

WINTER QUARTER

February 6, 2023

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# Paralegal Division of the Utah State Bar

## Newsletter

We are excited to provide you with this newsletter to provide current news and happenings in the paralegal community!



WELCOME:

We are excited to present the Winter Quarter Newsletter. Welcome to everyone within the Paralegal Division for the Utah State Bar. We genuinely appreciate your support and are excited for a brand-new year. If you have any questions, concerns, or other feedback, we invite members to provide suggestions, comments, and other feedback. Feel free to reach out to any Board member or the Paralegal Division email- [utahparalegaldivision@gmail.com](mailto:utahparalegaldivision@gmail.com).

## Utah State Bar Paralegal Participation Invite:

### To All Members of the Utah State Bar Paralegal Division:

If you would like to become more involved with the Paralegal Division of the Utah State Bar, you may join a Committee within the Division. **You do not need to be a Member of the Board of Directors in order to be on a Committee.** Join others within the profession to volunteer your time and share your knowledge of the paralegal profession. **There is currently a need for volunteers to be on the Education Committee - If interested, please send an email to [utahparalegaldivision@gmail.com](mailto:utahparalegaldivision@gmail.com) with your name and contact information, along with a description of the Committee you'd like to join.**

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## Member Spotlight

The purpose of this quarterly newsletter spotlight is to pay tribute to a Utah paralegal who, over a distinguished career, through their ethical and personal conduct, enthusiasm, and fortitude, rendered extraordinary contributions and service to the paralegal profession.

The Paralegal Division is pleased to announce that the Member Spotlight for this Quarter is:

### JAN MCCONNELL



Dedicated, Competent, Exceptional, Hard-Working, Knowledgeable, Committed, and Loyal are a few superlatives used by colleagues to describe Jan McConnell. Jan has also been portrayed as someone who meets and exceeds expectations without the need to tell others of her accomplishments. All the more evidence of this is that Jan McConnell was nominated by supervisors and colleagues for the 2022 Distinguished Paralegal of the Year Award without even knowing that she had been nominated. Jan seemed sincerely moved coworkers had taken the time to praise her professionally.

Jan McConnell started her illustrious career in 1974 in North Platte, Nebraska as a Legal Assistant. At that time, the paralegal profession was fairly new and Jan felt fortunate to be employed by one of the few law firms that utilized a Paralegal. In 1980, Jan was promoted to a Paralegal position and has been working as a paralegal ever since, and if my calculations are correct, that is an impressive forty-three (43) years. At the start of her career, certification programs in Paralegal Studies were not prevalent. Jan's expertise in the field has been derived from her Legal Assistant Certification training, as well as on the job training and pursuit of learning new skills by forums, CLE, reading and learning from others.

Jan has spent twenty-four years (24) working as a Business, Real Estate, Transaction, and Estate Planning Paralegal at the law firm of Strong & Hanni (“S&H”) in Salt Lake City. According to one of her current supervisors, Jan encompasses all of the standard and required skills that define a good paralegal, like excellent writing skills, work ethic, flawlessly organizational skills, constant multitasking, Master of Technology and great communication skills. What makes Jan unique and moves her from a “good” to a “great” paralegal is her attention to detail, which the supervisor described as “*more than perfect*”. Her high level of accuracy and careful precision is paramount in the success of her career. He further described her ability to keep in mind all of the small facts, catch details, and awareness of not only deadlines, but the time and steps required to achieve those deadlines as praiseworthy.

Another supervisor that has worked with Jan since her tenure with S&H stated that Jan has always been a student of the law and very quickly developed important skills that have enabled her to play a major role in supporting the business transactions for the firm. Those transactions include a wide range of business and personal needs, ranging from estate planning matters, organization of business entities, all the way to the complicated M&A and corporate finance transactions. He also went on to add that Jan has played a significant role in the success of his practice of law, namely the ability to retain and maintain clients. Jan has such an incredible repour with clients that they have gone out of their way to inform S&H of how much they appreciate Jan’s professionalism, communication skills and kindness.

Jan has been described by many as qualified, warm and considerate of others. Not only is this evident in her professional career, but it can also be observed through her extraocular activities. In her free time, Jan formed a Utah Non-Profit, called “*The Painted Chair Project*”. This foundation’s purpose is to prevent homelessness by creating first-ever homes for youth aging out of foster care and individuals or families emerging from homelessness after crisis or disaster by using donated household goods to transform empty, cold houses into warm, welcoming, and uplifting homes. The Non-Profit’s goal is to empower the young adults and recently homeless to begin building a successful life.

Jan wanted to share how lucky she feels to be working with such great attorneys in the Business Section of an outstanding law firm like Strong & Hanni. She commented that they really make her feel like she is a valuable asset to the firm. Based upon all the letters of recommendations I received from Jan’s supervisor’s and colleagues in her support, it is obvious that the firm and those she works with feels the same way about her. Throughout her tenure, Jan has watched as the paralegal profession evolved to what it is today. Jan seems respectful and grateful for a long and rewarding career as a paralegal.

