



WELCOME TO THE NCPA

Quarterly Newsletter

we're so glad you're here!

ABOUT THE FORUM

Our goal is to provide this newsletter every three months, bringing you laughter, helpful tips, and important updates. Here's what you can expect:

- Engaging Articles – We'll share interesting and insightful pieces we think you'll enjoy.
- Upcoming Events – Stay informed about key dates and events within NCPA.
- Community Updates – Important announcements and information to keep you in the loop.

We look forward to staying connected and sharing this space with you. Send us your ideas!

**HELLO
FALL!**

INSIDE:

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	2
CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE	3
MEMBERSHIP REPORT	4
UPCOMING EVENTS	6
PARALEGAL CORNER	7
NALA LIASION REPORT.....	8
FEATURE ARTICLE	9
SUSTAINING MEMBERS...	11-12

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello NCPA! 2026 is moving right along. We are now in the “ber” months and before long 2027 will be here.

In NCPA we have to plan well in advance, so we have been looking at 2027 for months now preparing for the 2027 Annual Seminar and Meeting. Oh, really, we were discussing it as the 2026 seminar was winding down at Durham Tech. It was so great to be back in person in 2026. Durham Tech was a great host.

We are excited to partner with Cape Fear Community College in Wilmington for the 2027 Seminar. We hope that you will join us and stay around and enjoy all that Wilmington has to offer.

I must thank the entire NCPA Board for continuing to do an awesome job. Special thanks to COB/NALA Liaison Elizabeth Vance, ACP, NCCP for working so diligently to get other NCPA members involved.

There is still room for you!! If you are interested, just reach out and we will find the position that is right for you.

I wish you all the best as Summer fades and Fall moves upon us.

**Beverly K. Moore, NCCP
President**

2027 SEMINAR - SAVE THE DATE

Our 2027 NCPA Annual Seminar will be held on Friday, April 23 at Cape Fear Community College's North Campus in Castle Hayne. We are already working on a line-up of all in-person speakers, recruiting sponsors, and planning special events. The CFCC North Campus is just a short drive from downtown Wilmington. Information about nearby hotels and seminar-related events will be forthcoming. Plan to join us and be a part of building on the success and energy of our 2026 Seminar.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

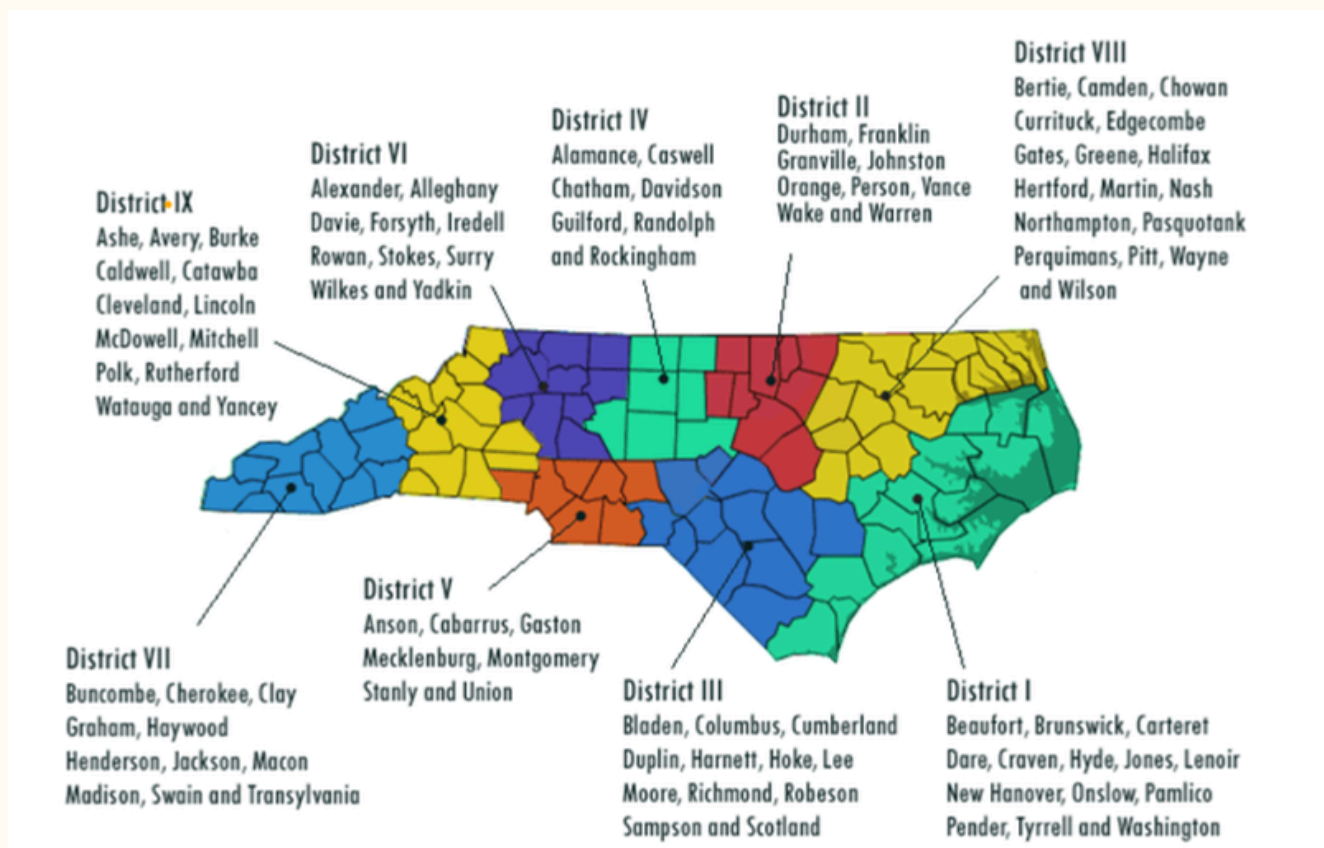
Hello, fellow paralegals!

