



PARALEGAL DIVISION
Post Office Box 1923
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103
www.nmbar.org

February 24, 2011

Jessica A. Pérez, Esq.
2011 President, State Bar

Paralegal Division
2011 Officers

Ruby Silva
Chair

Evonne Sanchez
Chair-elect

Yolanda R. Ortega
Secretary

Tina L. Kelbe, CP
Treasurer

Deborah R. Tope, CP, RP
Immediate Past Chair

Board of Directors
Daniel R. Berg
Nettie L. Condit
Sheila F. McGlothlin
Jamie L. Shortz, ACP
Stephanie D. Taylor
Carolyn B. Winton, CP

Kathleen F. Campbell, ACP
Administrative Assistant

Committee Chairs

Budget & Finance

Tina L. Kelbe, CP

Bylaws & Rules

Linda A. Murphy

Communications

PD ENews

Carol Casstevens

Web Page

Daniel Berg

Kate Cotner

Membership

Jamie L. Shortz, ACP

Evonne Sanchez

Continuing Legal Education

Coordination

Evonne Sanchez

Krista Ganes

Provider(s) Approvals

Tina L. Kelbe, CP

Tracking

Patricia M. Marsh CP

Elections

Nettie L. Condit

Events Coordinator

Stephanie D. Taylor

Pro Bono/Community Service

Linda A. Murphy

Professional Development

Carolyn B. Winton, CP

Scholarships

Patricia M. Marsh, CP

Independent Contractors

Jeanne L. Adams

Executive Director, State Bar

Joe Conte

Division Meetings/Events

Continuing Legal Education ("CLE")

Benefits

Communications

Pro Bono Opportunities

Scholarships

Last, But Not Least ...

Dear Members:

Hello! My name is Ruby Silva and I am the Chair of the Paralegal Division for 2011. I would like to take this opportunity to let you know about the Division's schedule for the year and all the benefits the Division has to offer. As Division members, we not only have a unique opportunity but an obligation to demonstrate to others in the legal community that we are a profession that has come into its own and that we deserve the respect that we have worked so hard to attain. On behalf of the Division's Board of Directors, I hope you will "wear" your membership proudly and take advantage of the many opportunities afforded by your Division to network with other members, to volunteer your time to improve the Division, and to advance and reap the rewards of this challenging and honorable profession that we have chosen.

Division Meetings/Events

The Division meets quarterly and holds functions and events periodically throughout the year. Before our annual meeting held January 15 we had a free ethics seminar followed by the first board meeting of the year. We will be having our annual Meet and Greet and board meeting in Albuquerque on March 3. Our next regular board meeting will be on May 14 in Santa Fe.

The 2011 State Bar Annual Meeting will be held in Pojoaque, New Mexico, July 14-16, at Buffalo Thunder. The annual meeting offers a convenient way to complete your MCLE requirements for the entire year in just a couple of days, and it also provides the opportunity to get together with other Division members and have some fun too - all at a good price. So watch for ENews from the State Bar with more details.

The Division will sponsor the Paralegal Institute again this year. This is one of our most popular events during the year and it will be held December 9th at the State Bar headquarters in Albuquerque. We expect to offer about 6 hours of CLE credit for \$99 at this year's Institute and the seminar will be available by webcast as well. So mark the date on your calendar and watch for more information on the topics and registration in November.

The full schedule for our meetings and events is posted on our website under the News section. We hope you'll be able to join us at a time and place that is convenient for you.

Continuing Legal Education ("CLE")

One of the Division's primary objectives is to provide good quality, reasonably-priced CLE opportunities for our members and the legal community. Division members pay reduced fees at Division-sponsored seminars such as the annual Paralegal Institute and the brown bag lunch seminars held in Albuquerque. Right now members in Santa Fe can attend the Albuquerque brown bag sessions via videoconferencing. We are working on getting the videoconferencing set up in other parts of the State. The volunteers on the CLE coordination committee and the regional coordinators do a great job every year setting up seminars. All of the Division-sponsored seminars are posted on our website under the CLE Programs section. The Division does not have a professionalism credit requirement so for members attending seminars that offer professionalism credits, those hours are counted toward the member's general credits requirements.

We encourage you to submit your CLE credits to the Division for recording as you earn them throughout the year. This helps avoid a last minute crunch for the CLE tracking committee at the end of the year. Please remember that it is the member's responsibility to obtain certificates of attendance for CLE attendance and submit them for credit to the CLE Tracking Committee. Sometimes members are told at CLE seminars that their CLE credits will be reported to the New Mexico State Bar by the seminar organizers; however, that is incorrect. Generally, the CLE providers only report credits for attorneys, not paralegals, and the credits are not reported to the Division either. We recommend you print the certificate of attendance from our website and take it with you when attending seminars, or you may use the certificate of attendance provided for attorneys in the seminar materials. If you do not obtain and submit a certificate of attendance, you will not receive CLE credit from the Division. The only seminars for which your credits will be recorded without the need to obtain and submit a certificate of attendance are the annual Paralegal Institute, luncheon seminars or other seminars sponsored by the Division. You may submit the certificate via U.S. postal mail to the P.O. Box address on the form or you may scan and e-mail it to pd@nmbar.org or to Patricia M. Marsh at PMM@FBDLAW.com. You can then monitor your credits through the CLE credits table posted on our website. Credits are posted once a month so check back from time to time to make sure you have been given credit.