If you know of anyone that you would like to elect to be in the Member Spotlight section of this newsletter, please send me an email at: [sdirksen@parrbrown.com](mailto:sdirksen@parrbrown.com).

## Reference Resources for Paralegals:

### Reference Resources for Paralegals

Paralegals are the organizational glue that help keep law firms running smoothly. Over my six years working as a paralegal, I have relied on a number of resources to help me work efficiently and to keep me apprised of changes in the law. Below is a brief list of resources that every Utah paralegal should have in their toolkit. I personally recommend tracking websites that include updates either by receiving email notifications or creating RSS feeds.

By: Peter Vanderhooft

<u>Resource</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>URL</u>
Utah Court Forms	A non-comprehensive website of Court forms that may be filed in Utah State District and Justice Courts. Additional forms for specific districts may be found at the Court's District website. ( <a href="https://www.utcourts.gov/en/about/courts/dist.html">https://www.utcourts.gov/en/about/courts/dist.html</a> ). Note that the Court forms are saved in a legacy Word format and that orders need to be converted to .RTF before filing.	<a href="https://www.utcourts.gov/en/forms/forms/court-forms.html">https://www.utcourts.gov/en/forms/forms/court-forms.html</a>
MyCase	An online access portal allowing parties in litigation to review documents that have been filed in their case and file documents in Debt Collection, Eviction, and ODR Small Claims cases. Parties may access cases whether they are opened or closed, but may need to contact the Court clerks to gain access to their case. MyCase is not intended to be used by businesses, lawyers, or researchers.	<a href="https://www.utcourts.gov/en/self-help/services/mycase.html">https://www.utcourts.gov/en/self-help/services/mycase.html</a>
Timpanogos Legal Center	Timpanogos Legal Center offers a free clinic every week for people dealing with divorces, custody battles, or other family law related issues. Clients have the opportunity to speak with an attorney about their case. The attorney will offer legal advice and provide information regarding the next steps in your situation but will not provide full representation. Timpanogos Legal Center is also an excellent resource for free CLEs.	<a href="https://www.timplegal.org/legal-services/clinics">https://www.timplegal.org/legal-services/clinics</a>
S.J. Quinney College of	The S.J. Quinney College of Law maintains an archive of free CLE events on Youtube. CLE credits may be requested using the form	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF9dkMUyaDVAmoNcw9r-WpA">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF9dkMUyaDVAmoNcw9r-WpA</a>

Law CLE Archive	URL listed in the video descriptions.	
Utah Supreme Court and Court of Appeals Decisions	Appellate Court decisions are released on Thursdays at 10:00 AM. The BYU Law Digital Library also has a limited index of briefs submitted to the appellate courts.	<a href="https://legacy.utcourts.gov/opinions/subscribe/">https://legacy.utcourts.gov/opinions/subscribe/</a> <a href="https://legacy.utcourts.gov/rss/opinions/index.xml">https://legacy.utcourts.gov/rss/opinions/index.xml</a> <a href="https://digitalcommons.law.byu.edu/utah_briefs_collection/">https://digitalcommons.law.byu.edu/utah_briefs_collection/</a>
Utah Court Rules	A website run by the Utah Supreme Court and Judicial Council inviting public comment on proposed rule changes. RSS feeds are available for rules published for comment and for rules that are adopted.	<a href="https://legacy.utcourts.gov/utc/rules-comment/">https://legacy.utcourts.gov/utc/rules-comment/</a> <a href="https://legacy.utcourts.gov/utc/rules-comment/feed/">https://legacy.utcourts.gov/utc/rules-comment/feed/</a> <a href="https://legacy.utcourts.gov/utc/rules-comment/feed/">https://legacy.utcourts.gov/utc/rules-comment/feed/</a>
Utah Division of Professional Licensing (DOPL) Prelitigation	DOPL's prelitigation process is a prerequisite prior to filing a medical malpractice lawsuit. DOPL's website provides helpful citations to relevant statutes and administrative rules as well as sample forms.	<a href="https://dopl.utah.gov/prelitigation/">https://dopl.utah.gov/prelitigation/</a>
Utah Division of Corporations and Commercial Code – Business Search	An invaluable tool to lookup registered agents to assist with service of process as well as reviewing filed business documents. I also recommend OpenCorporates as a starting point when researching out-of-state businesses, especially when uncertain of which state the business is registered.	<a href="https://secure.utah.gov/bes/index.html">https://secure.utah.gov/bes/index.html</a> <a href="https://opencorporates.com/">https://opencorporates.com/</a>
County Record/Assessor Offices	Utah's County Recorder and Assessors office are essential resources when attempting to do in-depth skip tracing or identifying real property. Some Counties (like Summit and Utah) have all recorded documents freely available while other Counties (like Duchesne, Salt Lake, Tooele, and Wasatch) require a subscription to gain access to recorded documents or pull property abstracts. Most recorder's offices have documents digitized through the early 1990s, but special care must be taken for older documents as they may not be properly indexed even if they are digitized.	Check with each county for online availability.