I am pleased to announce that we have two new members on our Board of Directors. Mikaylen Redmon is now Interim District IV Director. Mikaylen is a graduate of UNC-Greensboro and also completed the Paralegal Technology Program at Guilford Technical Community College. She is a paralegal with Pinto Coates Kyre & Bowers, PLLC in Greensboro. We are grateful for the enthusiasm and energy Mikaylen brings to the Board.

Tina Marie Harvey, NCCP, is our Interim District II Director. Tina brings a wide range of professional qualifications and experience in legal, educational, and non-profit organizations to the Board. She is employed as an Account Manager at Durham Technical Community College and is already putting together plans for membership engagement and professional networking opportunities. District II Members - keep an eye on your e-mail for news on upcoming events.

We are looking forward to hosting in-person events in the next few months. If you have suggestions for a venue or activity for an event in your district, please e-mail me with suggestions at evance878@gmail.com.

Elizabeth Vance, ACP, NCCP



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

We appreciate each and every one of our members. If you have questions about your membership status, please login and check your Member Profile at [Member Login](#) or send an email to info@ncparalegal.org. If you would like to join NCPA, visit our website for details on levels of membership and application forms: [Join NCPA](#).

If you are a student member and have graduated, please be sure to update your membership level when you re-join in January. Again, contact info@ncparalegal.org with any questions!

Patti Clapper, ACP, NCCP
Second Vice President, Membership

NALA CONFERENCE 2026



DID YOU KNOW?

Process Agent Directory

The North Carolina Attorney General's Office maintains a register of all process agents and their addresses for state government departments and agencies.

These process agents are representatives of individual state agencies upon whom court papers may be served. Every State agency is required to file with the Attorney General the name and address of an agent upon whom process may be served. N.C.G.S. 1A-1, Rule 4(j)(4)(b). The term "agency of the State" includes every agency, institution, board, commission, bureau, department, division, council, member of the Council of State, or officer of the State of North Carolina, but does not include counties, cities, towns, villages, other municipal corporations or political subdivisions of the State, county or city boards of education, other local public districts, units, or bodies of any kind, or private corporations created by act of the General Assembly. N.C.G.S. 1A-1, Rule 4(j)(4)(d). Although some agencies choose to list more than one service of process agent, any one of the names can be used to serve process.

