

Message from the Chair

Happy New Year! As we enter into 2011, I am proud to announce that the Paralegal/Legal Assistant Section is starting its 21st year as a section of the State Bar of Michigan. Our section has become what it is today because of the hard work of our council members, and because of the involvement and support of our members. As the paralegal/legal assistant profession continues to grow, I am confident that our section will grow as well.

As the new chair, I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself to all of our new and returning members. I am currently working as a paralegal/legal assistant at Capitol Bancorp Ltd. in Lansing. I have been working as a paralegal for more than four and a half years in both private firms and corporate environments. I obtained my bachelor's degree in business administration with a major in management from Northwood University in 2010, and I earned my associates degree in business/paralegal studies from Lansing Community College in 2006. In 2008, I became involved in the Paralegal/Legal Assistant Section of the State Bar of Michigan when I became a council member.

Heading into 2011, I am excited to be taking on the role of chair of the section. Many of us set goals or resolutions at the beginning of the New Year to try to improve our lives in some way. As chair, I can say that our council's collective resolution is to see the section thrive and expand by focusing on what is important to our members: continuing education, increased awareness of the paralegal/legal assistant profession, and networking. We will make every effort to set and meet objectives which keep us in line with our resolution.

I encourage all members to contact me with questions about the section or about the paralegal profession. If you would like to become more involved, attend one of our council meetings, or if you have a suggestion for one of our events, please feel free to email me at casey.mobley@capitolbancorp.com. Again, thank you for giving me this opportunity to serve as your chair, and I look forward to our section's 21st year!

—Casey M. Mobley

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Disclaimer

Articles and columns that appear in the *Michigan Paralegal* do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Paralegal/Legal Assistant Section of the State Bar of Michigan, and their publication does not constitute an endorsement of views that may be expressed. Publication and editing are at the discretion of the editor. The *Michigan Paralegal* encourages republication and dissemination of articles it publishes. For information regarding permission to reprint articles, please address inquiries to the editor.

Editor's Note

The newsletter is published quarterly.

Newsletter submissions (Calendar Events/Items, Letters to the Editor, Section News and Business, Section Committee News/Reports, National and International News, State and Local News) and Advertising should be sent to the attention of KathyAnn Blunck at kblunck@shrr.com.

Section Mission

The Paralegal/Legal Assistant Section of the State Bar of Michigan provides education, information and analysis about issues of concern through meetings, seminars, the website, public service programs, and publication of a newsletter. Membership in the Section is open to qualified paralegals, legal assistants, and to all members of the State Bar of Michigan. Statements made on behalf of the Section do not necessarily reflect the views of the State Bar of Michigan.

2010-2011 Council and Committee Directory

Chairperson—Casey M. Mobley

(517) 374-0436, casey.mobley@capitolbancorp.com

Chair-Elect—KathyAnn Blunck

Secretary—Jeanne M. Nyhuis, CP

Treasurer—MaryJo White

Ex Officio Chairperson—Marianne B. Delaney, CP

Council

Kelly J. Dufty, CP (2009-2011)

Denise E. Gau (2009-2011)

Dorothy J. Grant, PP (2010-2012)

Renee J. Jent, CLA (2010-2012)

Cheryl J. Nodarse, CLA (2010-2012)

Kathleen Kasiorek, CP (2010-2012)

STANDING COMMITTEES

Annual Day of Education—

Marianne B. Delaney, Cheryl J. Nodarse

Annual Meeting—

Renee J. Jent, Linda S. Jevahirian

Membership—Denise E. Gau

Michigan Paralegal—Jeanne M. Nyhuis

Policies & Procedures—Marianne B. Delaney

Pro Bono—

Kelly J. Dufty, Renee J. Jent

Public Relations & Communications—

Linda S. Jevahirian, Kathleen Kasiorek

Scholarship—Cheryl J. Nodarse

Take These Three Steps for Career Success

By Vicki Voisin, ACP

Throughout my career, I have immersed myself in learning.

Because I have always worked as a paralegal, I have primarily attended and spoken at law-related seminars. Lately I've become interested in time and space organization, so I've been learning a lot about that, too. I've discovered, though, that it is also important to take ample time to focus on personal development.

