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September 2012

THE PARAGRAPH

GAP - Leading Georgia's Paralegals to Excellence Since 1973



Greetings Georgia Paralegals!!

--K. Paezle' Harris, RP®, CP

I would like to thank our GAP members for your continued support this year. We have had great turnouts at every event and met some great paralegals and future paralegals.

In June of this year, Governor Nathan Deal, for the 2nd time in Georgia's history, proclaimed an entire week as PARALEGAL WEEK, for our benefit and as a demonstration of our value in the legal community. GAP partnered with the Gate City Bar Paralegal Section and held an event each and every day during Paralegal Week. As you will see from the pictures within, many of our members participated and enjoyed themselves in the process.



L-R: Sabrina Henry, Steve Osheroff, Paezle' Harris, Governor Nathan Deal, Julia Lanford, LaShonda Dillard, Suzette Corley, James Benson

Next year, GAP will celebrate its 40th birthday!!! In 1973, a group of paralegals came together to form our association which was then called the "Atlanta Association of Legal Assistants, Inc." Today, almost forty years later, the Georgia Association of Paralegals, Inc. "GAP" represents paralegals throughout the entire State of Georgia and we will continue to fulfill our goal of promoting the paralegal profession with your help! If you are interested in being involved with coordinating next year's 40th anniversary celebration, **Ca§ino de Jure II Awards Dinner & Fundraiser**, please email your name, phone number and email address to president@gaparalegal.org to be added to the volunteer list. Bi-weekly conference calls with the planning committee will begin in October.

As a proud PARALEGAL, I know it is important to each of you that your profession is represented at the highest level possible and that it is given the respect that is certainly due and well-deserved. That is exactly why GAP will continue to make sure that you are privy to the latest changes in law and technology, through our CLE seminars and meetings; that you are invited to participate in the pro bono opportunities for learning, as well as service, alongside the GAP members and attorneys who support us; and that you are recognized and rewarded through our publications, award ceremonies, and announcements.

If you are interested in being a part us this by representing GAP as a 2013 Georgia Association of Paralegals Board of Director, please fill out the STATEMENT OF INTEREST form and email it to president@gaparalegal.org by **October 15, 2012**. If being a board member is too much of a commitment at this time, please email volunteer@gaparalegal.org to tell us how you would like to participate with GAP! We look forward to hearing from you!

Lastly, as we prepare to represent you, our membership, at NFPA®'s 2012 Annual Convention in Alaska at the end of September, I ask that you please take the time to cast your **VOTE** and submit your ballot on this year's agenda topics, as some of these topics affect your profession and future.

I cordially request the honor of your presence in the promotion of the paralegal profession. We can't do it without you!

It's not just a job; it's a lifestyle – LIVE IT!
Paezle'



K. Paezle' Harris, RP®, CP
President

Getting Ready for the NFPA® Convention!

-- LaShonda R. Dillard
NFPA® Primary

August has been a very busy month as Julia Lanford, NFPA® Secondary, and I prepare to attend the 2012 Annual National Federation of Paralegals Association (NFPA®) Convention in Anchorage, Alaska, during the last week of September. The Alaska Association of Paralegals (AAP) is hosting this event.

There are several events planned for the 2012 NFPA® Convention. Among them are a tour of the Anchorage Museum, with a buffet dinner and entertainment; and an opportunity to benefit the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center – NFPA® will be adopting a bison at the center! For a complete line-up of events, visit NFPA's website at www.paralegals.org.



Did you see the item in the GAPpenings email recently regarding the Policy Meeting Agenda Topics? (If you didn't, click the link at the end of this article.) Each of you is invited to review and vote on these items. The Georgia Association of Paralegals (GAP) is one of the larger associations within our region. Our members' input is essential and will aid in determining key aspects regarding the future of our profession. Please let me hear from you!

The ballot includes Administrative and Bylaw Resolutions, and Agenda Topics.

An Agenda Topic is a proposed NFPA® policy. Oftentimes, agenda topics are sponsored by a local association(s), a member of a local association, or by an NFPA® Board member or coordinator. One example of an Agenda Topic on our ballot is whether to expand eligibility to sit for the PACE® exam.

