

# The Advocate

Louisiana State Paralegal Association



**The Advocate**  
**Volume XXVIII**  
**Issue III**  
**June 2013**

**Have a question about paralegal certification, upcoming events, or how to get your CLE hours before year-end?** Contact us via e-mail by visiting our LSPA web site at <http://www.la-paralegals.org> where you'll find further information about LSPA, including benefits of membership, CLE seminars, state paralegal certification, scholarship for paralegal students, calendar of activities, NALA certification and updates, order forms for the LCP Study Guide and for LSPA T-Shirts "Paralegals are always swamped", history of LSPA and much more. *The Advocate* is published quarterly and is a benefit of membership. (Note: Views presented by the authors herein are not necessarily the opinions of LSPA.)

## THE JIMMIE MURVIN CERTIFICATION SCHOLARSHIP

At the LSPA Spring Seminar held in Baton Rouge on March 15, Jimmie Murvin, LCP, CP was presented with a plaque with the following acknowledgement:

*In Recognition of your Many Years of Dedicated Service to the Louisiana State Paralegal Association and the Paralegal Profession, The LSPA Scholarship for Members Shall be Named in your Honor*

## **THE JIMMIE MURVIN CERTIFICATION SCHOLARSHIP**

LSPA is pleased to offer the new Jimmie Murvin Certification Scholarship (JMCS) for LSPA members and anticipates that the first JMCS will be presented by Jimmie Murvin at our annual meeting to be held in Lafayette on September 21. The JMCS will provide financial assistance to LSPA members who take the LCP, CP and ACP certification exams. A committee is being formed to establish a complete set of qualifications and guidelines for the Scholarship. More information will be posted to the LSPA website when available.



**Jessie L. Cormier, CP, LCP**

## ***PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE***

Dear LSPA Members:

LSPA's Spring seminar "Women and the Law" on March 15, 2013 was a success, in large part to CLE Chairperson, **Tiffany Thomas**. Thank you, Tiffany!

During a break in the seminar, the 2013 Rochelle Scholarship was awarded to **Courtney Ann Marshall**, a student in LSU's Paralegal Studies program. Read about her in this issue of The Advocate.

Following the Ethics session of the seminar presented by **Jimmie W. Murvin, ACP, LCP**, we honored her with a plaque commemorating our naming LSPA's new scholarship the **Jimmie Murvin Certification Scholarship**. This scholarship will be for members only to defray expenses involved in studying and sitting for any of the certification exams offered by NALA as well as the Louisiana Certified Paralegal examination. There is an article and photo in this issue.

**Renee Grissom** has joined the CLE committee and will be instrumental in plans for the Fall seminar which will encompass some of the subject areas which comprise the Certified Paralegal examination offered by NALA. If you are considering sitting for the exam, you will definitely want to attend. If you already hold the CP designation, this will be an excellent refresher – sometimes it's good to get back to the basics.

In the Winter 2013 issue of The Advocate, we informed you that a proposal has been made to the Louisiana State Bar Association for paralegal membership and a paralegal division of the bar. The proposal was made by the New Orleans Paralegal Association (NOPA) in November of 2012. In order to provide Louisiana paralegals and opportunity to learn more about the proposal and debate the issues, LSPA held a Paralegal Forum

immediately following the Women and the Law seminar. **Becky Rolland, RP, CBA**, President of NOPA and also a member of LSPA, was given the opportunity to explain their proposal and the floor was opened for questions and discussion. More information is provided in a separate article.

Be sure to read the NALA Corner by our NALA Liaison, **Debbie Fontenot, CP**. She has a lot of information about the NALA Annual Meeting and Educational Institutes which will be held in Portland, Oregon on July 10 – 13, 2013. You need not be a NALA member to attend. Debbie's article also reveals that a special honor will be bestowed on a member of LSPA during the conference.

Other activities and news are contained in this issue. Read about the LCP Review Course being offered this summer, highlights from paralegal associations around the state, and the Outstanding Paralegal of the Year selection process. Also included is an informative article by The Paralegal Mentor, **Vicki Voisin, ACP**.

I hope you'll take a few minutes to read this issue of The Advocate. It will also be posted on the Members Only section of LSPA's website. As always, your comments, questions and feedback are welcome. You can contact me directly at [jandlcormier@earthlink.net](mailto:jandlcormier@earthlink.net).

*Jessie L. Cormier, CP, LCP*

President, LSPA

## **LSPA Calendar 2012-2013**

### ***Save the Date!***

May 2013	CP exam administered
July 1, 2013	Deadline for nominations for Outstanding Paralegal of the Year
July 10 – 13, 2013	NALA Annual Meeting and Educational Institutes Portland, Oregon
July 27, 2013	Members are welcome to attend the LSPA Board of Directors Meeting, Baton Rouge
August 1, 2013	Application deadline for CP exam to be given in September
August 2 – 3, 2013	LCP Review Course, Lafayette
August 10, 2013	Late application deadline for CP exam (with payment of late fee)
August 16, 2013	Application deadline for LCP exam to be given in October
September 20-21, 2013	LSPA Annual Conference, Lafayette

## 2013 LSPA Carol Rochelle Scholarship



Courtney Ann Marshall, recipient of 2013 Rochelle Scholarship

The deserving recipient of the 2013 LSPA Carol Rochelle Scholarship in the amount of \$500.00 is Courtney Ann Marshall. Ms. Marshall is enrolled in the Continuing Education Paralegal Studies Program at Louisiana State University, and she is expected to graduate May 22, 2013. She attended high school at Ouachita Christian School in Monroe, Louisiana. She is currently employed as a clerk/runner/paralegal intern at the law firm of Carleton Lorato, LLC in Baton Rouge. Ms. Marshall belongs to several organizations including LSU Alumni, Chi-Omega Alumni, and Baton Rouge Paralegal Association. She serves as the Student Representative on the Paralegal Studies Advisory Committee. Upon receiving her Paralegal Certificate, she plans to further her education in paralegal work

while simultaneously gaining experience by working as a full-time paralegal at a respectable law firm. She would like to receive professional certification from the National Association of Legal Assistants and hopes that her education and experience will mold her into a seasoned and competent paralegal. She has maintained an above-average GPA while working in a law firm to better her education and understanding of the work she will undertake upon graduation. As student representative for the Paralegal Program at LSU, she has devoted numerous hours of work on a volunteer basis assisting students with gathering notes and grasping difficult concepts learned in class. We congratulate her on this outstanding accomplishment.

Heather D. Wyatt

**THE YEAR OF JIMMIE MURVIN:  
JIMMIE MURVIN, LCP, ACP TO BE  
AWARDED THE NALA FOUNDER'S AWARD**

Jimmie Murvin, LCP, ACP is not only recognized by LSPA this year, she has also been selected to receive the highest honor NALA bestows – the **NALA Founder's Award**. It will be presented this July at the NALA Annual Conference to be held in Portland, Oregon. Please try to join us at the conference to witness this memorable event.

The following was submitted in support of LSPA's nomination of Jimmie Murvin, LCP, ACP for the NALA Founder's Award. The nomination was a collaborative effort of three LSPA members, and I think each of us learned something about Jimmie we didn't already know, although we have all known her for many years. We thought you might find something you didn't know about Jimmie in this writing as well.

*EXTRAORDINARY OR OUTSTANDING  
QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTION:*

Jimmie W. Murvin, ACP, LCP, has spent her entire adult life promoting the paralegal profession in Louisiana and nationally. Ms. Murvin began working in the legal profession in 1973, obtained her Certified Legal Assistant certification in 1984, her advanced certification in Civil Litigation in 1987, and became a Louisiana Certified Paralegal (LCP) in 1996, its inaugural year.

In 1983, Jimmie was asked to help create and teach in the Louisiana State University's paralegal studies program. Thirty years later, she continues as an adjunct professor in the LSU Paralegal

Studies Program and is a member of its Advisory Committee. Jimmie is more than a teacher; she forms a close relationship with the students in the program and is a mentor to many. She values the ability to watch them grow, graduate and enter the workforce. She was honored with the LSU Paralegal Studies Program's Outstanding Teacher Award in 1991.