Use this link to access the list:

<https://ncdoj.gov/legal-services/legal-resources/process-agent-directory/>

Law Firm Security

The North Carolina State Bar announced the launch of a free and anonymous Cyber Security Self-Assessment for lawyers, made possible through the sponsorship and support of Lawyers Mutual. This initiative reflects a shared commitment to empower lawyers with the resources and guidance needed to improve cybersecurity practices and safeguard against growing cyber threats. This free self-assessment is a practical tool to help you identify your firm's cybersecurity infrastructure, policies, and habits, and then provide you with a set of resources tailored to the areas you identify as needing improvement. The self-assessment is completely confidential—results are not shared with the State Bar.

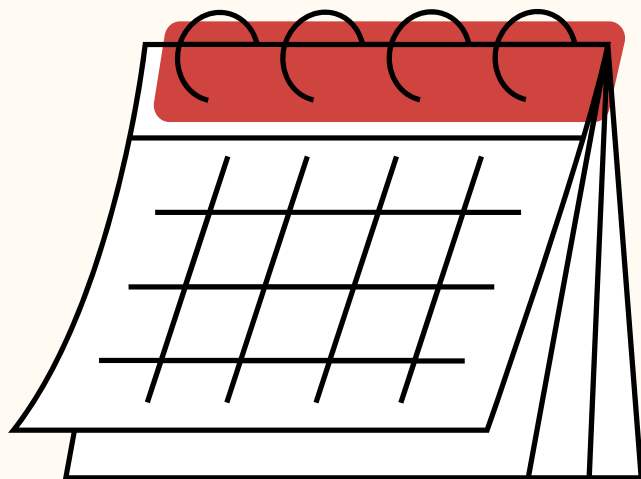
As an incentive for participating, all members who complete the self-assessment will receive 1 hour of technology training CLE credit.

This free and confidential self-assessment (the State Bar will not see your individual data) guides you through a series of modules with questions designed to evaluate your firm's IT and cybersecurity infrastructure, policies, and practices. The assessment will not dictate what to do or judge what's right or wrong. Instead, it encourages you to reflect on your firm's strengths and weaknesses and provides resources tailored to the areas you identify for improvement.

Use this link for more information: <https://www.ncbar.gov/for-lawyers/planning-and-self-help/cybersecurity-self-assessment/>

Become a NALA Certified Paralegal

Are you curious about NALA certification? Follow the link below for YouTube videos about the basics of the CP examination program, including benefits, costs, and the three pathways for eligibility to take the exam: paralegal studies, bachelor's degree, and paralegal experience. <https://nala.org/certification-videos/>



EVENTS

NCPA ANNUAL SEMINAR 2027

In-Person for Attendees & Speakers!

April 23, 2027 - Castle Hayne, NC

NORTH CAROLINA STATE BAR CERTIFIED PARALEGAL EXAM

Best of Luck to everyone taking the Exam on October 10!

**Stay tuned for spring registration deadline for the next exam in
June, 2027**

Details:

<https://www.ncbar.gov/paralegal-certification/why-become-a-certified-paralegal/important-dates/>

NALA CONFERENCE & EXPO

July 22-24, 2027: Indian Wells, California

Early Bird Registration Opens in May, 2027

ACCOLADES

Congratulations to these North Carolina Paralegals for earning certificates from NALA: Lenore Vitale-Sadej, CP, Laura Wyrick, CP; Elizabeth M. Unroe, ACP; Noelle G. Robertson, ACP; Stephanie Chase, ACP; and Buffy L. Johnson, ACP.



PARALEGAL CORNER: RIDDLE ME THIS!

Take a quick break from deadlines and discovery and test your legal wit with this month's Paralegal Riddles! See how many you can solve before checking the answers.

SUBMIT YOUR ANSWERS TO CRYSTAL AT
CRYSTALROBINSON1975@GMAIL.COM FOR A
CHANCE TO WIN A PRIZE
1ST 5 CORRECT ANSWERS WILL WIN

1.Riddle: Why did the paralegal bring a ladder to the courthouse?

2.Riddle: What is a personal injury lawyer's favorite dessert?

