

CHAIRMAN'S *Report*

by Barbara A. Booker, CLA



Over the past few months I have settled into a new employment position and in the process have gradually grown accustomed to having a wide array of computer

technology available at my fingertips. I have enjoyed learning and using a variety of programs, but at the same time am disheartened by just how little I know about computers. Computer technology has evolved so rapidly, and I often wonder how I ever managed with only the Selectric typewriter that was available to me when I first entered the legal profession in 1985. I have also come to realize that we take these advancements for granted and fail to comprehend how rapidly technology has improved over just the past several years. Tools that we now use on a daily basis for document management, scanning, indexing, summarizing, electronic mail, and so on were non-existent in the very recent past! It is exciting, but at the same time, terrifying!

Our paralegal profession has advanced as well, although maybe not quite so rapidly, and the legal community has come to recognize the professionalism, resourcefulness, efficiency, accuracy, effectiveness, knowledge and variety of skills that a paralegal can offer. Just as computer technology, the paralegal profession has continued to evolve through the years. There are so many opportunities available to today's paralegals!

As an organization, NCPA has also grown by leaps and bounds over the 20 years of its existence, yet I think we often fail to

realize the impact we have and the impression we make on the legal community. While overseeing the NCPA exhibitor booth at the North Carolina Bar Convention held in Asheville this summer, I had an opportunity to speak with a number of judges, attorneys, court administrators and other exhibitors, the majority of whom were already familiar with NCPA. Several individuals with whom I spoke went so far as to say that they have been "watching us" and have heard great things about our educational events and our progress and growth over the years. What a compliment! Again, it is exciting, but at the same time, terrifying! I realize all the more that we, as a professional organization, must remember that we are being watched at all times by the legal community. NCPA's efforts to not only grow its membership, but to keep those members informed and educated, is a tremendous job. I feel that NCPA deserves a firm pat on the back for its progress and dedication and for its representation of paralegals as invaluable assets to the legal community.

I challenge each and every member of NCPA, whether a seasoned or up-and-coming paralegal, to always remember that we, as individuals and as an organization, are being watched, and we must strive to maintain the integrity of our profession and demonstrate that we, individually and as an organization, are invaluable assets to the legal community. I am proud of our paralegal profession and of NCPA, and know that as we continue to grow and evolve in the years to come, we will represent ourselves with the dignity and pride we have exhibited thus far.



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