Jimmie is the author of a book published by Aspen Law Publishing: Paralegal Guide to Automobile Accident Cases and has authored many articles. She lectures extensively to paralegal and lawyer groups around the country. She was the first paralegal in the nation to be chosen as Paralegal of the Year by the Association of Trial Lawyers of America.

Ms. Murvin was a founding member of the Louisiana State Paralegal Association in 1986, was the first President of LSPA, and subsequently served as president in 2002 – 03 and 2009 – 10. She has served on the board as an officer or committee chair almost every year since. She donates her time and expertise to teach at seminars sponsored by LSPA and other organizations several times each year.

Jimmie was instrumental in LSPA becoming an Affiliate Association of NALA and in the creation of the Louisiana Certified Paralegal credential in 1992. Jimmie, and the other LSPA members that created the LCP recognized that the LCP exam covers only Louisiana law, and alone does not reflect the paralegal's overall knowledge, therefore, the LCP designation



is 'tied' to the NALA CLA/CP credential and cannot be used until the applicant successfully completes the national exam. She was a contributor to the Study Guide for the LCP Review Course, "*Except in Louisiana . . .*" has played a major role in updating the Study Guide periodically, and continues to teach sections of the Review Course for the LCP exam annually.

Ms. Murvin was awarded the first annual Outstanding Paralegal of the Year by LSPA in 1989. She was subsequently honored with the first Meritorious Service Award in 1994. This award is bestowed infrequently and was dubbed "The Jimmie" in homage to its first recipient. When LSPA established a new scholarship this year to encourage and assist its members in obtaining the CP and LCP credentials, it was named the Jimmie Murvin Certification Scholarship in recognition of her efforts. Jimmie has dedicated her career to promoting paralegal education and certification, at both the state and national levels. Ms. Murvin has served on the NALA board and been recognized by NALA for her tireless dedication to the paralegal profession. She has received the NALA Affiliated Association Award and was the first recipient of NALA's Presidents Award in 1995.

She continues to work as a paralegal, currently performing freelance work for law firms including the law firm of deGravelles, Palmintier, Holthaus & Frugé where she worked fulltime for more than 25 years (beginning in 1979).

*EFFECT ON NALA OR PARALEGAL PROFESSION:*

Jimmie is a role model and mentor to paralegals in Louisiana. She has served on the board of the Baton Rouge Paralegal Association, the Louisiana State Paralegal Association, and NALA. She has promoted paralegal education as an educator for over 30 years, and has encouraged and supported voluntary paralegal certification. She was instrumental in establishing the Louisiana Certified Paralegal credential which is administered through NALA and promotes both national (CP) and state (LCP) paralegal certification.

Without Jimmie Murvin's vision and leadership, LSPA would not be the association it is today and NALA's presence and influence in the State of Louisiana, and throughout the south, would have been greatly diminished.

## **Highlights of Third Quarterly Board Meeting on May 4, 2013**

By Amy Collins-Gutter, Secretary and Jessie Cormier, President



Cindy Haggerty-Horne, Pam Turner, Amy Collins-Gutter, Debbie Billiot - 1st Vice President, Renee Grissom and Jessie Cormier, President (not pictured: Debbie Fontenot)

LSPA's Board of Directors met at the office of Deborah Fontenot, CP, in Lafayette on May 4, 2013. We discussed plans for the Fall seminar which will be part of our Annual Conference. In order to encourage and assist Louisiana paralegals in obtaining certification, it was decided that the CLE committee would obtain speakers on subjects that are covered in the Certified Paralegal exam administered by NALA. The Annual Conference will be held in Lafayette on September 20 – 21. Venues suggested by Program Chairperson, **Karen McKnight, CP**, were discussed. Preliminary plans for the Awards Reception were also discussed by Awards Chairperson, **Debbie Billiot**.

Our new editor of The Advocate, **Cindy Haggerty-Horne**, was introduced to the Board and a list of articles was discussed. Plans for this year's LCP Review Course were presented by Chairperson **Pamela Turner**. It will be held in Lafayette on August 2-3, 2013, at the office of Debbie Fontenot.

Our NALA Liaison, **Deborah Fontenot, CP**, presented several ideas on promotional items for LSPA's booth at the NALA Annual Meeting as well as our members. As chairperson of the Jimmie Murvin Certification Scholarship committee, Debbie offered her

report and first draft of the proposed guidelines. The committee's final recommendation will be considered at the July Board Meeting. It was also decided that the first scholarship would be presented at this year's Annual Conference.

President, **Jessie Cormier, CP, LCP**, presented to the Board a suggestion that dues be prorated for first time active members and the following schedule was approved by vote: if joining in July, August and September prior to the Annual Conference the full dues amount of \$50 will pay for membership through September 30 of the following year; in other words, someone joining in July 2013 would have membership from the date their membership is approved through September 30, 2014. Other pro-rata discounts approved were a decrease to \$40 if joining in January through March and \$30 if joining in April through June.

We also discussed the status of NOPA's proposal to the Louisiana State Bar Association for paralegal membership. (Please read the separate article on this important subject.)

LSPA's quarterly board meetings are always held on Saturdays. Members are welcome to attend. The Board wishes to thank **Debbie Billiot** for bringing warm, fresh donuts to the meeting and also thanks **Debbie Fontenot** for the use of her office.

**Proposal for Paralegal Membership**  
**In the Louisiana State Bar Association**

By Jessie L. Cormier, CP, LCP, President, LSPA 2011 - 2013

In the Winter issue of The Advocate, I wrote an article titled What do Louisiana Paralegals Want? regarding the New Orleans Paralegal Association (NOPA)'s proposal to the Louisiana State Bar Association (LSBA) for paralegal membership and possibly the creation of a paralegal section of the bar. My article raised several questions and asked for feedback from you, the members.

I want to bring you up to date on all that has happened since then. NOPA has submitted supplemental information to Mr. Barry H. Grodsky who initially requested that NOPA President, Becky Rolland, submit a proposal for paralegal membership in LSBA. Mr. Grodsky is a New Orleans attorney, First Board District Representative on LSBA's Board of Governors and Chair of LSBA's Committee on the Profession. On February 8, 2013, LSPA wrote to Mr. Grodsky stating that when we received notice from NOPA President Rolland of their proposal to LSBA, we provided that information to leadership of other paralegal associations in Louisiana: Lafayette Paralegal Association (LPA), Baton Rouge Paralegal Association (BRPA), Northwest Louisiana Paralegal Association (NWLPA) and Legal Assistants of North East Louisiana (LANEL). We requested time in which to study the proposal, research the issues and prepare a response to ensure that his committee has all information necessary to make an informed decision. We also provided Mr. Grodsky with letters of agreement and support from LPA, BRPA, NWLPA and LANEL.

There has been no response from Mr. Grodsky.

We have kept the lines of communication open with NOPA President

Rolland and the members of NOPA's bar liaison committee. They informed us that Mr. Grodsky was forming a committee consisting of two additional attorneys besides himself, NOPA President Rolland, and Vice President Pam Angel. We have no information as to whether this committee has met, nor has LSPA been asked to provide one or more representatives to serve on the committee.

On March 15, 2013, a forum was held from 4 – 5 p.m. following the completion of our Women and the Law seminar in Baton Rouge. NOPA President Rolland was invited to address those present. She provided a well-thought out history of the proposal, its components and arguments in favor of the proposal. This was followed by a question and answer period. It is unfortunate that few paralegals other than those who attended the seminar were in attendance.

On April 16, 2013, I spoke at the luncheon meeting of the Baton Rouge Paralegal Association. I discussed NOPA's proposal including associated issues such as recognition of our profession, distinction between paralegals and other non-attorney staff, and certification available through NALA, NFPA and LSPA.