3.Riddle: Why are estate planning attorneys the most determined people in the office?

4.Riddle: What kind of underwear do lawyers and paralegals wear to trial?



Challenge for Members:

Got a great legal riddle of your own? Submit it for a chance to be featured in next month's newsletter!

Email to info@ncparalegal.org.

NALA News

Elizabeth Vance, ACP, NCCP
NALA Liaison



Congratulations to NCPA's First Vice-President, Crystal Robinson, NCCP, for receiving the NALA Affiliate Award for North Carolina Paralegal Association. The award was announced at the 2026 NALA Conference. Crystal was presented with the award at her firm, Bagwell Holt Smith, P.A., in August with a surprise visit from Patti Clapper and I. (See NCPA's Facebook page for the full presentation.) The purpose of the award is to recognize members or committees of Affiliated Associations for their contribution to the goals and programs of their NALA Affiliated Association. The nomination read as follows:

Crystal Robinson has served as NCPA's First Vice President for Education for many years. She has tirelessly worked on our Annual Seminar each year, seeking out and scheduling speakers, and then doing continuous follow-up with speakers to get their biographical material, outlines, manuscripts, and PowerPoint presentations for each session. Due to our concurrent sessions, each one-day seminar typically has nine speakers. [Given that most of our speakers are attorneys, we can all imagine how difficult it is to get this "work product" done under a deadline!] Crystal submits the necessary documentation to NALA and the NC Bar Board of Paralegal Certification to get the seminars approved for continuing education credits. In addition, Crystal coordinates with the videographers and the venue to ensure that we have adequate technology to produce and professionally record each session. The 2026 Annual Seminar was especially challenging, given that it was our first in-person seminar in four years. Crystal juggled all her typical duties, in addition to coordinating speakers who were presenting remotely with those who were in-person. In 2025, Crystal also volunteered to revive our Quarterly newsletter, The Forum, learning new software, tracking down articles, and herding Board Members and Officers for newsletter submissions. Did we mention that Crystal also recruits NCPA's Sustaining Members, Seminar Sponsors and Vendors? Last, but not least, Crystal is married and is the (very) busy and proud mother of three children. She works full time as a real estate paralegal, and participates in numerous fundraisers to support her son's competitive dance team.



LEFT: Patti Clapper, Crystal Robinson, and Elizabeth Vance at Award Ceremony in Mebane, NC; MIDDLE: 2026 NALA Affiliate award Ceremony, Denver, CO (Elizabeth Vance accepted the award on Crystal's behalf) RIGHT: Crystal's framed award.

Is Becoming a Paralegal Still Worth It? Pros and Cons

Written by Shawn Denise Andrews

The paralegal profession has long been seen as a practical, respected entry into the legal world. For decades, it offered a clear path into law without the time commitment, cost, or pressure of becoming an attorney. It was viewed as stable, professional, and intellectually engaging.

But the legal landscape has changed.

With artificial intelligence, automation, shifting law firm business models, and evolving client expectations, many people are now asking a fair and necessary question:

Is becoming a paralegal still a smart move today?

The answer is not a simple yes or no.

It depends on how you enter the profession, why you are drawn to it, and what you expect the role to be. Today's paralegal profession is not the same as it was even 10 years ago. Understanding that difference is the key to deciding whether it is worth pursuing now.

Here is the honest breakdown.

THE PROS OF ENTERING THE PARALEGAL PROFESSION NOW

1. Strong Demand Still Exists

Despite constant headlines about automation and AI replacing jobs, paralegals remain in strong demand across a wide range of industries. Law firms, corporate legal departments, health-care systems, financial institutions, insurance companies, and government agencies all continue to rely heavily on paralegals.

Why?

Because legal work still needs:

- Organization
- Judgment
- Compliance awareness
- Human oversight

AI can assist with research, drafting, and document review, but it cannot fully replace these functions. Legal work involves people, deadlines, ethical obligations, and real-world consequences. Paralegals sit at the intersection of all of these elements.

In many ways, technology has made paralegals more necessary, not less. As systems become faster and more complex, someone has to ensure accuracy, consistency, and accountability. That role increasingly falls to paralegals.