Why? Because it's essential that you work harder on yourself than you do on your job. If you do this, the job will take care of itself and your life will be successful.

Over the years, I have learned three steps for success that I want to share with you. I refer to these as my "a-ha" because they have helped me focus on very important areas of my life, and they have also helped me create a successful career.

1. You are the average of the five PEOPLE you hang around the most. This is a principle taught by Jim Rohn, whom some call the father of personal development. A light bulb went off when I heard this. It made me realize that it's necessary to surround myself with people I want to be like.... people who are success oriented, who have vision, who have spirit and dedication.

The key is to make a concerted effort to be with people who think big and talk about great ideas, instead of the headlines of *People* magazine, the price of gas (how depressing!), or how much they hate their jobs and their bosses. Attitudes and levels of thinking are contagious. Beware!

There are tons of great seminars offered both where you live and all around the country. You have no excuse not to get

out there and surround yourself with people who have positive attitudes and like-minded goals.

2. Your ENVIRONMENT must support your goals. Your success depends more on your environment than you may realize, so it's imperative that you give yourself an environment that supports you at the level you want to attain, not the level you are at now. There are three areas of your environment that you should give your utmost attention:

Your physical environment. Do you love your work space? Do you have enough room to work comfortably? Does this space encourage you to think? Are you surrounded by things that are beautiful and bring good memories, such as an eye-catching piece of art?

We can't all have a gorgeous view from our offices, or even a window, but we can create an environment that brings us peace and tranquility without spending a lot of money. Little touches like flowers; photos of friends, family, or your recent vacation; even an interesting paperweight, can make you feel good.

Your emotional environment. Do you get the support you need from your friends, family, and co-workers? These people are not mind readers. It's up to you to ask for what you need from them.

I have a great group of friends that I can bounce ideas off, ask for help with problem solving, and share my successes. Of course, sometimes I just need to vent! If your friends, family, and co-workers can't provide this, you may need to find a career coach or a support group that will.

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Your intellectual environment. It's crucial that you feed your brain with new ideas and up-to-the-minute knowledge. Are you stimulating your brain every day? If not, you need to find a way to make this happen...to expose yourself to creative and innovative thinking that will stretch and increase your brain power. Again, seminars, teleclasses, and books/audio programs are helpful. I really enjoy listening to these on my iPod so I can learn while I take a walk or when I travel... this makes a long drive, a lengthy wait in an airport, or my time on an airplane zip by. My personal favorite is downloading books to my iPod from my membership at www.audible.com. iTunes also has many podcasts and other programs available at little or no cost.

3. Your future is created by your habits. It only makes sense that your daily habits will create long-lasting effects in your life. The habits you establish today will determine the results you have tomorrow.

If you want to be healthy and in shape, you must have the habits of a person who is healthy and in shape. If you want to be a successful paralegal, you must have the habits of a successful paralegal. If you want to be a leader, you must have the habits of a leader. None of these things will happen tomorrow unless you establish habits today that will lead to the results you want.

Your challenge: Visualize YOUR tomorrow. What kind of person do you want to be? Where do you want your career to take you? Then decide: What new habit can you put into place now that will make your tomorrow what you want it to be? What can you do today to create a work environment that gives you joy? What will you do to surround yourself with people who will support you and who will be a positive influence? Ask yourself these questions now so that you can create habits for yourself today that will result in the tomorrow you want.

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Do you want to use this article in your newsletter, ezine or Web site? You can so long as you include this entire blurb with it: Vicki Voisin, "*The Paralegal Mentor*," delivers simple strategies for paralegals and other professionals to create success and satisfaction by achieving 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 publishes a weekly ezine titled *Paralegal Strategies* and co-hosts *The Paralegal Voice*, a monthly podcast produced by Legal Talk Network. More information is available at www.paralegalmentor.com

New Section Members

Through November 15, 2010

- Candy L. Adrianson, Allegan
- Christy A. Capelin, Lansing
- Nawaal M. Elhaddi, Dearborn
- Terri L. Fackender, Howell
- Jodie A. Groh, Detroit
- Samuel J. Gurwin, Southfield
- Daniel F. Hallman, Jr., Warren
- Katherine S. Herman, Roseville
- Tiesha N. Hogue, Allendale
- Beverly A. Jenks, Troy
- Elizabeth E. Kochevar, Canton
- Wrae E. Loring, Jackson
- Steevie M. Marrin, Roseville
- Melanie D. Marshall, Canton
- Rebecca S. Mrljak, Farmington Hills
- Dawn L. Short, Allen Park
- Tonia D. Wernette, Birmingham
- Michelle R. Zandarski, St. Joseph