On April 20 – 21, 2013, I represented LSPA at the NFPA Joint Meeting in New Orleans. This was a good opportunity to learn more about NFPA and its policies pertaining to paralegal regulation, and their paralegal certifications, the PCC and PACE. Jan Melton, CP, LCP of NWLPA also attended a portion of the Joint Meeting. We were able to talk to paralegals from around the U.S. regarding these important issues, and to continue to forge a relationship with members of NOPA.



We have now scheduled a meeting in Alexandria on June 1, 2013 with NOPA President Becky Rolland and Vice President Pam Angel. Representatives from LPA, BRPA, NWLPA and LANEL have indicated they will attend. It is hoped that a face-to-face meeting will be useful in further discussing all aspects of NOPA's proposal and long term implications for all Louisiana paralegals.

LSPA will continue efforts to inform paralegals throughout the State of Louisiana regarding this proposal until we have sufficient information as to whether Louisiana paralegals want to join LSBA as paralegal members. We will continue to keep you, our members, informed. What is your opinion? I want to know, so contact me by email ([jandlcormier@earthlink.net](mailto:jandlcormier@earthlink.net)) or telephone (337-232-9700).

**IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN**  
**Nominations for Outstanding Paralegal of the Year ("OPY")!**  
By Debbie Billiot, Awards Chairperson

All of our members are TERRIFIC paralegals, but do you know of one member in particular that has gone above and beyond the call this year? Well, this is the time to acknowledge them for all of their efforts and accomplishments throughout the year. Is there a paralegal who works diligently both as a paralegal and member to make LSPA the great organization envisioned by its founding members? LSPA has awarded this honor yearly since 1989. Submit a nomination for the OPY award so that we can recognize him or her.

Criteria for nomination are:

1. A member in good standing who is currently employed as a paralegal;
2. Has demonstrated dedication to the development of the paralegal profession in the State of Louisiana;
3. Has contributed significant work toward the development of the Louisiana State Paralegal Association and/or a local paralegal association;
4. Has been actively involved in the development and continuance of educational programs for paralegals in Louisiana;
5. Is recognized by his/her employer as an outstanding employee who makes a

significant contribute to the work of the law firm;

6. Willingly lends assistance to fellow paralegals; and

7. Has high ethical standards.

The nominations received will be reviewed by Judges, Attorneys from around the State and other Paralegals to decide who will receive this prestigious award. Make your nomination and reasons stand out so that he or she receives the recognition so deserving of your nomination. Don't be shy with your words. Shout to the world why you think your nomination should win! You know, there wouldn't be any winners at the Oscars if no one were nominated. So take a minute, fill out the form, and give a deserving paralegal that Oscar! Oops! I mean OPY Award! Same thing....

The award will be presented at a reception after our Fall Seminar during our Annual Conference this September.

The deadline to submit nominations is JULY 1, 2013.

A nomination form is attached for easy reference --- THINK HARD, THINK FAST, DON'T WAIT, and SUBMIT!!!

# Outstanding Paralegal of the Year

## NOMINATION FORM

**PLEASE NOTE:** The nominee should be an LSPA member in good standing who is currently employed as a paralegal and meets the following criteria: has demonstrated dedication to the development of the paralegal profession in the State of Louisiana; has contributed significant work toward the development of the Louisiana State Paralegal Association and/or a local paralegal association; has been actively involved in the development and continuance of educational programs for paralegals in Louisiana; is recognized by his/her employer as an outstanding employee who makes a significant contribute to the work of the law firm; willingly lends assistance to fellow paralegals and has high ethical standards. Complete and return this form to DEBBIE BILLIOT, email: [dcb1030@yahoo.com](mailto:dcb1030@yahoo.com)

**NOMINEE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS/PHONE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMPLOYER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LSPA MEMBER MAKING NOMINATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please also include a brief statement of why you think your nominee should be LSPA Outstanding Paralegal of the year:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**NOMINATIONS DEADLINE: JULY 1, 2013.**

## **LCP Review Course/Study Guide**

**By Pamela D. Turner, Chairperson**

For months now, perhaps even years, you've pondered about becoming a Louisiana certified paralegal. You've asked yourself, "How do I start"? Here's your answer, you start by taking the Louisiana Certified Paralegal (LCP) Review Course.

Let's take a minute to look at the benefits of taking the LCP Review Course:

- Taking this course won't cost you a dime if you purchase the LCP Study Guide in advance;
- Prepare for the LCP Exam;
- Study various types of law;
- Pass the LCP Exam because you've taken the LCP Review Course and studied hard;
- Broaden your knowledge of Louisiana law;
- Become a Louisiana Certified Paralegal;
- Advance in the paralegal profession;
- Have advantage over paralegals who are not Louisiana certified;
- Make more money;
- You're confident because you know your stuff; and
- Employers will want to hire you.

This course is taught by experienced paralegals and attorneys who are eager to

teach and help you. Don't wait another minute; here is your opportunity to boost your paralegal career.

The course material is taken from the LCP Study Guide; so, if you purchase the study guide prior to taking the course, you can study on your own to familiarize yourself with the course material.

To purchase the LCP Study Guide, please contact Deborah Fontenot, CP at [debbiefontenot@bellsouth.net](mailto:debbiefontenot@bellsouth.net). And remember, the LCP Review Course is free of charge if you purchase your study guide in advance. The registration flyer for the LCP review Course will be distributed in the near future.

The LCP Review Course will be held on August 2-3, 2013 at Deborah Fontenot's office, located at 1720 Calisto Saloom Road, Suite D-1, Lafayette, LA.

And for those of you who are planning to take the LCP Exam on October 4-5, 2013, the deadline to submit your application is August 16, 2013.

The prospective course schedule is as follows:

<b>Time</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
<b>Friday, August 2, 2013</b>			
8:00-9:15	1.25	Wills, Probate/Successions	Kay Gautreaux, J.D.
9:15-10:45	1.50	Torts	TBD
10:45-12:00	1.25	Evidence	TBD
12:00 - 1:00	1.00	Lunch	
1:00 -2:00	1.00	Family Law	TBD
2:00-3:30	1.50	Contracts/Obligations	TBD
3:30-5:00	1.50	Business Organizations	TBD
<b>Saturday, August 3, 2013</b>			
8:00-9:00	1.00	General Law	TBD
9:00-10:30	1.50	Criminal Law & Procedure	Molly Davenport, CP
10:30-12:00	1.50	Ethics	Jimmie Murvin, CP, LCP
12:00-1:00		Lunch	
1:00-4:00	3.00	Civil Procedure	Jimmie Murvin, CP, LCP
4:00-5:00	1.00	Property	TBD

*We are still looking for speakers for the LCP Review Course. The material is already prepared and in the Study Guides, so speakers do not need to prepare any written material. If you are interested, or know someone who may be able to assist, please contact Pamela Turner, [pdtturner7777@att.net](mailto:pdtturner7777@att.net).*



## **PARALEGAL CREDENTIALS:** **Certificated Paralegals – Certified Paralegals**

Is there really a difference? YES, there is!

### **CERTIFICATED PARALEGALS:**

Certificated paralegals earned a certificate upon successful completion of a paralegal program. Education requirements in various paralegal programs vary widely in number of study hours, content, and quality. The ABA endorses paralegal programs with a minimum of 60 semester-hours and discourages short-term certificate programs. Graduates of ABA approved paralegal programs are assured their credentials will be recognized by prospective employers. You can determine if a paralegal program is ABA approved at <http://apps.americanbar.org/legalservices/paralegals/directory/home.html>.

Not all paralegal programs which meet ABA requirements have applied for ABA approval. Methods for evaluating the academic quality of non-ABA approved programs are to either go to that school's website to see if their requirements are posted online, or see if the school is listed with the AAFPE (American Assoc. for Paralegal Education) [www.aafpe.org/Directory/index.asp](http://www.aafpe.org/Directory/index.asp). Institutional Members of AAFPE are either ABA approved or 'in substantial compliance with ABA guidelines and accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency.' (Not all programs that meet these requirements are members of AAFPE.) To verify that institutions offering paralegal education programs are accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency see the US Dept. of Education's website (<http://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/>).

