

PRESIDENT'S Message

by Theresa (Terry) Irvin, CLA



"Assignment, responsibility, duty, commitment, ethics, professionalism. All these words - and more - come to mind instantly with the topic of "Paralegal Regulation." Each one of us is involved in some aspect of the legal profession, whether it be as a legal assistant/paralegal, a paralegal instructor, an attorney, a writer, a paralegal student. We are challenged to analyze, understand, and embellish the powerful impact of regulation, or the lack of it."

—Regulation Task Force

North Carolina Paralegal Association, Inc. October 28, 2000

On November 2, 2002 you cast your vote. The outcome of that decision is printed elsewhere in this publication. It was not a unanimous decision, nor was it expected to be. However, the decision and more importantly, the process that surrounded the decision, brought us together and has made us stronger.

NCPA together with the other paralegal associations in our state have demonstrated a tremendous resolve to work together for a common goal - that goal being to raise the paralegal profession in the State of North Carolina to a higher plateau.

We are initiating positive change for our profession. There has never been a more important time to belong to a professional association than at the present. Through your membership in NCPA, you are educated about the pressing issues of today. You are able to voice your concerns and the NCPA leadership listens and responds to those concerns. Without your membership, the APPS proposal may have eluded you. What would your reaction have been, if you had just found out about this movement, a movement that has been underway for some time now?

To foster an even greater awareness of how important membership in NCPA is at this time, we are holding an "Add One Campaign." It is simple, requires little time, and the rewards are substantial. You may even be able to attend the Annual Seminar without paying the registration fee! Look elsewhere in this issue for the advertise-

ment describing the rules and requirements for this campaign.

We are also raising the awareness of our profession with those in and those outside the legal field. Whatever the outcome of the final regulation, we are still, and will continue to be, professionals and an important dynamic in the legal arena. We will continue to work under the supervision of an attorney. We will still perform the daily tasks and substantive work to which we are assigned. We will continue to be committed to our careers and seek continuing education. We will continue to abide by the ethical cannons set forth by NALA and by NCPA. These things will remain unchanged regardless of regulation.

Yet in this process, we are forcing others to take note of our profession and recognize just how important we are in the delivery of legal services. We have also proven that the paralegal associations in our state can join together and work through difficult issues. We have all gained greater recognition.

Now I ask that you consider greater personal recognition and seriously consider active involvement in this association. All Executive Committee and Board members have been commended by their supervisors, firms and companies for their work in our association. Each has gained a better understanding of the workings of NCPA, and each has personally grown from their commitment to our organization.

What is preventing you from completing a nomination form? Fear of the unknown? We all share this in starting a new endeavor. Fortunately NCPA has developed several useful tools to help. We have an orientation manual, master calendar, duties and responsibilities file and electronic forms just to name a few, all in addition to the support from the Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

I challenge you to initiate your own positive change and to call a member of the Executive Committee or Board of Directors to learn more about active involvement and the benefits they have received. I challenge you to take your membership to a higher plateau.

May you and your family have a joyous holiday season and a happy New Year!

