paralegal® in 2001 has been a member of

the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas for 15 years.

She has been honored by the Dallas Area Paralegal Association with the Volunteer of the Year award in 2004, the President's Award in 2008, and the Paralegal of the Year award for 2011.



Bruce Moseley, Amarillo

### **ATTORNEY OF THE YEAR** Awarded by the Amarillo-Area Equal Justice Volunteer Program (Ejvp) of Legal Aid Northwest Texas

**B**ruce Moseley, Advisor to the Paralegal Studies Program at Amarillo College, humbly accepted the title of Attorney of the Year, awarded by the Amarillo-area Equal Justice Volunteer Program (EJVP) of Legal Aid Northwest Texas in October, 2011. With an easy smile and positive spirit, Bruce dedicates many hours of volunteer legal services to indigent clients and Legal Aid programs across the Panhandle of Texas. "I hate that justice in this country is not cheap, but I also know that it is very difficult for attorneys in private practice to find time to take on pro bono cases," Moseley said. "I just do what I can because it's helping the people who need it most, people who simply can't otherwise afford it." The ABA approved program at Amarillo College has bloomed under his tutelage from approximately 60 majors in 2009 to over 100 in 2012. Bruce teaches several classes in addition to advising all paralegal majors, and he is the advisor of several groups including the Badger Hearts, Phi Theta Kappa, State Employee Charitable Campaign, and the

newly formed Legal Society of Amarillo College. He and his wife, Robbie, have two children.



Mariela Cawthon, Dallas

### **PARALEGAL OF THE YEAR**

By the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA®)

The National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc. (NFPA) selected Mariela Evora Cawthon as the recipient of the organization's 2011 Paralegal of the Year Award. The award was presented at NFPA's Annual Convention on October 14, 2011 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Paralegal of the Year Award is given to an individual, whose on-the-job-achievements have contributed to the expansion of the paralegal profession, including contributions to her employer and colleagues and the paralegal profession in general.

Mariela Evora Cawthon has been a very involved member of the Dallas Area Paralegal Association (DAPA) since 1997. Ms. Cawthon obtained her Bachelor's Degree in 1993 from Baylor University. Ms. Cawthon attended one year of law school before deciding to become a paralegal and has worked at her current firm since 2001 where she handles complex commercial litigation cases.

Ms. Cawthon has served as DAPA's Chair of the Pro Bono Committee/Community Service Committee, Mentor/Protégé Committee and CLE Audit Committee. Ms. Cawthon was awarded DAPA's Pro Bono Award in 2005; the President's Award in 2006 and is DAPA's 2010 Paralegal of the Year.



Cindy Welch, Dallas

### **RE-ELECTED AS DIRECTOR, REGION II**

For the National Federation Of Paralegal Associations (NFPA®)

The National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc. (NFPA) is pleased to announce that Cindy Welch, RP® of Fort Worth, TX has been re-elected to the position of Director of Region II for 2011-2012. Cindy Welch, RP graduated from the University of Texas at Dallas with a B.S. in Business Administration and then attended El Centro Community College for her paralegal certificate. She has been employed by a group of trial consultants and a national mediation and arbitration firm. She has also worked for a Dallas firm that assisted police officers and fire fighters in legal actions relating to their employment and a defense labor and employment firm. Currently, she is working as a freelance paralegal in the areas of labor and employment, family law and representation of peace officers.

Ms. Welch is in her tenth year as an adjunct professor, including five spent in the paralegal department of El Centro Community College. She is the author of many articles for the NFPA's *Paralegal Reporter* and has written for the *Texas Paralegal Journal*. Over the years, Ms. Welch has served her local association, the Dallas Area Paralegal Association, in several capacities: President, Secretary, PACE® Ambassador, NFPA Primary and Vendor Advisor. Before being elected Region II Director in 2010 and 2011, she served NFPA as CLE Co-Coordinator and as a PACE Assistant Coordinator.

Ms. Welch became a PACE Registered Paralegal® in 2001 and is a member of the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas.



Melissa Marquez Leslie, Dallas

### **ELECTED AS VICE PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR**

of Marketing of the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (Nfpa®)

The National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc. (NFPA) is pleased to announce that Melissa Marquez Leslie of Richardson, TX was elected as Vice President and Director of Marketing for 2011-2013.

Ms. Leslie has been a family law paralegal for over 17 years. She is currently a paralegal at the North Texas firm of Koons Fuller, P.C.

As a member of the Dallas Area Paralegal Association (DAPA), Ms. Leslie has held the offices of President, President-Elect, Professional Development Director, NFPA Primary, Board Advisor, NFPA Secondary and Vendor Advisor. She has chaired many events for DAPA including the 2009-2011 full day CLE seminars, Diversity University and is a member of many event planning committees. Ms. Leslie was named DAPA's Volunteer of the Year in 2007. She also served as the NFPA Corporate Partners Coordinator from November 2009 – October 2011. Besides her involvement in DAPA and NFPA, she has been involved in the Texas Alliance of Paralegal Associations, the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas, and has served on numerous advisory boards. Ms. Leslie received her Paralegal Certificate (with Honors) from Southeastern



Paralegal Institute in 1994 and received her B.S. in Political Science from Sam Houston State University in 1993.