### **CERTIFIED PARALEGALS:**

Certified paralegals have gone above and beyond the minimum or entry-level educational requirements and have voluntarily taken one or more certification examinations. They have met certain certification requirements and generally

have an advanced level of competency and number of years experience in the profession.

When considering certification, you have options. All have different structures and eligibility requirements, as well as continuing education and re-certification requirements.

### **NALA Certification (CP/CLA):**

The NALA certification exam was established in 1976 to offer a nationwide credential for all paralegals. The original designation earned by passing the exam was the "CLA" or the Certified Legal Assistant designation. Through the years, the term "Paralegal" has replaced "Legal Assistant" and the designation now granted upon successful completion of the examination is "CP". Paralegals who obtained the "CLA" certification years ago may continue to use the "CLA" designation although they now also have the option of using the "CP" designation.

To be eligible for the Certified Paralegal examination, a paralegal must meet one of the following requirements:

1. Graduation from a paralegal program that is:
  - a. Approved by the American Bar Association; or
  - b. An associate degree program; or
  - c. A post-baccalaureate certificate program in paralegal studies; or
  - d. A bachelor's degree program in paralegal studies; or
  - e. A paralegal program which consists of a minimum of 60 semester hours, of which at least 15 semester hours are substantive legal courses.
2. A bachelor's degree in any field plus one year's experience as a paralegal. Successful completion of at least 15 semester hours of substantive paralegal courses will be considered equivalent to one year's experience as a paralegal.

3. A high school diploma or equivalent plus seven (7) years' experience as a paralegal under the supervision of a member of the Bar, plus evidence of a minimum of twenty (20) hours of continuing legal education credit to have been completed within a two (2) year period prior to the examination date.

The Certified Paralegal examination is a two day exam, divided into five sections, as follows:

- Communications (1.5 hours) (Essay required)
- Ethics (1.0 hours)
- Legal Research (1.5 hours)
- Judgment and Analytical Ability (2.0 hours) (Essay required)
- Substantive Law (2.0 hours)

The substantive law section includes five sub-sections. The first section, American Legal System, is mandatory. The applicants also select four of the following sub-sections: Administrative Law, Bankruptcy, Business Organizations, Civil Litigation, Contracts, Criminal Law and Procedure, Estate Planning and Probate, Family Law, and Real Estate

A minimum passing score of 70% is required in each section to earn the Certified Paralegal credential. If less than 70% is scored on one or more sections, those sections can be re-taken; it is not necessary to retake the entire exam.

The Certified Paralegal credential is awarded for a period of five years. To maintain CP status, paralegals must attend a minimum of 50 hours of continuing legal education within each five (5) year period, including five hours on the subject of legal ethics.

*NALA Advanced Certified Paralegal (ACP):*

The ACP (Advanced Certified Paralegal) certification is offered by NALA only to paralegals that have attained their CP. This program offers advanced certification in specific practice areas as follows: (1) Contracts Management/Contracts Administration, (2) Discovery, (3) Social Security Disability, (4) Trial Practice, (5) Alternative Dispute Resolution, (6) Business Organizations: Incorporated Entities, (7) Trademarks, (8) Personal

Injury, (9) Land Use, (10) Criminal Litigation, (11) Commercial Bankruptcy, (12) Real Estate Principles, and (13) Business Organization: Non-corporate Entities

**NFPA Paralegal Advanced Competency Exam (PACE):**

The NFPA PACE exam was established in 1996 to test the competency level of experienced paralegals. It is designed for professional paralegals who want to pioneer the expansion of paralegal roles for the future of the profession, not to restrict entry into the profession. Upon successful completion of the exam, one earns the PACE Registered Paralegal (RP) credential.

In order to take the PACE exam one cannot have been convicted of a felony nor be under suspension, termination, or revocation of a certificate, registration, or license by any entity, and must meet one of the following requirements:

1. An associate's degree in paralegal studies obtained from an institutionally accredited school, and/or ABA approved paralegal education program; and six (6) years substantive paralegal experience.
2. A bachelor's degree in any course of study obtained from an institutionally accredited school and three (3) years of substantive paralegal experience.
3. A bachelor's degree and completion of a paralegal program with an institutionally accredited school, said paralegal program may be embodied in a bachelor's degree; and two (2) years substantive paralegal experience.
4. Four (4) years substantive paralegal experience on or before December 31, 2000.

The PACE exam is a four (4) hour exam and consists of the following:

Domain I – Administration of Client Legal Matters: conflict checks; develop, organize and maintain client files; develop and maintain calendar/tickler systems; develop and maintain databases; coordinate client services.

Domain II – Development of Client Legal Matters: client interviews; analyze information; collaborate with counsel; prepare, file and serve legal documents and exhibits;

prepare clients and witnesses for legal proceedings.

Domain III – Factual/Legal Research: obtain factual and legal information; investigate and compile facts; inspect, evaluate and analyze evidence; ascertain and analyze legal authority.

Domain IV – Factual/Legal Writing: communicate with client/counsel; draft legal analytical documents.

Domain V - Office Administration: personnel management; acquire technology; coordinate and utilize vendor services; create and maintain library and legal resources, develop and maintain billing system.

Certification must be renewed every two years and requires evidence of 12 hours of CLE, including one ethics hour, within such two year period.

### **NFPA Paralegal CORE Competency Exam (PCCE):**

The PCCE exam was established by NFPA in 2011 to provide the groundwork for expanding paralegal roles and responsibilities; to provide the public and legal community with a mechanism to gauge the core competencies of paralegals; to be used in states considering the regulation of paralegals; and for potential use by paralegal programs as an exit exam or Assurance of Learning tool. Upon successful completion one earns the CORE Registered Paralegal (CRP) designation.

In order to take the exam, applicants must meet one of the following requirements:

- Bachelor's degree in any subject, plus a paralegal certificate; no experience or CLE required;
- Bachelor's degree in paralegal studies; no experience or CLE required;
- Bachelor's degree in any subject, no paralegal certificate, 6 months experience and 1 hour of ethics taken in the year preceding the exam application date;
- Associate's degree in paralegal studies, no experience or CLE required;
- Associate's degree in any subject, a paralegal certificate, no experience or CLE;
- Associate's degree in any subject, no paralegal certificate, 1 year experience and 6 hours of

CLE, including 1 hour of ethics taken in the year preceding the exam application date;

- Paralegal certificate from a program that meets or exceeds the requirements set forth in NFPA's Short Term Paralegal Program Position Statement, 1 year experience and 6 hours of CLE, including 1 hour of ethics, taken in the year preceding the exam application date;
- High school diploma or GED, 5 years experience and 12 hours of CLE, including 1 hour of ethics, taken within 2 years preceding the exam application date.

The exam is two and one-half hours and consists of the following:

Domain 01: Paralegal Practice – (1) Paralegal Profession, (2) Ethics and Professional Practice, (3) U.S. Legal System, (4) Legal Research, (5) Legal Writing and Critical Analysis, (6) Communication, (7) Law Office Management and Legal Technology, (8) Civil Litigation

Domain 02: Substantive Areas of Law – (1) Business Organizations, (2) Contracts, (3) Criminal, (4) Estates, (5) Wills and Trusts, (6) Family, (7) Real Estate, (8) Torts

### **NALS**

NALS offers a Professional Paralegal (PP) exam and Specialty Certificate Program. The PP was established in 2004 and is a two day exam. The requirements to take the exam are as follows:

- Five years' experience performing paralegal duties;
- Two year waiver for candidates with a paralegal degree;
- One year waiver for candidates with a post-secondary degree, successful completion of PLS exam, or other certification(s)

The exam is one day and covers the following:

Part 1 – Written Communications: Grammar and word usage, spelling, punctuation, number usage, capitalization, composition and expression.

