

Andrea Davis

From: Kate McAllister & Erica McAdoo [ncaj@ncaj.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 02, 2011 10:15 AM
To: Andrea Davis
Subject: What's Up with LAD?



LEGAL ASSISTANTS DIVISION

Newsletter

March 2011

Message from the Chair

This issue of the Division electronic newsletter contains awesome information for Division members -- upcoming Get-to-Know Luncheon, quality CLE, membership benefits for Division members and much more.

I've served on LAD leadership for many, many years and I strongly encourage you to get involved in LAD leadership too! When you read the leadership position descriptions outlined below in the "Call for Nominations" piece, the responsibilities may seem a bit overwhelming, however, I'm here to tell you that they're not -- being involved in LAD leadership has enhanced my career, providing me with a network of colleagues and friends statewide as well as having the privilege of interacting with NCAJ executive leadership and member attorneys through participation in NCAJ's Board of Governors.

NCAJ truly values its legal assistants as demonstrated by the 2009 unanimous vote by the NCAJ Board of Governors to give the LAD Chair a voting right on the Board of Governors -- the only organization in the nation that has afforded its legal assistants members this opportunity.

In addition to my role within the Division as Division Chair, I participate on the NCAJ Board of Governors as the collective voice for the Division on organizational matters. Similarly, in addition to serving in LAD leadership, each of the LAD officers serves on the NCAJ Committee in their area of charge -- Education, Communications, Membership, Publications -- as the collective voice for the Division in that specific area. I strongly encourage you to participate in LAD leadership, you won't regret it -- you will make great friends and further your professional development.

I also encourage you to take full advantage of the benefits your NCAJ membership offers: select your FREE Section and join the LAD listserv. These resources are invaluable to you as a professional.

And, at any time, if you have any thoughts, comments, questions about what you'd like to see the Division accomplish, please feel free to contact me at rhondar@wellsjenkins.com.

I hope to meet you at an upcoming LAD event or involved as an officer in this great LAD leadership group!

Best Regards,
Rhonda Rodenbough
Chair, Legal Assistants Division

Member Spotlight: Patricia F. Clapper, ACP, NCCP

Submitted by Kate McAllister, Glenn, Mills, Fisher & Mahoney, P.A.

To those of you who participate in the LAD listserv, the member we are spotlighting in this edition will very be familiar. So many of us have benefited from **Patti Clapper's** helpful posts! Others will know Patti from her long service as a volunteer with the NCAJ's Mock Trial program or through the North Carolina Paralegal Association. She is currently the outgoing president of NCPA. Patti has also served as a speaker for LAD, most recently in 2010 at NCAJ's Summer Conference for Paralegals. Her deep involvement in a number of paralegal organizations provides a model for professional development.

Patti recently shared some reflections on her career and experiences in the paralegal field. She grew up in Cary and has been in the Triangle area all her life. During high school, her grandmother gave her an advertisement from the local paper for the Paralegal Technology program at Central Carolina Community College in Sanford. Patti was interested, decided to enroll in the program, and she has never looked back. A strong supporter of the community college system in general, Patti has maintained close ties to CCCC, teaching two courses, *Introduction to Paralegalism* and *Civil Litigation*, and working with others on an advisory board for the paralegal curriculum at the school. In 1996, she had the chance to serve on a team which made recommendations for curriculum improvement throughout the community college system.

Service on that curriculum improvement team was but one of several opportunities that Patti has enjoyed during her career, working with groups on big-picture issues relevant to the paralegal profession. For example, Patti was a part of the movement to make paralegal certification a reality in North Carolina. She recalls this "exciting time" as one when a number of organizations were working on the idea, and their collective efforts coalesced into something called APPS, the Alliance for Paralegal Standards. APPS was instrumental in the creation of the statute that governs paralegal certification.

For over 16 years, Patti has been employed with the Chapel Hill firm of *Levine and Stewart*. She primarily works with attorney **John Stewart**, who has been in his own practice for 38 years. She noted that though a large portion of her work is family law, there is quite enough variety with other areas of practice, such as personal injury, estate planning, criminal defense, and the like, to keep the field fresh and new. Meeting new clients and hearing their stories can be challenging, and Patti mentioned that she finds inspiration every day in these words from NCSU legend Kay Yow, "We have no control over some things that happen to us in life, but we have 100 percent control over how we react to them."

