



Message from the Chair

by Heather J. Allen

This time of year brings out the resolutions or goal setting in most people. I've always believed that it is good to look to the past for lessons learned and to help make the future brighter. My parents taught me to set goals and write them down whenever there was much to be accomplished, regardless of the situation, and it didn't have to be at the beginning of the year. Prior to my becoming Chair in June, I thought about what the goals for our division would be and what the plan should be to achieve those goals. I surrounded myself with excellent paralegals who care about our profession, strive to be the best that they can be, and work hard to help bring about the goals set. The Paralegal Division of the Utah State Bar set the following three goals for the 2014–2015 year: (1) Increase membership; (2) Provide valuable and applicable CLE; and (3) Educate attorneys on proper utilization of paralegals.

One of our Division's greatest accomplishments in 2014 was the ability to give the first endowment of the Heather Johnson Finch Scholarship, which is chaired by attorney Nathan D. Alder and paralegal Julie Eriksson. As many of you are aware, this scholarship was put into place after our dear friend and colleague Heather Finch was tragically killed in an airplane crash in August of 2010 on her way to Mount Everest. Heather was a model paralegal, with joie de vivre to boot. The scholarship was given to a well-deserved Paralegal Studies major at Utah Valley University. We wish her well as she continues her career path as a paralegal. The Division is committed to and continues to budget contributions to this scholarship. For more information on donating, please visit: http://www.uvu.edu/development/scholarships/criteria_pages/heather_johnson/.

Our current board was set in June at our annual meeting and CLE. In July, a few members of the board and some Division members attended the Summer Convention in Snowmass. This was a great showing for our Division, and we hope attendance

will continue to grow at the various bar conventions in the coming year.

On September 25, Abby Ruesch and Julie Emery represented the Division at the Utah Minority Bar Association's Banquet honoring the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This year the event was held at the Natural History Museum of Utah. In addition to celebrating the achievements of Utah's minority attorneys, scholarship awards were presented to law students who have a demonstrated record of academic success and service to racial and ethnic minority groups.

In October, I was honored with an invitation by the New Lawyers Training Program to participate in a training video on paralegal utilization. This video is a part of the Utah Bar's initiative to provide "on demand mentor videos" that are currently available at the Utah State Bar's YouTube web page. For more information, please visit: <https://www.youtube.com/user/UtahStateBar>.

The Division, along with the Utah Paralegal Association (UPA), has continued with its tradition of offering "brown bag" lunches, whereby paralegals and attorneys are invited to bring their own lunch and attend an hour of CLE. These lunches are typically offered without any cost. This fall, the Division was honored to have the Professor Sharee Laidlaw of Salt Lake Community College present for a brown bag titled, "Do Birth Fathers have Rights in Utah Adoptions?" In October, Spencer Hadley, Office Administrator of the Utah Lieutenant Governor's Office, presented

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the second part of a series on notary training titled, “Notary Training, Part 2: Powers and Limitations.” And finally, in November, Lane Perkins of Salt Lake Legal made a presentation titled “Forensic Collection/Examination, Electronic Discovery, and Document Review.” We are thankful for the speakers who were willing to share their time and talents with the paralegals and encourage you to put these events on your calendars and plan on attending.

Throughout the year, one of the questions the Board has asked is how the Division can better serve the community and represent the paralegal profession in the State of Utah. This last year the Paralegal Division has actively supported the Young Lawyers Division by providing notaries and witnesses for the Wills for Heroes and Serving Our Seniors programs. For those not familiar with these programs, Wills for Heroes is a statewide program that provides police officers, firefighters, and other first responders (and their spouses/partners) with wills and other estate planning documents. Serving Our Seniors is a statewide program that provides advanced health care directives and durable powers of attorney for people aged fifty-five and older. These are valuable programs, and they are absolutely free for the recipients. If you are interested in volunteering, please email Diane McDermaid at dbm@scmlaw.com with your availability, contact information, and whether you are a notary.

We are pleased to report that the paralegal job market here in Utah looks strong. We had several firms, corporations, and government departments looking to fill qualified legal positions this last fall. The Division strives to email these notifications out to our members and also post them on our Facebook page. If you or someone you know needs a paralegal job, please regularly visit the Division’s Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/paralegaldivisionoftheutahstatebar>.

Many wonderful events and opportunities are coming up in 2015. First will be the Spring Convention held March 12–14 in St. George. We encourage all members of the Paralegal Division to attend. As part of our goals to offer valuable and applicable CLE and educating attorneys on utilization of paralegals, our Division has been actively participating in the planning for the Spring Convention. We are very excited to have received one of the keynote spots for a speaker to present on proper utilization of paralegals. We have invited Toni Marsh, J.D., from George Washington University. Ms. Marsh is the founding director of the

George Washington University Paralegal Studies program. After her address, she will be sitting on a panel to continue the discussion with Greg Sanders from Kipp and Christian and two of our board members, Greg Wayment and myself.

In May, the Division will be co-hosting with UPA the annual Paralegal Day Luncheon and awarding the Paralegal of Year award. In June, the Division will hold its Annual meeting and all-day CLE where our new board will be sat. Finally, the Utah Bar’s Summer Convention will be heading back to Sun Valley on July 29–Aug 1. Please make plans to attend as many of these great events as you can, the CLE and opportunities to network will be well worth the time.

Our Board continues to look for ways to meet the goals set and believes that the upcoming conventions, brown bags, and open house will help us meet those goals. I look forward to seeing you at the events in 2015.

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Distinguished Paralegal of the Year Award

The Distinguished Paralegal of the Year Award is presented by the Paralegal Division of the Utah State Bar and the Utah Paralegal Association to a paralegal who has met a standard of excellence through his or her work and service in this profession.

We invite you to submit nominations of those individuals who have met this standard. Please consider taking the time to recognize an outstanding paralegal. Nominating a paralegal is the perfect way to ensure that his or her hard work is recognized, not only by a professional organization, but by the legal community. This will be an opportunity to shine! Nomination forms and additional information are available by contacting Danielle Davis at ddavis@strongandhanni.com.

The deadline for nominations is April 30, 2015. Reminders will also come via E-Bulletin as well as announcements at the Spring Convention in March in St. George. The award will be presented at the Paralegal Day Celebration held on May 21, 2015.

Ethics Key Note Speaker – Spring Convention

The Utah State Bar's annual Spring Convention will be held March 12–14 in St. George. The Paralegal Division is pleased to announce that Toni Marsh from George Washington University has been invited to give the Ethics Keynote speech. Ms. Marsh is the Director of the Masters of Paralegal Studies and travels around the country giving CLE's on proper utilization of paralegals and also the unauthorized practice of law. Please make plans to attend the convention! It is a great opportunity to mingle with other members of the Utah State Bar, get CLE hours, and enjoy St. George. For more information on registration, please see the insert in the *Bar Journal* or visit www.utahstatebar.org.

Ogden Area – Paralegal Open House

The Paralegal Division of the Utah State Bar would like to invite all paralegals in the Davis, Weber, Cache and Box Elder area to attend an open house.

Farr, Rasmussen, Farr, LLC
205 26th Street, Suite 24, Ogden, UT
January 22, 2015 | 5:30 – 6:30 pm.

If you are not currently a member of the Division, we would love to meet you and pass along some information on how joining the Division can benefit you.

Even minds we don't understand
create brilliant things.

Let's rethink mental illness.