Part 2 – Legal Knowledge and Skills: Legal research, citations, legal terminology, the court system and ADR, and the legal skills of

interviewing clients and witnesses, planning and conducting investigations, and docketing.

Part 3 – Ethics and Judgment: Ethical situations involving contact with clients, the public, coworkers, and subordinates; other ethical considerations for the legal profession; decision-making and analytical ability; and ability to recognize priorities.

Part 4 – All areas of substantive law, including administrative; business organizations and contracts; civil procedure and litigation; criminal, family, real property, torts; wills, trusts and estates; admiralty and maritime; antitrust; bankruptcy; environmental; federal civil rights and employment discrimination; immigration; intellectual property; labor; oil and gas; pension and profit-sharing; taxation; water; workers' compensation.

Recertification is required every five years and requires 75 hours of CLE including 5 ethics hours.

### **Louisiana Certified Paralegal (LCP):**

In addition to national certification, many states offer state-wide certification. The Louisiana State Paralegal Association began offering the Louisiana Certified Paralegal exam in 1996 to demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and a high degree of proficiency in Louisiana law and adherence to a Code of Ethics.

To qualify to take the examination you must either:

- (1) be a CLA whose credential is current at the time of taking the examination, or
- (2) meet one of the following criteria:
  - Category 1: You must have graduated from one of the paralegal programs that is approved by the American Bar Association or an associate degree program or a post-baccalaureate certificate program in paralegal studies or a bachelor's degree program in paralegal studies or a paralegal program that consists of a minimum of 60 semester hours of which at least 15 semester hours are substantive legal courses.
  - Category 2: A bachelor's degree in any field plus one year's experience as a paralegal.
  - Category 3: A high school diploma or equivalent plus seven years' experience as a paralegal plus a minimum of twenty hours of

continuing legal education completed within a two-year period prior to application for the examination.

The LCP exam is given over a two-day period and tests on three required sections: general law (state court structure, including jurisdiction, and duties of those officials who work inside the court system, etc.); civil procedure, which is much broader in Louisiana than litigation only, although it includes litigation; and Louisiana legal ethics. In addition to the required sections, applicants are required to choose four substantive law topics on which to be tested from a list of eight: property; wills/probate/successions/trusts; criminal law and procedure; evidence; torts; family law; obligations (contracts); and business organizations. In order to earn the right to use the LCP designation, one must also pass the NALA (CLA/CP) Certification Exam.

All Louisiana Certified Paralegals must maintain their NALA Certified Paralegal certification in good standing. To maintain certification as an LCP requires 25 hours of Louisiana substantive and/or procedural law and 5 hours of ethics in each five-year period, which units may, at the discretion of NALA, also fulfill a portion of the fifty hours of continuing legal education required to maintain the CLA.

### **Is Certification for YOU?**

Remember the pride you felt when you graduated from paralegal school? You can experience that again by taking a certification exam. As an affiliated member of NALA, LSPA urges its members to take the NALA CP exam. If you have earned your CP designation, then it's time to consider taking the LCP. Not only will you gain valuable knowledge in preparing for these exams; you have the satisfaction of reaching a new personal and professional goal! Stand a little taller and feel stronger with a new level of personal and professional confidence.

By Deborah P. Fontenot, CP

NOTE: This is a reprint of an article originally published in the February, 2012 edition of The Advocate.





## NALA CORNER

By: Deborah P. Fontenot, CP - LSPA NALA  
Liaison

### **NALA Conference 2013**

The NALA conference will be here soon and I would like to encourage you to attend this year's conference. Jimmie Murvin, LCP, CP will be receiving the highest honor that NALA bestows – the Founder's Award – and I'm sure that many of you would like to be there to support Jimmie. We are so fortunate to have Jimmie Murvin as an active member of our association and we are very proud of her accomplishments. Not only do we recognize the impact that Jimmie has had on the paralegal profession, NALA is recognizing those accomplishments during the Awards Ceremony to be held on Friday, July 12, and honoring her at the Reception that same evening.

I am so honored that, as LSPA's NALA Liaison, I was able to participate in nominating Jimmie for this award, and I am also honored to be representing LSPA at this wonderful event! The conference will be held at the Hilton Portland & Executive Tower in downtown Portland on July 10 – 12, 2013. The Convention includes an Early Bird Reception on the evening of Tuesday, July 9, a Membership Forum on Wednesday afternoon, and a Reception/Party on Wednesday evening. (These parties are a lot of fun! In Dallas we had line-dancing lessons and in Omaha we had roping lessons. I wonder what's in store for us in Portland!) Thursday features the All Convention Luncheon, Member Exchange, and the Affiliate Association meetings. The Member Exchange will include presentations entitled "Going

Paperless in the Law Office", "90 Apps in 90 Minutes" and "Hot Topics in Legal Ethics".

As in the past, several educational institutes will be offered this year. Each institute is a three-day seminar, held during the mornings. This year's topics are: Criminal Law and Procedure, e-Discovery, Employment & HR, Estate Administration, Insurance Defense, Technology in the Law Office, and Essential Skills (which covers topics on the CP exam). All of these institutes meet the CLE requirements for maintaining the CP and LCP credentials and provide approximately eight hours of CLE.

I'm really looking forward to this year's conference and I hope we have several LSPA members in attendance. For more information, see NALA's website at [www.nala.org](http://www.nala.org).

### **CLE**

Did you notice that the brochure for the Annual Convention acknowledges that The Louisiana State Paralegal Association approves all educational programs offered by NALA for continuing education credit for certification/recertification of Louisiana Certified Paralegals? This includes the educational opportunities at the Annual Convention, the NALA Campus Live seminars, and any other seminar offered by NALA. NALA members don't forget you can use your \$80 Gift Certificate toward the cost of one of the NALA Campus Live seminars or the educational institutes offered at the Annual Convention. NALA Campus Live programs are web-based sessions from 90 minutes to two hours in length and cover a range of topics. Handout materials are included for most of these presentations. For more information go to [www.nala.org/onlineed.aspx](http://www.nala.org/onlineed.aspx).



## Facts & Findings

As always, I encourage all of you to check out the wonderful articles featured in the *Facts & Findings* Magazine for Paralegals. The March/April 2013 issue featured Tort Law and includes the following articles:

- Purely Psychological Injury
- Simple Guidelines for Product Liability Cases
- The Personal Side of Personal Injury
- False Imprisonment: The Misunderstood Tort
- Medicare Reporting in Liability and No-Fault Cases
- Multi-District Litigation
- Taxation of Damage Award and Settlements
- Demonstrative Evidence

Other articles include “Protecting your Company’s Intellectual Property Rights”, “Freedom from Domestic Violence”, an article on Adobe Acrobat entitled “Mastering the Art”, “Further Education Opens New Doors”, and “Association Sustainability”.

Remember, LSPA members that are not NALA members can subscribe to ***Facts & Findings*** for only \$25.00 per year through LSPA, and can take advantage of this opportunity on NALA’s website. As LSPA’s NALA Liaison I receive an extra copy of ***Facts & Findings*** which I would be happy to share with members. Please contact me if you are interested in reading any of these articles.

## NALA Certification (CP/CLA)

The NALA certification exam is computer based testing offered at over 200 ACT testing centers nationwide including Alexandria, Lafayette, Bossier City, LaPlace and Addis (near Baton Rouge). The testing dates and application deadlines each year is as follows:

Examination Date	Application Filing Deadline	Late Application Filing Deadline (\$25 late fee)
Sept. 1– 30	August 1	August 10
January 1 – 31	December 1	December 10
May 1 – 31	April 1	April 10

Application forms, application procedure overview, information on study material, and all other information an applicant needs, can be found on the NALA website at <http://www.nala.org/Certification.aspx>.