2. Faster Entry Than Law School

Becoming a paralegal requires far less time and financial investment than becoming an attorney. Law school can take

three years or more, often followed by significant student debt and a highly competitive job market.

In contrast, many professionals enter the paralegal field through certificate programs, associate degrees, or targeted career transitions. This makes the profession accessible to:

- Career changers
- Returning professionals
- Recent graduates seeking stability
- Individuals who want legal work without law school

This accessibility is one of the profession's strongest advantages. Paralegal work remains one of the fastest and most practical ways to enter the legal ecosystem without taking on long-term financial risk.

3. Exposure to High-Level Legal Thinking

Paralegals work directly with attorneys, clients, and complex legal matters. Over time, they develop:

- Legal intuition
- Procedural mastery
- Strategic awareness

This exposure is not theoretical. Paralegals see how cases unfold, how decisions are made, how risks are managed, and how legal strategy translates into action. They often understand the mechanics of law more deeply than outsiders realize.

This experience can lead to advancement, specialization, or pivoting into related roles such as compliance, legal operations, project management, or technology-focused positions. For many, paralegal work becomes a foundation for long-term professional growth rather than a static end point.

4. The Role is Expanding, Not Shrinking

One of the most misunderstood aspects of the paralegal profession today is the belief that technology is reducing its role. In reality, the role is expanding, just in a different direction, making it more relevant than ever for those willing to adapt.

Today's paralegals increasingly touch:

- AI oversight
- Workflow design
- Compliance operations
- Legal project management

Rather than simply executing tasks, paralegals are progressively serving as coordinators of systems and processes. They are

expected to understand how work flows through technology, where errors are likely to occur, and how to prevent breakdowns.

For those willing to grow, the ceiling is higher than it used to be. The profession now rewards initiative, adaptability, and systems thinking more than rote task execution.

THE CONS (THAT PEOPLE DO NOT TALK ABOUT ENOUGH)

1. The Role is No Longer "Just Follow Instructions"

This is one of the most important and least discussed changes in the profession.

New paralegals who expect purely task-based work may struggle. Firms now expect adaptability, tech awareness, and independent judgment. Paralegals are increasingly asked to anticipate problems, manage complexity, and make decisions within defined boundaries.

Those unwilling to evolve risk stagnation.

This shift can be challenging for individuals who prefer rigid instructions or predictable routines. The profession now requires mental flexibility and a continuous learning mindset.

2. Title ≠ Authority

Paralegals often carry heavy responsibility without formal decision-making power. They may manage deadlines, ensure compliance, coordinate filings, and prevent errors, yet still lack authority over final decisions.

This can be frustrating, especially in traditional firms with rigid hierarchies where titles matter more than contributions.

Success in this environment requires emotional intelligence and strategic communication, not just competence. Paralegals must learn how to influence outcomes without overstepping formal boundaries. This dynamic is not for everyone and can lead to ongoing frustration if expectations are misaligned.

3. Pay Can Plateau Without Specialization

Entry-level paralegal pay is generally reasonable and competitive. However, long-term financial growth often depends on specialization.

The following fields tend to offer stronger earning potential and greater job security:

- Litigation
- Health care and medical law
- Compliance
- Intellectual property
- Legal operations

Generalist roles, while still valuable, are more vulnerable to automation and outsourcing. Paralegals who do not actively build expertise in a niche may find their income leveling off sooner than expected.

4. AI is Raising the Bar

AI will not eliminate paralegals, but it will expose gaps in their skills.

Those who rely only on repetition, speed, or familiarity with outdated processes may struggle as automation handles those functions more efficiently. Paralegals who develop judgment,

systems thinking, and curiosity will not only survive but thrive in this new environment.

The profession is no longer about doing more work faster. It is about doing better work with insight and awareness.

WHO SHOULD ENTER THE PARALEGAL PROFESSION NOW?

Paralegal work is a strong choice for people who:

- Enjoy structure and problem-solving
- Like working behind the scenes
- Think in systems, not just tasks
- Are curious about how the law actually functions
- Are willing to evolve with technology

It is a weaker fit for those who want rigid routines, minimal change, or guaranteed linear advancement.