An Administrative Resolution is a proposed action for the NFPA® Board or Coordinator(s) to take in order to review and/or change already existing policy, clarify procedures, and/or carry out the goals of the Strategic Long Range Plan of NFPA®. These resolutions may also relate to the administration of NFPA® business or expenses, etc. A current Administrative Resolution seeks to ratify the Procedures Manual as posted online as of August 27, 2012.

On the other hand, Bylaw Resolutions actually change or amend the current NFPA® Bylaws. One such proposed resolution would affect eligibility for election to the NFPA® Board of Directors.

The NFPA® Policy Meeting, held on Saturday, is the highlight of the Convention, and all agenda topics and resolutions are discussed and voted on during the NFPA® Policy Meeting held on Saturday. Julia and I will formally convey our members' overall consensus regarding the items described on the ballot.

In case you missed seeing the ballot in the GAPpenings, VOTE here. Please submit your ballot or any questions via email to nfpapr@gaparalegal.org by Tuesday, September 18, 2012.

The Days of a Public Interest Paralegal's Life

MY LIFE AS A PARALEGAL AT A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

--Tamara McLendon-Coleman
Benefits Coordinator

Public Interest Paralegals help provide equal access to justice while honoring their ethical obligations to the community and the legal profession. I have always enjoyed helping people, and many years ago decided to apply that passion to the legal field. In 2010, I began working as a Paralegal at the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation (AVLF), a non-profit organization dedicated to providing pro bono representation to low-income individuals. My past experience in working for the DeKalb Volunteer Lawyers Foundation, a non-profit association, gave me an edge over the other candidates. My day consists of checking conflicts, interviewing clients, acting as a liaison between attorneys and clients, writing, and listening. Surprisingly, I have found listening to be the most important skill. Because I either request or provide information each time I speak or write, it is imperative that all clients, attorneys, and I clearly understand the case facts. There is no room for misinterpretation!

Within the AVLF organization, I work with our Saturday Lawyers Program (SLP), where I screen potential clients in areas of debt defense, landlord and tenant disputes, and employment cases. Each week, I prescreen clients for financial and geographical eligibility for the program. After the initial criteria is met, I conduct a brief phone interview to

AVLF's Saturday Lawyer Program provided pro-bono legal assistance to about 40% more clients in 2011 than in 2010, and increased by 50% the number of volunteers participating in the program.

get basic facts about the client's case to determine further eligibility based on applicable case restrictions; basically ensuring appropriateness and merit.

Oftentimes, clients are grateful that someone actually cared enough to listen to their story, regardless of the outcome.

Our Saturday team, which consists of staff attorneys and another paralegal, reviews each case to determine eligibility for the next phase. Each eligible client is scheduled for an SLP meeting and assigned to a volunteer attorney for full legal representation. In addition to the SLP and through the guidance of our Housing Program Director, I assist in facilitating the "Eviction Defense" and the "Dollars for Judgments" programs. These programs provide pro bono representation for eviction cases and for those needing assistance in collecting on judgments awarded in the areas of law in which we work.

Our Saturday Lawyer Program provided pro-bono legal assistance to about 40% more clients in 2011 than in 2010, and increased by 50% the number of volunteers participating in the program. The program is largely supported by volunteer attorneys and volunteer paralegals. During the past three years, AVLF volunteers have secured almost a million dollars in judgments and settlements for clients in housing, consumer, wage and domestic violence cases.

AVLF demonstrates how access to justice is improved through the wise utilization of paralegals. It is impossible for attorneys, some of whom are from prominent Atlanta law firms, to provide the solid analytical advice needed and be available to speak with clients each time they call. Since one attorney can supervise several paralegals, more people gain access to legal services and justice.

Working in the non-profit arena has endless rewards and few hurdles. One hurdle is the inability to serve an optimum number of clients due to limited resources. I work with clients who face very real problems; their surprising strength in the midst of these problems supplies my daily dose of humility. Oftentimes, they are grateful that someone actually cared enough to listen to their story, regardless of the outcome. Our volunteer attorneys empower clients by confirming that their rights were *indeed* violated – and amazingly, after understanding their rights and witnessing their attorney vigorously fight for them – clients are made to feel whole again. It's an amazing testament to the power of true public interest!