## ETHICS TALK

By Jimmie W. Murvin, ACP, LCP, LSPA Past President & Charter Member

In June 1988, Michael J. Matthews pleaded guilty to five counts of forgery and five counts of felony theft of client funds. See *State v. Matthews*, 572 So. 2d 250 (La. App. 1st Cir. 1990), writ denied, 575 So. 2d 387 (La. 1991). After entering his pleas, he filed a petition for consent disbarment, which was granted. *Louisiana State Bar Assn. v. Matthews*, 532 So. 2d 105 (La. 1988). Matthews served prison time for his crimes. He never applied for reinstatement to the practice of law in Louisiana. *In re: Michael J. Matthews*, 30 So.2d 737 (La. 3/26/10).

Donald Cave, a Louisiana lawyer, subsequently hired Mr. Matthews as a paralegal. On at least five occasions, he assigned Matthews to attend depositions, during which Matthews allowed all present to believe he was an attorney representing one of the parties and asked questions. Mr. Cave was disciplined for failure to properly supervise Matthews and for furthering Matthews' unauthorized practice of law. *Id.*, n. 1.

Attorney John Comish also employed Matthews as a paralegal and gave him permission to negotiate settlements with insurance adjusters. In doing this, Matthews wrote letters in which

he did not designate himself as a paralegal or otherwise indicate he was not an attorney. In another case, Comish gave Matthews permission to pick up a settlement check, which was made payable to Matthews directly. Matthews then deposited the check into his own personal account (again with Comish's permission), kept some of the funds and wrote a check to Comish for the balance of the settlement money. Matthews also signed Comish's name as Notary on a succession (again with Comish's permission). Needless to say, Mr. Comish was also disciplined for the same violations as Mr. Cave vis-a-vis his employment of Matthews. *Id.*, n. 2.

In July 2008, the ODC filed three counts of formal charges against Matthews, alleging his conduct violated the following provisions of the Rules of Professional Conduct: Rules 5.5 (engaging in the unauthorized practice of law), 8.4(a) (violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct), 8.4(c) (engaging in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation), and 8.4(d) (engaging in conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice). The Hearing Committee found that Matthews had engaged in the unauthorized practice of law and had done so knowingly and intentionally, and with dishonest motives, and recommended permanent disbarment as the penalty. The Disciplinary Board likewise found that Matthews had practiced law without a license knowingly and intentionally, and had done substantial and serious harm to clients. It also recommended permanent disbarment. The

Supreme Court agreed and ordered Michael J. Matthews permanently stricken from the rolls of attorneys in the State of Louisiana. *In re: Michael J. Matthews*, 30 So.2d 737 (La. 3/26/10).

Two questions came to my mind as I was reading this case. They are:

1. Why would any sensible lawyer hire anyone as a paralegal who had pled guilty to felony crimes, lawyer or not?
2. Why is it that lawyers believe it's OK to hire a suspended or disbarred lawyer as a paralegal?

It's as if some lawyers look upon the paralegal profession as a sort of all-inclusive place where anyone, from the file clerk to the courier to the legal secretary to any suspended or disbarred lawyer can be placed at the whim of the hiring lawyer, without thought to the protection of their clients or themselves and their own professional standing. Granted, this doesn't happen all the time, but it happens often enough to be a concern.

Where is the professional respect that paralegals are entitled to receive from lawyers? Where is the professional consideration - for their clients and themselves and paralegals - that all lawyers ought to have? When will all lawyers realize, understand and accept that they must be responsible in hiring well-educated, well-trained, honest, non-criminal individuals to be paralegals? Just hiring someone with employment experience in a law firm or legal setting is not enough. Lawyers don't seem to want any rules imposed on them as to who they can hire as paralegals. But if enough of them continue to be irresponsible in hiring unqualified people as paralegals, that day may come!

---

Please visit the LSPA web site at <http://www.la-paralegals.org> for further information on how to order The LCP Study Guide in preparation for taking the LCP Exam. You will also find LSPA's Bylaws, Board Policy, and Membership Roster, as well as an order form for LSPA t-shirts.

## *Women and the Law Seminar Photos*

*March 15, 2013*



Kent Dejean of Losavio & Dejean -- Louisiana Divorce  
101-What Women Need to Know



Jimmie W. Murvin, ACP, LCP -- Ethics and Social  
Media



Becky Rolland, RP, Pam Angel and Sonjanita Jordan.



CLE Chairperson Tiffany Thomas and Molly Balfour,  
attorney with the Attorney General's Office -- Legal  
Etiquette- How to be a Woman in a Man's World

**BYOD = Bring Your Own Device**  
**What's the ruckus about?**  
By Vicki Voisin, ACP



**What is BYOD?** This is a phrase that refers to employees who bring their own computing devices (Smartphones, laptops, tablets, and PDAs) to the workplace where they use them on the firm's network.

They customarily perform work for the firm, and communicate with clients on these devices.

**The shift.** For years, employees traditionally used a device owned and managed by the firm. The device was usually protected by a firewall. When the employee required remote access, the access was usually with a company-owned laptop, using anti-virus software and connecting with a secure server that connected back to a Firewall.

Today employees are demanding anywhere-anytime-any device access to the firm's data. The result is a rapid swing to the use of unmanaged smart mobile devices and tablets. With the increased use of virtualization, cloud and software as a service (SAAS), data has also become mobile.

**Is BYOD a good thing?** At first blush, it would seem so because there is a resulting decrease in costs to the company. Employees purchase their

own devices and the firm does not pay for device updates or replacement.

Employees experience no lengthy waiting time for approval from management to purchase a device. They may be happier because they are using the device of their choice instead of one dictated by management. An example is the use of an iPhone or Droid as opposed to a BlackBerry.

BYOD promotes more responsiveness, more accessibility for employees and higher worker satisfaction because they are able to work on their own schedule. They may also experience an increase in productivity, resulting in increased income for the employer.

**So what's the problem?** While BYOD may be a relatively new practice, the problems are the same as always: security and confidentiality.

Since employees expect to use personal Smartphones and mobile devices at work, law firms and corporations must ensure that the security of their networks is not compromised. They must protect confidential and/or privileged information of their clients.

While many firms have implemented BYOD policies outlining the firm's position to help better manage these devices and ensure security, not all have taken this step.

From an eDiscovery perspective, the question is: who owns the data on these devices? Is it the firm or the individual? Would discovery include everything from the device, including contacts, text messages, call logs, geo tagging, etc.?



What data can be captured for an e-discovery production without infringing on the privacy rights of the owner of the device? What data can be ignored or omitted without exposing the employer to allegations of spoliation?

Firms must ensure that data on employee-owned devices used in the workplace is preserved and collected in a defensible manner without compromising the ability to be successful in litigation. At the same time, the employee's privacy rights must be preserved.

The challenge is to support employees who bring their own devices into the firm while maintaining the security and confidentiality of sensitive data.

**BYOD practices are just the latest threat to security.** As an employee there are a few things you can do to help meet security obligations:

**1. Be sure to review your current security policies for web applications.**

You should assume that most of these policies will apply to mobile devices.

**2. Understand expectations.** Security adds additional layers to wade through, but think about the havoc a security breach could cause.

**3. Understand any policies adopted for employees who want to use their personal device.** If you do not intend to follow those policies, you should not expect to use your own devices.

**4. Understand which types of apps are off-limits.** Which apps are permitted and which have to be kept off the device?

**5. Take advantage of any training opportunities.** Be sure you understand how to correctly use applications, make the most of mobile capabilities, and watch for suspicious activity.