Patti, who lives with her family in Apex, has consistently found time in her busy schedule to be actively involved with professional paralegal organizations, particularly the North Carolina Paralegal Association, which is an affiliated association of NALA, the National Association of Legal Assistants. Patti earned her CLA and ACP certifications from NALA in 1996 and 2004, respectively. She has been involved in NCPA in a number of ways, beginning with her service as editor of *Forum*, NCPA's magazine. Presently, Patti is nearing the end of her term as president of NCPA. She noted that one of the absolute highlights of her presidential term was the opportunity to attend the NALA convention in Florida. "It was wonderful to meet and interact with so many paralegals from all across the country," she said.

Once her term ends, Patti looks forward to getting back into teaching. She enjoys sharing knowledge and helping others. Her schedule since the spring of 2009 has been limited, due to her responsibilities as NCPA president, and she will be glad to have additional time for a number of activities, including another big-picture opportunity. Patti was just appointed to the NC State Bar's Paralegal Certification Committee, where she will help write test questions for the NCCP certification exam. Finally, she is excited to have more time with her son and daughter, more time for coaching a youth soccer team, and especially, more time for cheering on the Wolfpack.
Congratulations, Patti & thanks so much for all that you've done to further the field!

Upcoming Events – Calendar These Dates!

MARCH 16, 2011 - [REGISTER TODAY!](#)

Spring Seminar for Paralegals

*Embassy Suites
Concord*

LAD leadership has put together a great seminar for you that will be informative, fun AND satisfies your yearly 6.0 CPE hours requirements (including 1.0 hour ethics).

Areas covered will be products liability, workers compensation, family law, social security, discovery and trust

account management. In addition, mid-day, LAD leadership will host a Get-to-Know luncheon for Seminar registrants -- a fun way to "get to know" your colleagues!

[Click here for details/to register.](#)

Interested in Other CLE Topics? [Click here](#) for the full schedule of upcoming live educational seminars and video replays.

APRIL 13, 2011 - RSVP TODAY!

LAD Get-To-Know Luncheon

NCAJ
Raleigh

Meet LAD leadership, network with colleagues and get invaluable information on NCAJ resources that will benefit your daily professional life. Do you have a legal assistant in your office who isn't a NCAJ member? Bring her/him along too! [Click here](#) for luncheon details. Questions or RSVP to AndreaD@ncaj.com.

UPCOMING SECTION & DIVISION EVENTS - RSVP TODAY!

All NCAJ members are welcome to attend any NCAJ Section or Division event. For more details or to RSVP, contact AndreaD@ncaj.com.

March 15: Commercial Litigation Section Meeting, NCAJ, Raleigh (Also Avail by Phone)

March 17: Disability Advocacy Section ALJ Networking Reception, Holiday Inn Bordeaux, Fayetteville

March 23: Mexican Consulate Reception, NCAJ, Raleigh

March 30: Small Office Practice Section Presents...Technology, NCAJ, Raleigh

March 30: Juvenile Defense Section Meeting, NCAJ, Raleigh (Avail by Phone)

April 13: Legal Assistants Division Get-to-Know Luncheon, NCAJ, Raleigh

April 14: New Lawyers Division Networking Reception, NCAJ, Raleigh

April 15: Professional Negligence Regional Section Meeting, Locations: NCAJ, Charlotte, Winston-Salem, Wilmington (Also Avail by Phone)

May 6: Disability Advocacy Section Annual Meeting, NCAJ, Raleigh

May 12: New Lawyers Division Networking Social, RiRa's Irish Pub, Charlotte

June 17-22: Section & Division Meetings at Convention, Hilton Riverside, Wilmington

CONVENTION 2011 - SAVE THE DATE!

June 18-22, 2011

Hilton Riverside
Wilmington

Mark your calendar for **June 18-22** as NCAJ heads back to Wilmington for **Convention 2011!** This year, ALL events will take place under one roof at the Hilton Riverside in historic downtown Wilmington. Convention 2011 Program Co-Chairs, **Emily McNamara**, *Wilmington* and **Vernon Sumwalt**, *Charlotte* have planned a tremendous Convention for you!

Convention Highlights:

- *Keynote Speaker:* consumer advocate **Erin Brockovich**
- *Saturday's Luncheon Speaker:* North Carolina's own **Roger Smith**
- *Civil Masters in Advocacy Seminar:* Hone your skills at **Arguing Motions** (morning) and **An Introduction to Reptilian Trial Advocacy from the Founders** (afternoon)
- *Criminal Masters in Advocacy Seminar:* **Hit & Runs: Fast-Paced Multi-Subject Hot Button Topics for the Everyday Practitioner**
- *Summer Conference for Paralegals:* Get a full year's CPE credit!