Ms. Leslie and her husband, Carey, are volunteer puppy raisers for Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc., [www.guidedogs.org](http://www.guidedogs.org).



Michele Boerder, CP, TBLS

## 2011 WILLIAM R. ROBIE AWARD

By the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA®)

The National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc. (NFPA) selected Michele Boerder, CP, TBLS, as the recipient of the organization's 2011 William R. Robie Award. The award was presented at NFPA's Annual Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota on October 14, 2011.

NFPA established the award in 1993 to honor the memory of the late Chief Immigration Judge William R. Robie for his dedication to the expansion of legal

services and equal access to justice for all Americans and his commitment to the paralegal profession. The winner of the annual award must have made a lasting legacy through his or her contributions to the community and the paralegal profession.

Michele Boerder has been a member of the Dallas Area Paralegal Association ("DAPA") since 1983 and has worked in the legal field for 31 years. During her career, Michele never stopped learning, volunteering and sharing her leadership skills. Besides her involvement in DAPA and NFPA, she has been involved in the Texas Alliance of Paralegal Associations, the Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas, and has served on numerous advisory boards and is a sought after speaker throughout the State of Texas. Michele graduated from the Paralegal Assistant Program at El Centro College in Dallas, Texas with an Associate's Degree in 1979. Later, she earned her Bachelor's Degree, *magna cum laude* from the University of North Texas as well as receiving an "Outstanding Student" award. In 2010, Michele earned a Master of Science Degree in Applied Technology Training and Development from the University of Texas.

In 2006, DAPA created a new award titled "The Michele Boerder Lifetime Achievement Award." The award is modeled after NFPA's William R. Robie Award as well as the significant contributions made by the award's namesake, Michele Boerder. Michele was the first recipient of the award named in her honor.

Michele and her husband, Scott Boerder, have been married for 33 years and they have a son, Ryan who is 21 years old. Michele is a past president of the Paralegal

Division of the State Bar of Texas. Michele also has served on the State Bar of Texas Paralegal Committee, the TBLS Paralegal Civil Trial Commission, NFPA's Paralegal Advanced Competency Exam Standards Committee, and Paralegal Today magazine's editorial review board. She received the Dallas Area Paralegal Association's Paralegal of the Year Award in 1995, NFPA's Paralegal of the Year award in 2005 and the Dallas Area Paralegal Association Lifetime Achievement award in 2006.

## SETAP PARALEGAL OF THE YEAR AWARD

Caryl McBroom, Beaumont

Caryl McBroom will be Membership Sub-Chair for District 10 when the new fiscal year, 2012–2013, begins in June. She has been a PD member for at least three years. She attended Sam Houston State University, graduating with a Bachelor of Science Degree in 1999. She also received her Paralegal Certificate through Blackstone Career Institute. She is currently employed with The Brasher Law Firm, PLLC and has worked with Clint Brasher for three years. For the past two years, she has served as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of her local association, Southeast Texas Association of Paralegals (SETAP) and was voted Paralegal of the Year for 2011.

Caryl is looking forward to serving with the Paralegal Division, which she expects to open the door for networking, making friends, and CLE.

Caryl is married and has two children.

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## UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Not receiving mail or email messages from the Paralegal Division?

UPDATE NOW!

Update work address, home mailing address, revise email address, and/or phone numbers on the State Bar of Texas master membership roster via the State Bar of Texas website.

- Go to [www.texasbar.com](http://www.texasbar.com)
- Choose on MyBarPage (top home page)
- Enter your membership (Bar) number and password
- Choose Update My Profile

If you have never visited this page, you will need to set up a pin (password) number. Your password to set up your NEW Pin/password is the last four digits of your social security number (if the State Bar does NOT have your social security number on file, you will not be able to use this area nor will you have access to MyBarPage); once you set up the new pin number, you will be able to enter this section of the website to update your member records. If you are having a problem with accessing this page on the State Bar of Texas website, please contact the Membership Department at 1-800-204-2222, ext. 1383. Note: If you have a name change, you must contact the State Bar of Texas by phone.

Don't forget to change the option for "preferred" mailing address.

## PD MEMBERS PASS CERTIFICATION EXAMS

Congratulations to the members of the Paralegal Division who recently passed certification examinations administered by TBLS, NALA, and NFPA. This is a great accomplishment!