Office of the Lieutenant Governor – Notary Administration	A great resource for locating notaries.	<a href="https://secure.utah.gov/notary/search.html">https://secure.utah.gov/notary/search.html</a>
Utah State Bar – Member Directory	A great tool to identify contact information for Attorneys, Paralegal Division Members, and Licensed Paralegal Practitioners and helpful for preparing Certificates of Service. Information is self-reported and may not be current. Licensed Lawyer is also a great resource to identify participating Attorneys and LPPs and their practice areas.	<a href="https://services.utahbar.org/Member-Directory">https://services.utahbar.org/Member-Directory</a> <a href="https://www.licensedlawyer.org/">https://www.licensedlawyer.org/</a>
Utah State Legislator Bill Tracking Service	A resource to allow users to track bills related to subject interests or Utah Code sections. This resource allows users to track the status of bills. An index of bills introduced by session is also available.	<a href="https://le.utah.gov/tracking/trackingLogin">https://le.utah.gov/tracking/trackingLogin</a> <a href="https://le.utah.gov/bills/bills_By_Session.jsp">https://le.utah.gov/bills/bills_By_Session.jsp</a>

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## Exciting CLE Opportunities:

The CLE Committee is in the process of planning additional CLE event for the coming year, please hold the dates for the Paralegal Day CLE Luncheon, as well as the Annual Paralegal CLE Event.

### Free Brown Bag CLE Events:

01/23/2023 – Attorney General’s Office- Administrative Law  
03/08/2023- 4<sup>th</sup> District Court – Probate Judges panel

### Paralegal Day CLE Luncheon: 05/18/2023

### Annual Paralegal CLE Event: 06/16/2023

In addition to the CLE put on by the Paralegal CLE Committee, you can also always sign up for a CLE opportunity through the Utah State Bar website:

[Utah State Bar Member Practice Portal > Events \(utahbar.org\)](https://www.utahbar.org/Member-Practice-Portal/Events)

Your next CLE Reporting Period will be: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 – the CLE requirement is 10 hours of accredited CLE, to include 1 hour of legal ethics and 1 hour of professionalism and civility. At least 5 hours must be live, which may include in-person, remote group CLE or verified e-CLE. The remaining hours may include self-study or live CLE.

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## NEW YEAR – NEW GOALS

In a blink of an eye, yet another year has passed us by. As we welcome the start of the new year, this is a good time to take a self-inventory and determine what new goals you'd like to accomplish and possibly what bad habits you'd like to overcome. While you are reading this article, take out a piece of paper and jot down some aspirations you have, along with some habits you'd like to overcome. Here are some possible suggestions:

### 1: Learn a New Skill:

As a paralegal, we are constantly needing to grow and adapt to stay viable in our positions. In the past year, were there any software programs that you became interested in or wanted to explore. The winter months are a great time to sign-up for a class to learn a new program or become more familiar at a program you already use. If you go online, you can find various resources for developing these skills, such as YouTube, LinkedIn Learning, or even your community centers may have resources available.

### 2: Become Healthier at Work:

Long days, skipped lunch hours, excessive sitting, and lack of exercise can all unfortunately fall within our job description. Be mindful of how this is affecting your overall health. Do you need to consider requesting a stand-up desk or set reminders to leave your desk to move around? Are you drinking enough water? Are you finding the time to eat? And if you are, are you being mindful of what you are putting in your mouth. Some suggestions would be to set aside time in your schedule to meal prep. Grocery stores have now made online ordering and grocery pick-up/delivery so much easier. This is a time-saver and also helps to prevent impulse buying.

### 3. Become more involved:

Volunteering and helping others is a great way to positively affect the world around you and also build your own self-worth. Find a cause that you feel passionately about and look for ways that you can help by volunteer your time.

### 4. Work on becoming a Certified Paralegal:

Are you looking for ways to boost your marketability as a paralegal or get the upper hand in the next job interview? A great way to accomplish this goal is to become certified with a national organization, such as NALA. This may cost you some money but will likely be a return investment as you grow in your career.

### 5. Update your resume:

The New Year is always a great time to make sure that your resume is up to date. Take this time to add any new skills you have develop and refine your resume. You never know when an opportunity may present itself and it would be nice to have a fully updated resume on hand.