Entering the paralegal profession today is still a smart move, but only for people who understand what the role has become.

The profession now rewards:

- Adaptability over routine
- Judgment over speed
- Systems thinking over task completion

For the right person, it offers stability, influence, and growth. It provides proximity to meaningful legal work without the financial and emotional toll of becoming an attorney.

When expectations are distorted, however, the role can feel limiting or frustrating.

The difference is not the profession.

It is how you approach it.

Written with assistance from OpenAI



Shawn Denise Andrews is a senior paralegal in the health-care industry, located in Atlanta, Georgia. She is the founder of the American Paralegal Network, the host of the podcast *Andrew Legal Matters*, and the author of *The Perfect Paralegal: A Quick Guide to Maximizing Your Efficiency & Income*. Additionally, Shawn creates and curates articles focusing on the professional development of litigation paralegals.
✉ sandrew24@atl.net

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WELCOME NEW MEMBER!

Welcome to our New Sustaining Member



<https://www.abclegal.com/>

**Check their website out, if you need a process server anywhere in
the 50 States or 88 countries.**

THANK YOU SUSTAINING MEMBER



NAEGELI Deposition & Trial is the trusted litigation partner for the North Carolina legal community. We provide premier court reporting, transcription, legal videography, remote depositions, interpreters, and trial presentation services to legal professionals in every jurisdiction throughout the Old North State. Our team leverages deep institutional knowledge to ensure every transcript and recording strictly adheres to the certification standards of the North Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure. With over 45 years of consistent performance, NAEGELI upholds the professional excellence your firm demands, from Charlotte and Raleigh to the Outer Banks. To speak to a Client Executive, call (800) 528-3335, email schedule@naegeliusa.com or chat with a live expert through our [website](#).

We are currently seeking additional sustaining members to help support our mission. If you know a business or individual who may be interested in becoming a sustaining member, please feel free to let us know.
Email info@ncparalegal.org.

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After requests from several of our attorney clients we have added a few new features to make this service more beneficial to the legal community. Our alert binders are receiving numerous matches every day. We are very excited to bring this product to our attorney clients in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Maryland.

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Why go to the Courthouse when you can search from your office? Access to criminal & civil cases, as well as driver's history and vehicle details with monthly cost recovery reports.



Premium Traffic Mail 2.0

Create a direct mail campaign that will boost your profile. Our Premium Traffic Mail 2.0 provides you with a daily list of people that need your services. Our Premium Traffic Mail 2.0 provides you with case details for records that were entered in the court system the previous business day. You choose the counties you wish to receive data from, then login to our website in the morning to pick up your cases. We currently provide data in North Carolina, South Carolina and Maryland.



3270 NC Green Screen

Are you a Terminal 91424? Able to negotiate the state's terminal screens at binding speed? You can now search the same screens from your desk with our 3270 Green Screen product. You are only charged 50 cents per page viewed. High volume users that are proficient with these screens may save a considerable amount of money compared to web usage. Call us today at 800.792.4339.



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A comprehensive review of individual driving records, including offenses and citations. Have a client with an out of state license? We can access out of state driving records for our customers and return results within a few minutes of receiving the request. With motor vehicle reports from CourtLogic, you'll get timely, comprehensive, and reliable reports on an individual's driving history, including driver's license information, driving history including revoked DMV points, driving restrictions, and more.



Vantage Point Services - for Employers

Maintaining a safe, successful business requires constant awareness. Vantage Point Services offers everything you need to choose the best employees and protect your business. The VPS Alert product is well suited for industry engaged in transportation, healthcare, education, or any industry with high employee liability including government agencies such as military installations, civilian contractors, law enforcement, and port authorities who need to monitor criminal activity.



NC Skip Alert - for Bail Bondsmen

NC Skip Alert is an online service that provides our Bail Bonds customers with the ability to track offenders that have appeared on their bail. This web based application tracks and monitors all pending liability as well as specific forfeitures that are entered by the client. After entering the data just one time a bondsman is able to keep up with all pending liability as well as the current status on bond forfeitures. If pending cases change for any reason an email alert is sent to the bondsman.