This article was originally published in The Paralegal Journal, *June 2012. Reprinted with permission.*

Editor's note: Tamara McLendon-Coleman and her husband recently relocated to Florida. GAP extends best wishes to them as they embark on new endeavors – Tamara, you will be greatly missed!

GAP Student Outreach Update

-- Patty Dietz-Selke
Student Outreach Coordinator

As GAP's Student Outreach Coordinator, I coordinate GAP's outreach efforts to the local Paralegal Certificate/Degree programs and associated Student Associations/Unions as well as the local student population as a whole. Our outreach efforts involve speaking on the Paralegal profession and the benefits of GAP membership.

Paralegal programs and students have enjoyed GAP/Paralegal Roundtables for a number of years. Specifically, GAP/Paralegal Roundtables are Q&A and Info Sessions at which active GAP members volunteer to come and share their wisdom with the next generation of Paralegals. The volunteers share their knowledge, experience, general tips and tricks of the trade. The students generally wish to hear about a Paralegal's day-to-day responsibilities, how to successfully interact with attorneys, how to work with court staff and state agencies, how to find their first job and how GAP can benefit their job search and professional growth. In short, the students garner knowledge about the Paralegal profession and how GAP can assist and benefit their career. We highly encourage our members to participate and to give back to the next generation of Paralegals.

2012 has been a busy year so far. YTD, we have completed nine Roundtables, with two remaining:

9/24 Emory Briarcliff Roundtable

10/27 Emory Alpharetta Roundtable

We've visited ITT Technical College in Duluth; Gainesville State College; Athens Technical College's Career Panel; the Legal Aid Society; and participated in the Paralegal Week's Atlanta Legal Market Expert Panel with our Roundtables. As you can see, we try to make these sessions convenient to everyone!

In addition to our outreach efforts, we also provide a comprehensive listing of Paralegal programs. On GAP's website - http://gaparalegal.org/schools.shtml - you will find a complete Paralegal program listing covering Atlanta, the State of Georgia and nationally. The website also provides information on standards for Paralegal programs from ABA, NPFA®, and AAfPE to help you properly evaluate and select a Paralegal certificate or degree program.

While active members drive this organization, GAP's student members are also important to this association since our student members represent not only the future of this organization, but also the Paralegal profession. We would love for you to join our outreach efforts. So, come experience the fun, excitement and lively interaction and contribute to our profession's next generation of Paralegals!

NFPA® Paralegal CORE Competency Exam – Attention Paralegal Students

Do you know about NFPA's Paralegal CORE Competency Exam?

The PCC™ Exam is now available in your local area, at your convenience! The PCCE handbook has been released as a PDF download. The test is administered by computer at Prometric Test Centers (https://securereg3.prometric.com/Dispatch.aspx) throughout the United States and Canada.

The application fee is $215, payable by credit card (only) through the application website. Applicants have 90 days to take the test from the date the application is accepted.

Georgia now has *two* CRPs – Ellen T. Wright, and our newest CRP, Delores Vanstone!

Please address any questions on this topic to pcce@paralegals.org.



Spotlight On Delores Vanstone – Georgia's newest CRP™

--Janet Wilson Williams, RP®
Director of Paralegal Certification

Congratulations to Georgia's newest CRP™, Delores Vanstone! Delores spoke with us about her journey. If you have been considering taking the PCC Exam yourself, read on for her helpful advice!

Vanstone, an Atlanta resident, holds Associates Degrees in both Business and Legal Administrative Assisting from Gwinnett College in Lilburn, GA. She began her path to excellence while attending Gwinnett by graduating *summa cum laude* in October, 2010. Vanstone reports that she had always been interested in law and wanted to make a contribution in some way; she feels that a legal career allows her to accomplish both goals.

While in school, Vanstone worked as a Clerk at the Gwinnett County Recorder's Court in Lawrenceville. She keeps on top of her profession with her memberships in GAP and the National Association of Legal Assistants. Like many paralegals, Vanstone is also a Georgia Notary Public.



Vanstone, a paralegal and office manager at The Mitchell Law Firm in Buckhead, wanted to learn more about the law and to become a stronger paralegal; she knew that through studying for the PCC Exam, she would

reach those goals. She credits GAP's PCC Exam study group as part of her success.