Recap of the SBM Paralegal/Legal Assistant Section 2010 Annual Meeting

The Paralegal/Legal Assistant Section of the State Bar of Michigan held its 2010 annual meeting the afternoon of October 1, 2010, at the DeVos Place in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in conjunction with the State Bar of Michigan Annual Meeting and ICLE Solo & Small Firm Institute. The State Bar of Michigan has partnered with ICLE for the past several years to provide three days of continuing legal education, motivational speakers, and networking opportunities. Vendors in the exhibitors' hall offered a variety of services, innovations, and devices for the legal practitioner to take back to his or her firm.

The section's annual meeting began with a networking luncheon, which was followed by a business meeting. The 2009-2010 officers and council members were introduced and recognized. The following officers and council members, who ran unopposed, were elected for the 2010-2011 year:

Chair-elect (three-year term)	KathyAnn Blunck
Secretary (two-year term)	Jeanne Nyhuis

Council members (two-year term):

- Dorothy Grant
- Renee Jent
- Cheryl Nodarse

KathyAnn Blunck, of Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge, P.C., who previously chaired the section in 2003-2004, has been actively involved in the section for approximately 14

years. Jeanne Nyhuis, of Warner Norcross & Judd, LLP, joined the council in 2007 and is serving her second term as secretary. Cheryl Nodarse, of Hubbard Law Firm, P.C., chaired the section in 2007-2008. Dorothy Grant, of Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge, P.C., and Renee Jent, of ProAssurance, are both new to the council. Ms. Jent is a past president of Legal Assistants Association of Michigan, Inc. (LAAM). A full list of section officers, council members, and committee members is available on the State Bar of Michigan's website (www.michbar.org).

Each year, the section awards at least two scholarships to persons enrolling or already enrolled in a paralegal/legal assistant degree/certificate program at a college or university located in Michigan. For 2010, the section awarded three \$1,000 scholarships: to Denise Gau, of Royal Oak, a student at Oakland University; Ann Marie McMichael, of Clarkston, a student at Baker College (Auburn Hills); and Denise Rafferty, of Dearborn Heights, a student at Henry Ford Community College. Denise Gau and Ann Marie McMichael were present at the annual meeting to accept their awards.

Following the business meeting, Carol D. Carlson, an attorney with Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge, in Grand Rapids, presented an excellent program on electronic medical records.

Mark Your Calendar: The SBM Paralegal/Legal Assistant Section's 2011 annual meeting will be held on September 16, 2011, at the Hyatt Regency Dearborn.

See photos from this event on the next page.

Photos from the Annual Meeting



- 1 New Chair Casey Mobley, outgoing Chair Marianne Delaney, and Chair-elect (for 2011-2012) KathyAnn Blunck



- 2 2010 scholarship recipients Ann Marie McMichael and Denise Gau



- 3 2010-2011 section council members Cheryl Nodarse, Kelly Dufty, Renee Jent, KathyAnn Blunck, Jeanne Nyhuis, Casey Mobley, Marianne Delaney, Dorothy Grant, and Denise Gau (not pictured: Kathleen Kasiorek, MaryJo White)

- 4 Networking luncheon

Council News

By Jeanne Nyhuis, section secretary

Highlights of recent meetings of the council of the SBM Paralegal/Legal Assistant Section

July 10, 2010: The council met on Saturday, July 10, 2010, at 10:09 a.m., at Foster Swift Collins & Smith, P.C., in Lansing, Michigan. The speaker at the section's annual meeting on Oct. 1, 2011, in Grand Rapids, will be attorney Carol D. Carlson, of Smith Haughey Rice & Roegge, who specializes in medical malpractice. The cost of the luncheon will be \$35. Three council seats and the offices of vice chair and secretary must be filled at the annual meeting. The Scholarship Committee reviewed with the council eight applications for the section's 2011 scholarships. Council approved a motion to award three \$1,000 scholarships. The Membership Committee reported that the section has 471 members, including 427 paralegals and 44 attorneys and paralegal program directors. Council discussed the ABA's creation of a new membership category for students. Given that the SBM is intended to mirror the ABA, the section will continue to consider the creation of student memberships.