Make your room reservation NOW! NCAJ has reserved room blocks at the following locations. *Be sure to mention the NC Advocates for Justice for discounted rates!*

- **Hilton Riverside** - \$159/night - 910.763.5900 (*Both river view and city view rooms available.*)
- **Best Western Coastline** - \$129/night - 910.763.2800 or 800.617.7732 (*All river view rooms, less than two*

blocks from the Hilton.)

- **Riverview Suits** - \$159/night - 910.772.9988 (*One-bedroom condos, all river view, one-half block from Hilton.*)
- **Shell Island Resort** - \$199/night - 910.256.8696 or 800.689.6765 (*In Wrightsville Beach, oceanfront one-bedroom condos.*)

Wrightsville Beach is a 20-minute drive from downtown Wilmington. For those who wish to rent beach cottages, NCAJ recommends the following realtors:

- **Intracoastal Rental** - 800.533.1840 or 910.256.4503 - www.intracoastalrealty.com
- **Bryant Real Estate** - 800.322.3764 or 910.256.3764 - www.bryantrealestate.com

Stay tuned to your mailbox and email inbox for updates about Convention!

Call for Nominations – Respond Today!

Nominate yourself or a fellow Division member to participate in 2011-12 LAD leadership. Volunteering for LAD leadership is quite beneficial to your career! By participating in LAD leadership, you will not only make valuable contacts with Division members statewide, you will also represent the Division with NCAJ executive leadership.

LAD Leadership positions are for one year, beginning at Convention 2011 in June, and are available in all areas:

- **CLE:** Working to a schedule provided by NCAJ CLE staff, develop topics, invite speakers, prepare finalized agenda of topics/speakers, for each of the three LAD seminars - Summer Conference, Spring Seminar, Fall Conference. Participate in monthly LAD leadership calls. Also serve on NCAJ Education Committee and provide input/take action on any projects, as needed/requested, by the NCAJ Education Committee.
- **Communications or Public Education:** Provide input to NCAJ staff for NCAJ's communications vehicles and organizational messaging from a Division perspective. Promote awareness of NCAJ LAD with outside organizations - paralegal schools, media outlets, other paraprofessional organizations. Participate in monthly LAD leadership calls. Also serve on the NCAJ Communications Committee and provide input/take action on any projects, as needed/requested, by the NCAJ Communications Committee.
- **Membership:** Assist in adding new members to the Division while also maintaining the current level of Division membership. Work with NCAJ staff/Division leadership on conducting meetings/events, assisting with a membership drive or making calls to lapsed or prospective members. Participate in monthly LAD leadership calls. Also serve on the NCAJ Membership Committee and provide input/take action on any projects, as needed/requested, by the NCAJ Membership Committee.
- **Publications:** Work with NCAJ staff to submit content for the Division e-newsletter. Participate in monthly LAD leadership calls. Also serve on the NCAJ Publications Committee and provide input/take action on any projects, as needed/requested, by the NCAJ Publications Committee.

LAD leadership really works as a team. And, completely understanding that all Division members are time-committed with their "day" jobs, participating in LAD leadership is fulfilling but not too much of a time commitment (really). NCAJ staff assists with most everything that LAD leadership does, freeing up leadership, to take care of their "day" jobs.

If you are interested in nominating a Division member or participating in LAD leadership yourself, contact AndreaD@ncaj.com.

Make the Most of Your Membership – Select Your FREE Section!

Have you taken advantage of selecting your FREE Section yet? As a NCAJ Legal Assistants member you are entitled to one complimentary Section.

Join a Section and be included in a vibrant, statewide community of other NCAJ members who practice in the same area of law and who will provide you with professional support, expertise and idea exchange.

Take advantage of Section-specific resources: listserv, CLE, statewide socials and meetings, electronic

newsletters, document banks or online trial notebooks, and much more!

NCAJ supports its members by providing a wide range of Sections - more than most TLAs in the nation: Auto Torts, Civil Rights, Commercial Litigation (free through June 2011), Consumer Areas of Practice, Criminal Defense, Disability Advocacy, Eminent Domain, Employment Law, Family Law, Juvenile Defense, Nursing Home Litigation, Products Liability, Professional Negligence, Small Office Practice, Workers Compensation.

*Already selected your free Section but work in more than one practice area and would like to join an additional NCAJ Section? **NCAJ has got you covered too!** Section membership is now half-price!*

Don't delay - get involved in the NCAJ Community and join a Section today!