> "Through the study sessions, I met a group of paralegals with differing levels of education and experience that were all working to achieve the same goal. The Sunday afternoon meetings which were held at Emory were comprehensive "question and answer" meetings where we would discuss the topics we had studied the previous week and build a deeper knowledge of the law. Leader Janet Wilson Williams, RP was very timely with the practice tests, the study information presented, the hand-outs and her years of experience. She was also, and still is, a source of inspiration and guidance for me."

Her family and friends, as well as the very supportive attorneys in her office, all believed she would have a strong chance of passing the exam. She used textbooks from college; the West Legal Research Nutshell; the PACE study manual; the list of topics covered on the PCC Exam that is available on the GAP website; and numerous other books, periodicals, flash cards, reference books, and websites in her studies. Vanstone found that she was allowed plenty of time to answer each question on the exam, and appreciated that the exam results were printed immediately upon completion. As you've no doubt guessed, she passed with high marks!

Delores, we wish you much continued success in the future!



A Rising Starr!

Pamela Starr receives her J.S.M. diploma *cum laude!*

Congratulations to Pamela Starr – on May 20, 2012, she graduated from an online program offered by Thomas Jefferson School of Law in San Diego, earning a J.S.M. degree (Master of Science of Law). AND…she graduated *with Honors!* Pamela "attended" classes from her basement office, receiving much support from classmates and professors who only interacted with her online. She *did*, however, get the traditional graduation experience by traveling to San Diego with her mom, meeting her professors and classmates in person for the first time.
Pamela, we're very proud of you!

Welcome, New Members!

Donna L. Abbott
Mohammad Ahmadieh
Tamara Armbrester
Lauren M. Armstrong
Kristine L. Bratcher
Angela Caruso
Alina Cox
Sarah Cundiff
Tiffany Davis
Johnna Davis
Fred Elrod
KaRissa Edgar
Sabina Farman
Tiffany Findlay
Andrea Fizer
Jamilah Freeman
Glynn Shackleford Gamble
Ashli Glezen
Phyllis Gordon
Andrea Gumbs
Kelly G. Hickey
Linda Hobbs
Kellye Holmes
Kara Kaiser
Alexandra C. Kern
Angela King
Salman Lakhani
Karen Lamar
Grace Love
Bishop Martin
Krista Mascavage
Richard S. McEntyre
Sharon Minery
Maddy Mullin
Kim Payne
Charlotte Payton
Edwina Pittman
Abigail Lynn Potter
Dorothy Reagan
Jan Reed
Ashley Rivers
Tricia Rozier
Lisa Shinaberry
Terri Thomas
Diana Weber
Josephine Westmaas
Discovery Litigation Services

NFPA® Member Benefits

As a GAP member, you are automatically also a member of NFPA® – and you can take advantage of quite a few NFPA® member benefits! Here are some of them:

- *Paralegal Today* magazine offers you a discounted subscription rate: View the flyer/subscription form.
- An exclusive one-year unlimited SmartPros online CLE subscription for only $195! Please contact Rose Kelly-Pond (rosekellypond@smartpros.com or 508-621-7852) to get your coupon code for this discounted offer. Visit http://sple.smartpros.com for more information.
- Come visit the "Happiest Place on Earth" – Walt Disney World Resort. As an NFPA member, you can log on to the following website to plan a Florida trip to any of the 16 Theme Parks in the Orlando area. The website is http://www.orlandovacation.com/discounts/login.php. Our username is "NFPA." From there, you can view the National Member Discount Program and all the discounts and special offers in Orlando. Some of the packages include cruises and resorts, National Car Rentals, and other discounts.
- Dell offers you an additional 4% discount on top of generally-advertised Dell Products! Go to www.dell.com/paralegals. Our member ID is CS105317223. You can also call 1-800-695-8133.
- NFPA® Career Center: Select "Career Center" at the NFPA® home page to search for job opportunities and post your resume through the Legal Career Center Network at

Legalstaff at no cost to you. Employers may also post available jobs which will be accessible to legal professionals, bar associations, and others across the country.