**As technology evolves, so will BYOD practices.** Be sure you recognize the guidelines and procedures that have been adopted by your employer so you meet security requirements and, as a result, keep up with changing trends.

~~~~~

© 2013 Vicki Voisin, Inc.

Vicki Voisin, "The Paralegal Mentor", delivers simple strategies for paralegals and other professionals to create success and satisfaction by setting goals and determining the direction they will take their careers. Vicki spotlights resources, organizational tips, ethics issues, and other areas of continuing education to help paralegals and others reach their full potential. She is the co-author of *The Professional Paralegal: A Guide to Finding a Job and Career Success*. Vicki publishes *Paralegal Strategies*, a weekly e-newsletter for paralegals, and hosts *The Paralegal Voice*, a monthly podcast produced by Legal Talk Network.

More information is available at [www.paralegalmentor.com](http://www.paralegalmentor.com) where subscribers receive Vicki's *151 Tips for Your Career Success*.

## Highlights of Local Associations from Around the State



### Friends:

It is with great pleasure that the Baton Rouge Paralegal Association announces the election of its new Board for 2013-2014. The new members are President-Lisa Patterson, First Vice-President-Katrina Gwin, Second Vice-President-Rebecca Arceneaux, Secretary- Denise Daniel and Treasurer- Renee Grissom. The new Board will be taking on challenges such as addressing certification of paralegals, continuing education matters and other important issues that paralegals in a changing market will be faced with in the coming year. It is the hope of this new Board that current membership will grow to new heights due to an increase in awareness concerning education and certification opportunities that were otherwise left up to each individual to monitor and participate in. With the added support of the membership of the Baton Rouge Paralegal Association it is expected that we will have a surge in growth and this coupled with a national exposure due to our recent expansion into membership with NFPA is expected to attract paralegals that have otherwise had no interest in joining our group. It is also anticipated that with support from other paralegals around the state and members in other organizations such as the Louisiana State Paralegal Association this new Board will make these transitions in our association effortlessly. Thank you for your support and for including us in your activities and publications.

**Submitted by: Lisa Patterson, President-Elect Baton Rouge Paralegal Association**

### Lafayette Paralegal Association News

By Sandy Pourciaux, ACP

The Lafayette Paralegal Association got off to a great start for 2013 with Mr. Jim Dill, a Lafayette attorney, presenting a seminar to LPA at the Petroleum Club on 18 Wheeler Litigation. It was truly fascinating to see the technology used today in defending this complex area of litigation. Mr. Dill wowed us with the advanced litigation tools used to present evidence to juries and showed us a live video of an accident from the inside of the 18 wheeler cab. Thank you, Mr. Dill for this truly educational seminar. February brought a new round of officers to the slate. Board members for 2013-14 included Lesley T. Simon as President, Savannah Stephens, CLA, as Vice President, Michelle M. Domas as Secretary, and Nancy P. McMillian was re-elected to the office of Treasurer. Clerk of the U.S. District Court, Western District of Louisiana, Cathy Bacon, installed the officers and we thank her for taking the time to be there and do this for our members and new LPA board. Newly elected President, Lesley T. Simon appointed Sandy Pourciaux, ACP as Corresponding Secretary, and Deborah P. Fontenot, CP as Parliamentarian.

For the seminar held in March, yours truly gave the reader's digest version of the Medical Malpractice Overview – Complaint to Decision and Power Point Presentation which was first presented at the 2012 Annual Meeting of LSPA in September. Requests were made for an encore and I was honored to be asked to present it again. April brought us Mr. David Cook, a local attorney and mediator. He explained the mediator's role in handling settlement negotiations. It was interesting to hear the point of view from mediator. Thanks to Mr. Cook for taking the time out to give us his prospective.

On May 23, LPA will be honored to have as its guest speaker, Jimmy Murvin, LCP, ACP who will present a talk on Ethics and the Media. We look forward to having a discussion on these issues that we as paralegals face every day, and of course, it is always a pleasure to see Jimmie at every opportunity! On June 20, Jasmine B. Bertrand of the Onebane Law Firm will provide information on Oil & Gas Title Opinions, Form and Substance. Non-members are welcome to attend the LPA monthly luncheon seminars which are usually held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month. Look to LPA's website at [www.lpa-la.org](http://www.lpa-la.org) for more information.

### **NOPA Report on Joint Conference**

By Suzanne Fontan, NFPA Primary Representative

Submitted by Becky Rolland, NOPA President

| <b>Session</b> | <b>Total Number of Attendees</b> |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Regulation     | 65                               |
| Leadership     | 35                               |
| Certification  | 19                               |

Please note that on the second day of the conference, Leadership and Certification ran concurrently.

The Regulation conference was organized by Lisa Vessels and included 4 hours of CLE and was very well received and attended. NOPA provided speakers on working with local Bar Associations (NOPA President Becky Rolland), Lobbyist Renée Roberts and Walt Leger, III, Louisiana State Representative *Speaker Pro Tempore*, Louisiana House of Representatives.

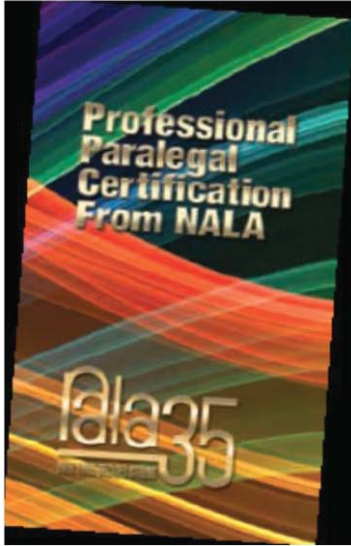
The Leadership conference was presented by Kristine Farmer. Bob Hrouda and Cindy Welch appeared via conference call.

The Certification conference was presented by Suellen Honeychuck and (Region II's own) Lori Boris. Tulane University's Director of Paralegal Studies, Sallie E. Davis, presented on working with local associations and the newly established Assurance of Learning program.

The socials were popular and there were many side-trips to the French Quarter. Suzanne gave a very short car tour while en route to the French Quarter when one attendee (not from Region II) asked if the Superdome had been renovated yet!

NOPA worked closely with NFPA to promote the JC locally, regionally and nationally. NOPA planned and hosted the Saturday social. As a direct result of JC, NOPA now has a Certification Ambassador and started a study and support group for PACE and PCCE.

All in all, this conference was a very big success with a record turnout.



## **LATE-BREAKING NEWS FROM NALA**

The NALA Certifying Board has released new specifications for the Certified Paralegal examination effective with the September 2013 examination.

### **NALA Certifying Board Announces New Examination Specifications**

The NALA Certifying Board has announced new specifications for the Certified Paralegal examination effective with the September 2013 testing window. These modifications are based on a careful and detailed analysis of the findings of the 2012 Job Task Analysis study conducted by the Board in consultation with PSI Psychometric Consulting Services.

The new examination specifications call for minor adjustments to the number of points per topic within all sections of the examination. (See table below.) No new topics were introduced in any examination area.

The most significant modification is the elimination of several practice area tests under the Substantive Law section. The Job Task Analysis study demonstrated that, on a nationwide basis, a low percentage of paralegals utilize the knowledge and skills tested by these practice area examination sections on a regular and routine basis in the workplace.

In addition, the option to test in certain specialty practice areas will no longer be available to examinees. All examinees will take the same Substantive Law section of the examination, as is the case with all other sections of the Certified Paralegal examination.

Effective with the September 2013 testing, the Substantive Law section will consist of questions on the following subjects:

- American Legal System
- Civil Litigation
- Business Organizations
- Contracts

With these modifications, the Certifying Board listened to member and nonmember paralegals, and applied findings of the Job Task Analysis study to the exam specifications. The Certifying Board strives to link the Certified Paralegal examination directly to the day to day duties and responsibilities of paralegals in the workplace. The modifications announced for the September 2013 examination are a continued effort to ensure the Certified Paralegal examination remains an accurate and relevant reflection of the duties and responsibilities of today's paralegals.

A detailed list of specifications for the Certified Paralegal examination may be found on the NALA web site under "Certification/Certified Paralegal Exam Description" as well as a more detailed statement of these modifications

*Thank you,  
LSPA Sustaining Members!*

LSPA would like to take this opportunity to recognize its  
2012-2013 Sustaining Members:

**Lori Heaphy & Associates**

Lori Heaphy, CCR, RPR, CMRS  
(337) 233-1655  
[loriheaphy@bellsouth.net](mailto:loriheaphy@bellsouth.net)

**LSU Paralegal Program**

Charlotte DesHotel, Program Director

**ProLegal Copies**

Lafayette, Louisiana

**Clarity Litigation Support, LLC**

[bburdick@claritylit.com](mailto:bburdick@claritylit.com)

We appreciate your support of LSPA and the paralegal profession.