[Click here](#) to join your free Section.

[Click here](#) to join an additional Section (at half-price) online using your credit card.

[Click here](#) for the form to join a Section (at half-price) using a check.

Questions? Contact AndreaD@ncaj.com or (919) 836-4215.

Get Expert Advice: Join the LAD Listserv Today!

If you have not joined the LAD listserv, you are missing one of the best membership benefits of being a Legal Assistants Division member. The listserv is a great way to receive responses, 24/7, to legal practice matters and issues, distribute information on important topics and to survey Division members. Contact AndreaD@ncaj.com to set-up your listserv account.

Announcing NCAJ's Veterans' Affairs Listserv – Join Today!

NCAJ has created a listserv especially for NCAJ members who do work in the Veterans' Affairs area. The Veterans' Affairs listserv is free of charge to NCAJ members and a membership list for those participating in the Veterans' Affairs listserv can be found on the Members' Homepage, members.ncaj.com. Contact AndreaD@ncaj.com to set-up your listserv account.

She Did What???

Submitted by Erica McAdoo, Henson Fuerst, P.A.

I try my best to stay out of office politics. I'm not so much concerned about whether I'm the topic of the talk. I just don't even want to know what's being discussed. I hear enough without even trying...my office is beside the copy room! I hear the latest without my co-workers even realizing (or maybe caring?) that I heard it. Even if I wasn't stationed in such close proximity to the infamous, gossip-inducing copy room, I'd like to think that I would still avoid participating in the gossip. After all, what could be more awkward than the senior partner walking in just as you have gotten deep into a hot new topic with a co-worker, while standing dead still in the center of the copy room where you are obviously not doing any work, because the gossip was so good you forgot to even pretend to be doing work?!?

There is an art to acknowledging a co-worker's hurt or anger and allowing them a few seconds to vent, while at the same time avoiding commiserating or implying that you'd like to hear more, either now or in the future. I've been working on this technique for a few years now. It takes some practice - after all, you work with all of the people in the office and don't want to be labeled an uptight, uncaring person that everyone dislikes because after all, who really wants to be that person? On the flip side, however, overindulging in gossip or lengthy conversations about the less-than-ideal traits of other co-workers, or, worse, bosses can often lead to unemployment.

It seems that seeing your co-workers as people and sincerely caring about them while using catchphrases and looking busy works well. What I mean by that is...

- You really should care - to some extent. However a co-worker is feeling in the moment is real to him/her, even if you think the matter is petty or an over-reaction.
- Catchphrases like "I understand" or "I can only imagine how you must feel" go a long way. They show that

you care and are listening, but allow you to avoid participating in the emoting. (These phrases are also very useful with clients.)

- Whether you really are super busy, or if you can at least manage to look super busy at that moment, it will usually keep the conversation brief. Your co-worker will feel acknowledged but will assume that all those papers you keep shuffling require your immediate attention, thus bringing the conversation to a brief, though not entirely insensitive, halt.

As for the general copy room gossip, bottomline, if you can, just avoid it altogether. Go into the copy room with a purpose - get in and get out quick! You'll stay in great standing with your boss and you'll get more done. AND, when the day is over and everyone has gone home, that day's gossip is already old news. All anyone will have to say about you is that you are nice, very busy, and a hard worker -- and that employee is the type that a boss likes to keep around!

Acquaint Your Colleagues with All that NCAJ has to Offer...at Half-Price!

Pass along the good news to colleagues who are non-NCAJ-members: *NCAJ membership is now half-price!*

As you are aware, NCAJ has so much to offer your colleagues: Sections & Divisions specific to your practice area; CLEs provided statewide - live, video replay, webcast; Educational Achievement Program; legislative initiatives that positively impact you and your clients; "Trial Briefs" bi-monthly print journal, "Brief Notes" weekly e-newsletter; "e-Clips" daily news updates and other NCAJ publications; print and online membership directory listing, and much, much more!

[Click here](#) to print a Half-Price Membership Application to pass along or let your colleagues know that they can enroll online at www.ncaj.com.

Questions? Contact LisaW@ncaj.com or (919) 835-2807.

2010-11 Legal Assistants Division Officers

Chair: [Rhonda Rodenbough](#) (Winston-Salem)

Vice Chair: [Deborah Welsh](#) (Greenville)

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Publications Co-Chair: [Erica McAdoo](#) (Raleigh)

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