- Continuing Legal Education – Discounts are provided for various courses offering CLE credits. Look at NFPA's home page for the "CLE" navigation tab.
- Lorman Education Services and NFPA® have arranged a 30% discount on both CLE and bookstore items for NFPA® members. Sign in to the NFPA® website and visit the Member Benefits page for the details!
- Save $$ on insurance! We've partnered with Liberty Mutual to offer our members special discounted rates on auto, homeowner's, and renter's insurance. This special rate comes from a company that has led the industry in safety advancements since 1912. Find out more and get a free quote from www.libertymutual.com/nfpa.
- Do you need to create legal diagrams? The SmartDraw Legal Solution is the easy drawing software that helps you create perfect legal diagrams in minutes. Drawing is easy! Just drag ready-made graphics from the built-in libraries and drop them onto your page. Quickly create timelines, storyboards, accident diagrams, medical diagrams, evidence charts, org charts, floor plans and facilities, and much more! SmartDraw includes more than 50,000 symbols and templates specialized for the legal community. Gain greater control over your exhibits, save time with pre-made templates, make changes on the fly, wow your peers and intimidate the opposition! View the brochure.
- CaseSoft creates software products for paralegals, legal assistants, and litigators. Download full-featured trial versions at www.casesoft.com . Discover why tens of thousands of paralegals appreciate the power and ease of CaseSoft's award-winning software. Special pricing for NFPA® members!
- Would you appreciate a publication full of articles on career issues and legislative activities? Of course you would! Watch your mailbox – a subscription to the *National Paralegal Reporter* is included as part of your NFPA® membership. As a GAP member, you are also a NFPA member!
- Hertz offers special rental rates on cars and vans! At least 24 hours advanced notice is required to receive these discounts. Call Hertz – 1-800-654-3131 NFPA Discount CDP#336559 to use this discount.
- Don't you just love updating your wardrobe at a discount? Macy's extends a discount to NFPA® members twice per year for a 30 day period – once in the Spring season (Feb-Jul) and once in the Fall Season (Aug-Jan). We receive a 15% all day pass during this promotion. Watch your GAPpenings for info on this promotion!

GAP In Our Communities



Rico, Paezle' Harris, Matt Mascone, Pamela Ledford, Monica Morris, Patrick Davis

--James Benson Community Service Coordinator

Hello everyone!

GAP's members are actively involved in giving back to Georgia's communities. As part of Paralegal Week, members of GAP

recently participated in the Service Juris Day along with others in Atlanta's legal community. Members painted the inside and outside of several buildings on the Campus of Chris Kids transitional home; organized several utility storehouses and departments on the campus; and demonstrated their green thumbs, landscaping skills, and willingness to help by planting flowers and trees which beautifully enhanced the campus property.

The Community Service Division of GAP hosts community service events throughout the year and invites all of GAP's members to participate in giving back to the communities of Georgia. The next community service outing will be August 25, 2012 at the Gateway Center. The Gateway Center is a shelter and transitional home for the homeless and less fortunate. It is located at 275 Pryor Street, SW, Atlanta, Georgia 30303. If you are interested in participating, please contact me at community@gaparalegal.org.



1st Row L-R: Eric Hoskins, Amanda Donaldson, Patrick Davis, Caleta Carr, Karina Sanders, Andrea Fizer. 2nd Row L-R: Rhonda Newton, unknown, Monica Morris, Brianna Benson, Precious Davis. 3rd Row L-R: Garian D. Clark, Dianne Bennett, James Benson, Paezle' Harris, Matt Mascone, Shakena Sterling

SuperHeroes Unite!

You may have seen our postings recently on our website, our LinkedIn Group, and our Facebook group encouraging you to "become a CASA SuperHero!" So just what IS CASA? How do you become a SuperHero? *Why* would you become a CASA SuperHero?



For those of you who don't know about Metro Atlanta CASA Collaborative, here is the definition

supplied by the Metro Atlanta CASA Collaborative:

> A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is a deeply committed, specially trained community volunteer who is appointed by a judge to advocate for the best interests of an abused or neglected child in juvenile court proceedings. The CASA volunteer gathers information about the child's situation, attends court proceedings and makes recommendations to the judge so that he or she has the information needed to make a decision about the child's best interest and future. The CASA volunteer advocates for the child to be placed in a safe, permanent home as quickly as possible.

There are five CASA programs in the Metro Atlanta CASA Collaborative: Clayton County CASA, Cobb County CASA, DeKalb County CASA, Fulton County CASA, and Gwinnett County CASA.