### Texas Board of Legal Specialization Board Certified Paralegals Civil Trial Law

Heather Crawford, Austin  
Ernesto A. Gonzalez, Houston  
Paulina Nguyen, Houston

### Estate Planning and Probate Law

Nicole D. Gonzalez, Dallas  
Sharon S. Young, Midland

### Family Law

Rebecca Alvarez, Austin  
Misti Dyane Janes, Amarillo  
Stephanie A. Merck, Fort Worth  
Kimberly Spivey, Denton

### Real Estate

Misty Michelle Hardy, Houston

### National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA)

Michele Flowers Brooks, CP, Austin  
Christie Howard, ACP, Glenn Heights  
Brytne Kitchin, CP, Austin  
Kim Littlejohn, ACP, Dallas

### National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA)

Lisa Lynch, CRP – Arlington, TX  
Kelli Smith, CRP – Garland, TX



## PRO BONO HOURS 2011 AND 2012

In Texas, there are 5.3 million Texans who qualify for legal aid. In order to qualify for legal aid, an individual must earn no more than \$13,538.00 a year and a family of four, \$27,563.00. There is one legal aid lawyer for every 11,512 Texans who qualify for legal aid. In many of our communities, there are agencies that provide legal services to the indigent for a variety of needs including immigration representation, family violence issues, public utility advocacy, wills and ancillary documents, civil litigation services to the disabled and infirm, and for the Veterans who have served this country valiantly. Legal aid services ultimately are a safety net for our communities, offering greater social stability and the belief that justice matters.

Pro bono service is a tradition of the State Bar of Texas and lawyers are asked to provide 50 hours of service per year. Although paralegals have never been required to perform pro bono service in our communities, many of us find great satisfaction and meaning with supporting the attorneys and agencies in providing for those who, without our assistance, would never have the basic services that provide equitable justice for them in our society.

Each year, our legislature in Texas is asked to consider funding for the many legal aid programs throughout the State. When the State Bar of Texas is called to justify the financial needs of these programs, one of the first questions asked is "What is the legal community doing to support these programs?" Every *documented* pro bono hour that is recorded for attorneys and paralegals translates directly into dollars from the legislature.

It is with great pride, that I announce those PD members who have tracked their pro bono service hours during 2011 and 2012 so the Paralegal Division can provide its share of document pro bono hours in an effort to support the legal community.

### Pro Bono Hours

2011 AND 2012 (Performed by Paralegal Division Members)

Akins, Michael	21	Malolepszy, Lyla	2.25
Anderson, Erica	4	Mihecoby, Allen	54.00
Brashears, Rhonda	1.5	Moreno, Elma	258
Bryan, Cheryl	4	Morrow, Brooke	44
Burgess, Risa	5	Palmer, Sunnie	4
Carrizales, Linda	6	Piggott, Janice	146.65
Cook, Christine	4	Pratt, Joan	56.92
Fisher, Darla	9.6	Rayburn, Michele	90.25
Giuliano, Patricia	22	Rodriguez, Nicole	3.0
Haynes, Catherine	4	Rogers, Rhonda	2
Haynes, Ronda	6.5	Ruiz, San Juanita	5
Hough, Jennifer	2	Tucker, La'Shundra	33
Howard, Shandi	2	Wiggins, Britany	10.3
Janes, Misti	12.75	Wilen, Susan	71.75
Johnson, Sarah	4	Worthington, Cynthia	2
Lorenzen, Vicki	3.5		

It is very important when you provide this support, to document your time in the *Members only* area of the PD website. To enter your pro bono hours, go to the PD website at [www.txpd.org](http://www.txpd.org) and choose *Members Only* to logon. Once you have logged on, choose *Directory*, "View My Pro Bono Records" and enter your hours under *Add a pro bono item to your history*. Every hour that you document in the Pro Bono section, translates into dollars. Your time and skill will translate into protection and support of those who so desperately need it. In this time of enormous economic uncertainty, your time is money....money worth spending to ensure safety, security, and justice for the neediest in our communities.

Susan M. Wilen  
2011-2012 President  
Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas  
Nurse Paralegal  
Brin & Brin, P.C.  
San Antonio, Texas 78201  
[president@txpd.org](mailto:president@txpd.org)



# PARALEGAL DIVISION

*A Tradition of Championing Texas Attorneys*

**2012 ANNUAL MEETING**  
**THE HOUSTON CLUB, HOUSTON, TX**  
**(811 Rusk Street)**

**Paralegal Division Luncheon - \$25.00\***  
**Friday, June 15 - 11:30 am - 1:30 pm**

**State of the Paralegal Division and  
Swearing in of new Officers and Directors**

**Keynote Speaker**

*The Evolving Role of the Paralegal*  
Lawrence "Larry" Wilson, Attorney at Law  
The Lanier Law Firm, Houston

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

PD Member Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*An additional \$25 will be assessed for a returned unpaid check*  
**Early Registration Deadline: Monday, June 4, 2012**  
**Registration Fee: \$25.00; after June 4, 2012 and On-Site: \$35.00**

**Send form and payment made payable to the Paralegal Division:**  
**Paralegal Division**  
**P.O. Box 1375**  
**Manchaca, TX 78652**



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