~~~~~

*Don't see your company's name here?  
Perhaps it is time to Renew Your Sustaining Membership! Contact Debbie Billiot by  
Phone (337) 254-1363 or  
E-mail @ [dcb1030@yahoo.com](mailto:dcb1030@yahoo.com)  
For an LSPA Membership Application.  
Or Visit our LSPA Web Site at  
<http://www.la-paralegals.org>*

*Don't Delay! Renew Today!*



**LSPA Membership**

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM**

Name	
Preferred Mailing Address	
City, State, Zip code	
Telephone Number	
Preferred E-Mail Address	

Please send this completed form to Debbie Billiot at [dcb1030@yahoo.com](mailto:dcb1030@yahoo.com).



**MISSION STATEMENT**

The Louisiana State Paralegal Association, Inc., as the leader of the paralegal profession in Louisiana, is dedicated to the advancement and betterment of the paralegal profession throughout the State of Louisiana and in general. LSPA strives to increase the recognition of the paralegal field by promoting the benefits of effective and increased utilization of paralegals.

Working diligently to maintain the integrity of the profession, LSPA promotes high ethical standards for its membership and also offers a voluntary certification examination to identify Louisiana paralegals who have demonstrated a high degree of competency in the profession. LSPA also promotes continuing legal education for its members. Further, LSPA is dedicated to providing a network of professional support to paralegals in their careers.



## *LSPA 2012-2013*

### **OFFICERS/BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*President*

**Jessie L. Cormier, CP, LCP**  
[jandlcormier@earthlink.net](mailto:jandlcormier@earthlink.net)

*First Vice President*

**Debbie Billiot**  
[Dcb1030@yahoo.com](mailto:Dcb1030@yahoo.com)

*Secretary*

**Amy Collins-Gutter**  
[amy@losaviolaw.com](mailto:amy@losaviolaw.com)

*Treasurer*

**Sandy Pourciaux, ACP**  
[smp@onebane.com](mailto:smp@onebane.com)

*NALA Liaison*

**Deborah P. Fontenot, CP**  
[debbiefontenot@bellsouth.net](mailto:debbiefontenot@bellsouth.net)

*Parliamentarian*

**Camille Moran, CP**  
[caramor@wnonline.net](mailto:caramor@wnonline.net)

*Chair, LCP Certifying Board*

**Shondra D. "Shonnie" Broussard, CLA, LCP**  
[shonnieab@yahoo.com](mailto:shonnieab@yahoo.com)

### **CALL NOW! JOIN TODAY!**

For **LSPA Membership Application** please contact:

Mrs. Debbie Billiot, LSPA First Vice President and Membership Chair

Phone (337) 254-1363 or e-mail @ [dcb1030@yahoo.com](mailto:dcb1030@yahoo.com)

Or visit LSPA's web site at <http://www.la-paralegals.org> under the Membership tab.



## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Awards

Lobbying

Membership

**Debbie Billiot**

[dcb1030@yahoo.com](mailto:dcb1030@yahoo.com)

Continuing Legal Education/Seminars

**Renee Grissom**

[Grissom.renee@gmail.com](mailto:Grissom.renee@gmail.com)

Executive

**All Elected Officers**

Finance and Budget

**Sandy Pourciaux, ACP**

[smp@onebane.com](mailto:smp@onebane.com)

Fundraising

Historian/Archives/Scrapbook

**Jessie Cormier, CP, LCP**

[jandlcormier@earthlink.net](mailto:jandlcormier@earthlink.net)

LCP Review Course

**Pam Turner**

[Pdturner7777@att.net](mailto:Pdturner7777@att.net)

Long Range Planning

**All Past Presidents**

Media Relations (PSA) (Sub-Com.)

**Camille Moran, CP**

[camor@wnonline.net](mailto:camor@wnonline.net)

Newsletter

Cindy Haggerty-Horne

[cindyhaggertyhorne@yahoo.com](mailto:cindyhaggertyhorne@yahoo.com)

Professional Development

**Sonjanita C. Jordan**

[sonjanitajordan@hotmail.com](mailto:sonjanitajordan@hotmail.com)

Program

**Karen McKnight, CP**

[kmcknight@mpassmanlaw.com](mailto:kmcknight@mpassmanlaw.com)

Rochelle Scholarship

**Heather Wyatt**

[hwyatt@psnlaw.com](mailto:hwyatt@psnlaw.com)

Sponsorship/Vendors

Sandy Pourciaux, ACP

[smp@onebane.com](mailto:smp@onebane.com)

Technology

**Robert "Bob" Jullens, CP, LCP**

[bjullens@dphf-law.com](mailto:bjullens@dphf-law.com)

Jimmie Murvin Certification Scholarship

Development Committee

Web Site

**Deborah Fontenot, CP**

[debbiefontenot@bellsouth.net](mailto:debbiefontenot@bellsouth.net)



## **BENEFITS OF LSPA MEMBERSHIP**

- Promotion of the paralegal profession, paralegal education, and ethical conduct for paralegals in the State of Louisiana and specifically in cooperation with local and state bar associations.
- Networking opportunities with other paralegals throughout the State of Louisiana.
- Free subscription to LSPA's quarterly newsletter, *The Advocate*, which is prepared especially for Louisiana paralegals, contains information on CLE, organization activities, professional achievements, local paralegal association activities, and features regular articles and columns of special interest to paralegals such as "Ethics Talk," "Computer Talk," and "Paralegal Student News".
- Two annual statewide continuing education opportunities which are specific to paralegal education interests and needs, plus a yearly LCP Review Course which also serves as CLE and the preparation for paralegals desiring to take the LCP examination, all of which offer reduced tuition benefits to LSPA members.
- Affiliation with the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.
- Acknowledging and rewarding paralegal excellence through various awards such as LSPA's Outstanding Paralegal of the Year Award, the Meritorious Service Award, and Service Achievement Award.
- Take advantage of a statewide Job Bank available and accessible to LSPA members only.
- A Lobbying Committee which actively and continuously monitors legislation and jurisprudence that could in any way affect the paralegal profession in Louisiana and which stands ready to lobby for paralegal interests in our state.
- Website which provides LSPA's history, mission statement, membership applications, news, activities, LCP examination schedules, seminar schedules, and legal links.
- Administration of the LCP (Louisiana Certified Paralegal) examination, which provides an opportunity for Louisiana paralegals to demonstrate their high level of knowledge of Louisiana law (connected to NALA's CLA examination).



Louisiana State Paralegal Association  
 P.O. Box 51690  
 Lafayette, Louisiana 70505

place  
 postage  
 here

---



---



---



---

## Welcome, LSPA Sponsors!

### **LSPA Sponsors, Place your Sponsorship in *The Advocate*, today!**

*The Advocate* is published quarterly and is distributed to numerous individuals, law firms, and businesses across the state. Now is the time to take advantage of this opportunity to reach legal professionals all over the state. So, pick up your phone and call today!

The deadline for submitting your camera-ready sponsorship ad or business card, for our August 2013 Issue, is July 15, 2013.

Sponsorship Rates per issue:	1/8 Page	\$30.00
	1/4 Page	\$50.00
	1/2 Page	\$90.00
	Full Page	\$125.00

*Businesses placing sponsorships in all four issues of *The Advocate* receive a 10% discount!*

For Sponsorship info for *The Advocate* or for sponsoring an LSPA Seminar, please contact:

Sandy Pourciaux at [smp@onebane.com](mailto:smp@onebane.com).

LSPA is also offering a yearly subscription of *The Advocate* to non-members at the cost of \$15.00.

For LSPA Membership information, including Voting, Student, Associate, or Sustaining Membership, Please contact: Debbie Billiot, First Vice President, by email: [dcb1030@yahoo.com](mailto:dcb1030@yahoo.com).

***Thanks to all LSPA 2012-2013 Sponsors for your support!***