So how do you become a SuperHero? One, you can volunteer. To become a volunteer, or to learn more about volunteering, check them out at http://www.metrocasa.org/page122028.aspx.

Two, you can put on your running shoes and join TEAM GAP to run in the 5K Run, November 10, 2012, in Piedmont Park. Join us in this family event – have fun while you help raise awareness and funds for the Metro Atlanta CASA Collaborative!

Three, if you can't participate in the event, visit the TEAM GAP page to make a donation.

So what are you waiting for? TEAM GAP and Metro Atlanta CASA Collaborative *need* you!



Around and About With GAP

Paralegal Week, June 9-16

As Proclaimed by Governor Deal!







Winetasting Event at City Club of Buckhead, Tuesday, June 12







Lunch And Learns – All Throughout The Week











Roundtable at Emory University – Briarcliff Campus







Service Juris Day – June 16















Pro Bono Opportunity

Georgia Appleseed has requested non-lawyer volunteers to help with the screening process for DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), i.e. DHS' recent decision to consider a certain class of illegal immigrants for deferred action for two years.

The AILA, Georgia-Alabama Chapter, in partnership with GALEO, and LAA will hold a DACA Application Assistance Day on SEPTEMBER, 15, 2012 at the Latin American Association located at 2750 Buford Hwy NE, Atlanta, GA 30324. There will be two shifts: 8:30 AM until 1:00 PM and 12:30 PM until 5:00 PM.

To Sign Up: Please email the organizers at dacadayvolunteers@gmail.com and use the subject line below that applies to you:

Non-AILA Attorney/Legal Assistant Volunteer– AM shift
Non-AILA Attorney/Legal Assistant Volunteer– PM shift

Should you want to serve for both shifts, put "AM and PM shifts" in the subject line.

Again, here's the date, location, and time shifts:

Date: September 15th
Time: 2 shifts: 8:30am-1:00pm, 12:30pm-5:00pm
Place: Latin American Association 2570 Buford Highway NE, Atlanta, GA 30324

Come on out and help!

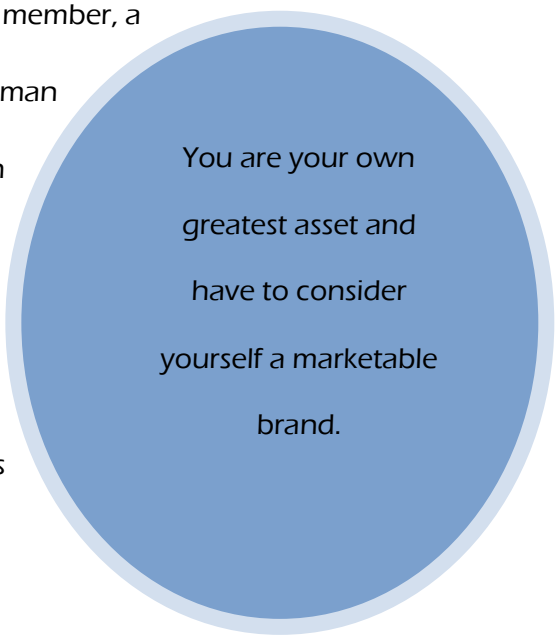
The Paralegal Profession – Alive and Thriving!

--Monica C. Morris
Job Network Coordinator

The paralegal profession is alive and thriving! So how do *you* become established and gain notice as an entry level paralegal? Or promote yourself as an experienced senior paralegal? And remain globally marketable and innovative? Here's the answer: Keep yourself visible, establish connections, market your brand well, and utilize self-sell techniques.

Today's recruiters *are* looking for **you**. They are looking for you on LinkedIn and within their circle of contacts. Professional social networking is critical to your branding. This is where you can have a platform, make posts, and share information relative to our profession. You are your own greatest asset and have to consider yourself a marketable brand.

When you join a professional organization such as GAP, make it work for you. How? Get involved! While volunteering during Paralegal Week, one GAP member, a recent graduate of Emory's Paralegal Program, established a connection. This eager paralegal shared her story with a gentleman over a pile of mulch as they both worked to revitalize a community. When she shared that she really wanted to work in construction law, the gentleman told her that he was an attorney and his firm was looking for a paralegal. He then gave her the information to the hiring manager and a referral to the position.