Benefits

Division members get a number of benefits from membership in the State Bar. Benefits include receiving the electronic version of the weekly *Bar Bulletin* and the weekly *ENews* with news of current events in the New Mexico legal community. These weekly publications allow paralegals to stay current with the State Bar, see all the CLE advertising, the classified ads and events scheduled across the state. If you do not want to receive these e-mails from the State Bar, you can unsubscribe through the link at the bottom of the e-mail. Starting this year all members of the Division will receive their own Bench and Bar Directory. Other benefits of Division membership include access to Casemaker for research and discounts on selected insurance and financial services. For a complete listing of the benefits, see the member benefits program available on the SBNM web site at [http://www.nmbar.org/Attorneys/MemberServices/MemberBenefits 2011.pdf](http://www.nmbar.org/Attorneys/MemberServices/MemberBenefits%2011.pdf).

The Division just launched a share site for members of the Paralegal Division. This Yahoo Groups site has been created for active Division members who wish to share information, forms, new Rules and proposed Rules, UJIs, post questions, tips and share updates of rules and similar materials. These are just some of the areas this site can assist paralegals at any stage of their career. PLEASE NOTE that this site is intended as a professional site and is not to be used for personal blogging, personal postings or information not related to the promotion of the New Mexico Paralegal profession. This site is for Division members only. You should have received an invite from Shelia McGlothlin. If you did not get an invite from Shelia you may contact her at smcglathlin@dineslaw.com.

The Division has a travel cost reimbursement policy which helps members with the expense of attending Division meetings, CLE seminars like the Paralegal Institute in Albuquerque and the annual meeting in Pojoaque or any other Division-sponsored event. If a member travels over 50 miles for any Division-sponsored function, your actual gas expense will be reimbursed. This is not a per diem expense reimbursement but is intended to reimburse the member for the out-of-pocket expense of traveling to a Division event. The way it works is that you fill up your vehicle before you leave for the function and then again immediately upon your return from the function. You then submit the receipt for what it cost to fill up your vehicle again after the trip so that reimburses the member for the actual gas expense. The driver will also receive \$1.00 per head for each fellow member traveling with her or him and an additional 15% of the gasoline expense for wear and tear on the vehicle. To request reimbursement, the member should download the travel expense reimbursement form from the Forms section of our website and submit it by e-mail to pd@nmbar.org or by U.S. postal mail to the address on the form.

Communications

As I have already mentioned, the Division has a website which is part of the main website for the State Bar of New Mexico. The address for our portion of the website is: <http://www.nmbar.org/AboutSBNM/ParalegalDivision/paralegaldivision.html> or you can go to www.nmbar.org, click on "About Us" and follow the links to the Division's website. There you can see local Division news, the schedule of upcoming events, check your CLE credits and much more. And if you are looking for a paralegal position, or your firm has a paralegal position to fill, don't forget to check out our free job bank on the website. You can access the Bar's members-only section of the web page by clicking on the login link in the upper right corner of the website. **Your username is your bar number and the password is your last name.**

For efficiency and cost purposes, the Division tries to conduct the majority of our communications with members via electronic mail so please keep the Division apprised of a current e-mail address for you. You can send updates for your e-mail address and any other address or employment changes to the Division at pd@nmbar.org.

Pro Bono Opportunities

There are numerous pro bono opportunities throughout the year. We will notify you of any upcoming pro bono opportunities via email. The National Mock Trials will be held in Albuquerque in 2012 on May 2nd and 3rd. We will be asking for volunteers to help with the Mock Trial later this year. We will need numerous volunteers to help put the packets together in April 2012 and help will be needed at the Mock Trials. So please keep these dates in mind. We will send out more information later in the year.

Scholarships

The Division believes formal education is necessary for the future of our profession and is dedicated to assisting paralegal students in achieving that education. The Division has budgeted \$1,000 for scholarships this year. Information on applying for the scholarships will be posted on our website in November.

Last, but not Least ...

As I mentioned at the beginning of this letter, we have the opportunity and obligation as Division members to advance the profession. The Division represents both you and the profession and your time and energy are needed—unfortunately, the Division does not run itself. The real work of any volunteer organization is most often done through its committees and the Division is no different. I encourage you to volunteer for a committee. You'll learn a lot more about how the Division works and contribute to our ongoing success. You can find a list of the committees and a signup form on our website at <http://www.nmbar.org/AboutSBNM/ParalegalDivision/PDcommittees.html>.

I would also like to urge you to be active in the Division and consider serving on the Board as an

officer or director. It is your Division and it is an all volunteer organization with the exception of a few hours a month of our administrative assistant's time. The Division needs new volunteers to help manage the organization. The officer, board and committee chair positions do take some time (approximately 1 to 2 hours a week, depending on the position, week, month or time of year). Much of the board and committee work is now done through e-mails and we now have the opportunity to videoconference meetings. If you live in or near Farmington, Las Cruces or Roswell, videoconferencing is available and the Division could set it up so you could attend BOD meetings that way. And with the travel reimbursement policy, members can participate in Division meetings and events by coming to Albuquerque or Santa Fe OR one of the sites where videoconferencing is available. With all these options, we believe that it is now possible for members across the State to be able to volunteer and participate in as much of the Division process as possible. So *please start thinking about the possibility of serving as an officer or director in 2012*. If you begin thinking about it now, you can learn more about the Division throughout the year, and by September when we send out the election and candidate information, you'll be ready to take the plunge. Or you can join a committee at any time. It's really only a little bit of work which is spread out over time, it's a lot of fun and you have the opportunity to make new friends and to interact with your peers. And contributing to the Division really does give you a sense of satisfaction. I know – I have been volunteering with the Division for 13 years now.

As with everything in this life, Division membership is what you make of it. We look forward to hearing from you!

We are always interested in hearing about ways to improve the benefits of Division membership and encourage active participation in the Division. If you have suggestions, complaints or just comments in general on what you might like the Division to do or not do, please contact me or the Division at pd@nmbar.org.

Ruby Silva
Paralegal Division Chair