

## **Pay It Forward: Community Service Opportunities in the Paralegal Division**

by Carma Harper

When I was appointed as Chair of the Paralegal Division's Community Service Committee, I thought of it as a great opportunity to find a project where we could make a difference. I soon discovered that there is no shortage of programs and services in need of assistance from the public year round. With so many projects to choose from, allocating our time and resources became a larger challenge.

I am proud to report that in the past year, we have taken part in many very worthwhile activities and causes to benefit our community. Here are some highlights:

- We've had the pleasure of assisting the Young Lawyers Division in the Wills for Heroes Program, in which estate planning documents are prepared free of charge for first responders such as police officers and firefighters. Wills for Heroes events have been and continue to be held all over Utah. I would like to thank the members of our Division's Wills for Heroes Committee, J. Robyn Dotterer, JoAnna Shiflett, and Lindsey Bodily, as well as each volunteer who has donated time to notarize and witness documents.
- Last spring, our committee conducted a Professional Clothing Drive and collected over seven SUVs full of clothing to benefit the Women Helping Women Program. We are very grateful to Henrie's Dry Cleaners for not only donating clothes, but also for cleaning all of the donated items prior to delivery. A special "thank you" to Shawna Powers, Cheryl Jeffs, Mary Stephens, and JoAnna Shiflett for collecting and sorting all of the clothing.
- We joined Mervyn's Department Store and the Davis School District in May 2008 for a project providing clothing and school supplies for underprivileged children. Funds for Mervyn's gift cards were donated by the Davis School District, and each child was paired with an adult volunteer to spend their gift card money on school clothes. Mervyn's also donated a backpack full of additional items, such as books and toiletries, to each child. The program was a huge success, as well as a lot of fun.
- In December 2008, we made over 100 fleece hats and scarves for donation to the Youth Center, as part of a service project being conducted by the Legal Assistants Association of Utah. We appreciate being able to participate in this very worthy effort.

I am humbled by the amount of good work our Community Service Committee has been able to accomplish thus far. I want to take this opportunity to encourage all of us to find ways to “pay it forward” in our communities throughout the year.

We are always looking for new projects and volunteers. Please contact either myself, [charper@strongandhanni.com](mailto:charper@strongandhanni.com), or J. Robyn Dotterer, [rdotterer@strongandhanni.com](mailto:rdotterer@strongandhanni.com), with ideas on where we can be of assistance. Thank you for your continued support.

**Notice:**

**Change in Paralegal Division Membership Application & Renewal Policy**

Please be aware that we are changing our policy on membership applications and renewals. Starting with the 2009-2010 membership year, there will be two open application and renewal periods, one from May 1st – 31st and a second from January 1st – 31st. Membership applications and renewals submitted outside of these dates will be held until the next open application period. There will be no exceptions and no discounts on membership regardless of when the application or renewal is submitted. Our membership year continues to run from July 1st – June 30th. Thank you for your support.

*Carma Harper is the Region 1 Director for the Paralegal Division, Chair of the Community Service Committee and Liaison to the Young Lawyers Division. She is a paralegal with Strong & Hanni.*

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