We've all heard the saying, "It's not who you know, it's what you know." Although this is true in some situations, when you are looking to stay globally marketable and maintain yourself as a viable asset, the saying is, "It's not who you know, it's who knows you." So get out there and make yourself known!

WE'RE COMING TO MACON!

SAVE THE DATE ~ 09/20/2012

GAPpy Hour

Georgia Association of Paralegals

- Have you always wanted to attend GAP events but driving to Atlanta in traffic=YUCK!
- Are you a GAP member and want to get more involved, but can't because you live and work in the Macon area?
- Do you have questions about GAP, its purpose, and how membership can benefit YOU?

MEET WITH US FOR DRINKS & LIGHT APPETIZERS AND DISCUSS THE POSSIBILITIES OF A CHAPTER IN MACON!

Thursday, September 20th, 2012

Downtown Grille

562 Mulberry Stree Lane, Macon, GA

5:30 ~ 8 pm

Free DRINK to the first 25 attendees

RSVP to Sabrina Henry, Director of Membership at

membership@gaparalegal.org by 9/17/2012

Event Sponsored by: ESQUIRE DEPOSITION SOLUTIONS

Did You Know?

- Notaries Public hold an office that may have existed as far back as the ancient Roman Republic!
- President Calvin Coolidge was actually sworn into office by a Notary Public – his own father! Coolidge took the oath a second time in Washington as there was some question about a Notary's authority to administer the presidential oath of office.
- Many paralegals hold Notary Public commissions. If you don't already hold one, you can go to http://www.gsccca.org/projects/notaryapp/SelectCounty.asp, fill out an application, and take it to your county courthouse. You'll be asked to swear an oath and pay a fee of $37.00. You then will need to purchase a stamp and/or seal at an office supply store. Your commission will last for four years and is renewable.
- Georgia offers an online course available at http://training.gsccca.org/LMS/login.asp . If you take the course, you can pay $10 for a certificate, although the course itself is free.



OK – I Finished My Paralegal Program – Now How Do I Land The Job?

--Janet Wilson Williams, RP®
Director of Certification

Before The Interview

1. Research the company and Google the officers or the person with whom you are interviewing. Look up that person on LinkedIn as well – do you have any common contacts?
2. Participate in mock interviews or practice answering questions that you would expect to be asked.
3. Google yourself once a month –you may be surprised at what you find! Many employers are using this as a tool to boot candidates out off the top to get down to a

manageable number. Keep this in mind when you are posting on social media. Don't pose with drinks in hand, even on vacation. And extreme opinions can hurt you with some employers.

4. *Count on* a background check being run if the recruiter or company is interested in you.
5. Get that *perfect* interview suit.

> *Your interviewer wants to know one thing about your appearance: "Could I put you in front of a client?" Make sure the answer is YES!*

Interview Pointers

1. Always present a professional, well-groomed appearance – wear a dress and stockings (yes, even in 90˚+ weather) or a suit (note: no bare arms!), make sure your hair is neatly styled, and shoes are in great condition and shined (that first impression is so, so very important!)
2. Cover any tattoos. Some people may not appreciate body art or even if they do, they don't want to see it at an interview.
3. No perfume or cologne – if your interviewer is allergic or doesn't like the scent, your interview is over before it has begun!
4. Keep jewelry and makeup to a minimum. If you wear nail polish, stay away from bright or dark colors, and make sure it isn't chipped!
5. Your interviewer wants to know one thing about your appearance: Could I put you in front of a client? Make sure the answer is YES!
6. Be friendly (but not overly so) and respectful, with excellent manners. Remember, the interviewer has already decided you can do the job – but will you fit into the culture?
7. Avoid chewing gum. Make sure to have fresh breath, as bad breath is another turn-off!
8. Make good eye contact with your interviewer and maintain composure.
9. IF a hand is extended to you, make sure you have a good handshake – firm but not too energetic.
10. Don't interrupt the interviewer – let him speak. Slightly pause before you respond to questions to give yourself time to form well-thought out answers.
11. Don't volunteer family information (easy to do when you are proud of your children and slightly nervous).
12. Never criticize a former employer. Be ready with a positive, true statement about all former employers!
13. Don't ask inappropriate questions at the interview (such as, "When do I get vacation?" Ask these types of questions only when an offer has been extended).
14. Don't carry a purse and briefcase. Instead, carry only an uncluttered portfolio that you can easily reach in and take out documents if they ask to see them. Make it look effortless!
15. In the portfolio, carry extra copies of your immaculately printed, unfolded resume with a separate sheet of references in case they ask.
16. Don't ask for parking validation or ask for or accept a water or soft drink.
17. Write a sincere thank-you note afterwards, but don't mail it for two days (you don't want to appear desperate), making sure it is letter perfect and extra neat.