### 6. Clean up and update your social media:

This is also a good time to make sure that the information available online is presenting the image you want others to see. Is it accurate? Does it positively

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portray the image you are hoping to present? Always remember that our clients and potential employers are using these resources to learn more about us.

#### 7. Read a motivational book:

During this dreary time of year, it is definitely easy to fall down that rabbit hole of negative thoughts. Reading a motivational book can do wonders for your mood and provide the motivation you may need to push forward. Try to find a book that will help you overcome some of the personal habits you'd like to overcome.

#### 8. Clean up the clutter:

Do you have piles of paper, files and binders weighing you down? Now is a great time to get rid of the old to make way for the new. Set aside some time in your day to clean up your office. It does wonders for the soul to see your desk again and walk into a clean space.

#### 9. Network, network, network:

There is definite truth behind the saying, "it's all about who you know." Meeting new people and developing your professional network is a key to success. Make a goal to expand your network. Try to reach out and interact with at least one new person each month. This may be making a telephone call to the paralegal on the other side of a case or scheduling a lunch date with another paralegal in your office.

#### 10. Mentor or be mentored.

Becoming acquainted and learning from someone who is more experienced than you can do amazing things to help propel your career forward and build your overall self-confidence. Find someone in your office or someone you respect and determine if they would be willing to mentor you. Think of someone with less experience than you that may benefit from your knowledge that you could mentor. This can definitely go both ways.

#### 11. Be Appreciative

Sending thank you notes, or appreciative emails can go along way in helping your overall mood as well. Find some time to recognize the people around you who help to make your life easier. Taking the time show your appreciation can make someone's day and grease the wheels towards your success.

#### 12. Consider becoming more involved.

We would be remiss if we didn't encourage you to become more involved in the Paralegal Division. We are only as good as the people who devote their time and energy to make this a better organization. Consider becoming involved in one of the various committees, such as Education, Community Service, Membership, Marketing or social media. This would be a great way to meet others in your same profession and also commit to making the Paralegal Division stronger and better than ever.

We wish you the best of luck in achieving your goals this year.



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## Community Service Opportunities

### Remote Pro Bono Opportunity

Lani Harris, with the **Timpanogos Legal Center (TLC)**, is seeking paralegal help (pro bono volunteer opportunity). TLC offers free legal services to low-income individuals and domestic violence victims. TLC manages a family law Pro Se Calendar for the 4th, 5th, and 8th Districts in Utah. The Courts in these districts create a calendar where they place Pro Se parties (individuals who do not have attorneys) whose cases have stalled for a number of reasons. TLC provides the parties on this calendar with a volunteer attorney that represents them on a limited basis for the one hearing only. On the day of the hearing, the volunteer attorneys spend a few hours of negotiation to help these cases come to a resolution. This is where **YOU** come in. When an agreement is reached and orally read in Court, we need volunteers willing to draft the final documents for the case so that it can close. No need to attend the hearing yourself! TLC staff will be able to email you the recording of the hearing if a full or partial settlement was reached. We would ask that you return the documents to TLC within the following days so that it can be reviewed by TLC attorneys and the party, and then filed with the Court by the Pro Se party. This is a way for you to provide free volunteer service from the comfort of your home or office on your own time. TLC is available to answer questions and guide you as you draft the necessary documents. We will have regular hearings on this Calendar starting in May. Please email [lani@timplegal.org](mailto:lani@timplegal.org) with your interest and questions. TLC would like to have a strong list of people ready and willing to serve when the time comes!

Possible documents that would need drafting may include: a Pretrial Order, an Order on a Motion, Findings of Fact & Conclusions of Law, and a Final order/Decree.

Applicants of the Licensed Paralegal Practitioner program may use this opportunity to gain experience hours.

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### Membership update:

**The Division now accepts applications throughout the year with a small nominal late fee. A member will no longer need to wait until the June renewal time period to join the Paralegal Division of the Utah State Bar.**

Please remember that there is a two-step process for membership: a) Register online through the Utah State Bar website and pay the required dues; and b) Upload the required documents through the portal located on the Paralegal Division website to finish the membership process.

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## Benefits of Membership

As a member of the Paralegal to the Utah State Bar, you have access to the valuable tools and resources offered through the Practice Portal. These resources include CLE information and requirements, information regarding annual conventions, search tools for attorneys and other colleagues, ethics information, Fastcase research, and subscription to the Utah Bar Journal. You also have access to exclusive savings and discount benefits through the Utah State Bar Group Benefits. The Utah State Bar also has various options to help with your mental well-being, including free EAP services through BlomquistHale. For a full list of benefits, please visit [utahbar.org/member-services/](http://utahbar.org/member-services/)

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*A myriad of opportunities awaits you as a member of the Paralegal Division. If you are interested in participating on a committee or perhaps assisting on a specific project, please submit a committee volunteer form or contact a member of the Board of Directors. We welcome and encourage your participation.*

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