October 1, 2010: The outgoing 2009-2010 council met on Friday, Oct. 1, 2010, at 11:43 a.m., at DeVos Place, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, site of the SBM Annual Meeting. The Nominating Committee reported that declarations of candidacy for the office of secretary and the three open council seats had been received, but none has been received for the office of vice chair. KathyAnn Blunck accepted a nomination for the office of vice chair.

The incoming 2010-2011 council met on Friday, Oct. 1, 2010, at 1:50 p.m., at DeVos Place, following the section's annual meeting. The section's *Michigan Paralegal* quarterly newsletter is in need of a new editor given that the current

editor has been elected vice chair. Council members discussed reducing the newsletter's size to four pages, to include a feature article, a chair's report, and announcements, and returning to a hard-copy format. New Chair Casey Mobley scheduled the following 2010/2011 council meetings:

- **Saturday, November 13, 2010**, at 10 a.m., at Hubbard Law Firm, P.C., in Lansing
- **Saturday, January 22, 2011**, at 10 a.m., at Hubbard Law Firm, P.C., in Lansing
- **Saturday, March 5, 2011**, at 10 a.m., at SBM headquarters, in Lansing
- **Thursday, May 5, 2011**, time tbd, at the site of the 2011 Day of Education
- **Friday, May 6, 2011**, time tbd, at the site of the 2011 Day of Education
- **Saturday, July 23, 2011**, at 10 a.m., via conference call
- **Friday, September 16, 2011**, time tbd, at the site of the SBM Annual Meeting

November 13, 2010: The council met on Saturday, Nov. 13, 2010, at 10:23 a.m. at Hubbard Law Firm, P.C., in Lansing, Michigan. The 2011 SBM annual meeting will be held at the Hyatt Regency Dearborn on Sept. 14-16, 2011. Council members discussed holding the section's annual meeting

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Complete minutes are available to section members upon request to the section secretary.

Council News

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the morning of Sept. 16, rather than early afternoon, to eliminate the cost of a noon luncheon and encourage attendance. Kathleen Kasiorek was appointed to fill the open council seat vacated by the new chair-elect. Council selected GVSU's downtown Grand Rapids campus as first choice for the section's 2011 Annual Day of Education on May 6, 2011. The treasurer's report reflected a balance of \$19,461.55 as of Sept. 30, 2010. Council reviewed existing committees for continued relevance. Council eliminated the Job Bank Committee given that job openings are no longer being submitted by employers; the job bank link will be removed from the section's website. Council resolved to rejuvenate the Pro Bono Committee, whose purpose is to seek out opportunities for pro bono service by paralegals under the direction of attorneys. The current list of committees and their members will be posted on the section website. Council will plan a special celebration for the section's 21st anniversary. Council proposed setting up a section email address, for use in responding to section members' inquiries and concerns.

Calendar of Events**(Please verify date and information on the organization's websites)****SBM Paralegal/Legal Assistant Section** www.michbar.org

- Friday, May 6, 2011
Annual Day of Education
- Friday September 16, 2011
Section Annual Meeting
Hyatt Regency Dearborn
600 Town Center Drive, Dearborn, MI 48126-2793

NALS www.nals.org

- March 11-13, 2011
NALS Professional Development & Education Conference
DoubleTree Warren Place
6110 S. Yale Ave., Tulsa, OK 74136

NALA www.nala.org

- July 27-30, 2011
NALA 36th Annual Convention & Exhibition
Dallas/Plano Marriott
Legacy Town Center, 7120 Dallas Pkwy., Plano, TX 75024

SBM/ICLE www.michbar.org

- September 14-16, 2011
SBM Annual Meeting/ICLE Solo & Small Firm Institute
Hyatt Regency Dearborn
600 Town Center Drive, Dearborn, MI 48126-2793

NFPA www.paralegals.org

- October 13-16, 2011
NFPA 2011 Annual Convention and Policy Meeting
Hilton Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport Mall of America
3800 American Boulevard East
Bloomington, MN 55425