Life Lesson 101

--Janet Wilson Williams, RP®
Director of Certification



Recently, I came across an article in which country star Trisha Yearwood was describing some turning points in her life. When Trisha was still in high school, her aunt called and asked her to sing a song for a visiting friend, Academy Award winner and vocalist, Shirley Jones. Trisha was a bit reluctant - after all, she was a young girl with no professional experience, but since her aunt asked, she went for it. After the song, Ms. Jones gave her the valuable advice to take small opportunities as they arose and this would lead to big things down the road. She never forgot this advice – and has now progressed to add a new cookbook and cooking show to her resume.

For those of you completing your paralegal programs or new to the legal field, always keep the *big picture* in mind. If you stay with it and embrace these small opportunities, they will eventually lead to a big paralegal career. Important note: We veterans started the same way!

Consider that volunteer opportunity, internship, entry level position at the law firm or legal department, contracts administrator or a paralegal assistant position - with a great attitude, hard work, study and experience, you *will* accomplish your goals and before you know it, *you* will be the vet!

Mark Your Calendars!



DACA Screening Process – Pro Bono Opportunity

ATE:	September 15
TIME:	8:30 AM-1PM or 12:30 PM – 5PM
LOCATION:	Latin American Association 2750 Buford Highway NE

	Atlanta, GA 30324
VOLUNTEER:	To Sign Up: Please email the organizers at dacadayvolunteers@gmail.com and use the subject line below that applies to you: Non-AILA Attorney/Legal Assistant Volunteer– AM shift Non-AILA Attorney/Legal Assistant Volunteer– PM shift Should you want to serve for both shifts, put "AM and PM shifts" in the subject line.

GAPpy Hour in MACON, GEORGIA

DATE:	September 20
TIME:	5:30-8:00 PM
LOCATION:	DOWNTOWN GRILLE 562 Mulberry Street Lane Macon, GA
COST:	What you consume (A free drink to the first 25 attendees)
VOLUNTEER:	RSVP to Sabrina Henry, Director of Membership, membership@gaparalegal.org.

NFPA Annual Convention

DATE:	September 27-30
TIME:	N/A
LOCATION:	Sheraton Anchorage Hotel & Spa 401 E. 6th Avenue Anchorage, AK 99501
COST:	See NFPA website www.paralegal.org.
REGISTRATION:	http://www.paralegal.org/default.asp?page=113

GAP Paralegal Roundtable Presentations

DATE:	September 24
TIME:	7:30 PM
LOCATION:	Emory University (Briarcliff Campus) 1256 Briarcliff Road, Building B Atlanta, GA 30306

COST:	N/A
VOLUNTEER:	Contact students@gaparalegal.org

DATE:	October 27
TIME:	10:30 AM
LOCATION:	Emory University (Alpharetta campus) 1725 Windward Concourse Alpharetta, GA 30005
COST:	N/A
VOLUNTEER:	Contact students@gaparalegal.org

Atlanta Bar Association Brown Bag Mondays

DATE:	Mondays through November 10, 2012
TIME:	12 noon
LOCATION:	Varies
COST:	Varies (Some may be free; others range from $5-$20
MORE DETAILS:	Visit the Atlanta Council of Younger Lawyers Section of the Atlanta Bar Association at https://m360.atlantabar.org/ViewCalendar.aspx for details. Registration is required.

Metro Atlanta CASA 5K Run

DATE:	November 10, 2012
TIME:	4:00 PM
LOCATION:	Piedmont Park
COST:	N/A
MORE DETAILS:	Visit http://www.firstgiving.com/fundraiser/GeorgiaAssnParalegals/casa-superhero-5k-run to register for TEAM GAP or to donate.

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