

MARCH 2010

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UPCOMING GDPA
ELECTION
INFORMATION

Greater Dayton Paralegal
Association, Inc.
PO Box 10515, Mid City Station
Dayton, OH 45402

GDPA Newsletter

President's Message

Rima Davidson

I find myself being reminded of a Shakespeare quote in reference to paralegal certification. "To be, or not to be: that is the question." I am often approached with that very question by paralegal professionals. The responsibility of a paralegal is great, and if one takes pride in work product, and displays unwavering professionalism, that paralegal becomes a valuable asset to a supervising attorney, and legal professional association. Look at certification as an investment in yourself and your career. Are you worth it? Only you can answer that question. My sincere thanks to Susie Dugan, D.J. Shade and Brenda Poteet for participating on the certified paralegal panel at February's membership meeting. If you were unable to attend due to weather conditions, hand-outs will be made available at April's meeting.

Last meeting focused on working paralegals; now let us focus on GDPA's student and associate members currently seeking paralegal positions. I am pleased to announce that Lumen Legal's VP of Global Operations will be the speaker at April's membership meeting. The presentation will cover changes in the paralegal market from 2009 and

2010; suggestions on how to revive your resume by highlighting your skills and professional goals to potential employers; and how to conduct creative job searches. Make the investment in yourself and come join us on April 14th.

Spring is around the corner, and the close of GDPA's 2009-2010 Board term is fast approaching. If you are interested in serving the interests of all paralegals in the Greater Dayton area, consider putting your name in the hat for nomination for a Board position or become a member of a committee. The duties and responsibilities of Board positions and committees are outlined in GDPA's Code of Regulations and Policies and Procedures. Go to www.gdpa.org for more information.

"I am who I am, from my past. But I will be whom I want to be from the creation of my future, which is in my hands." - Malka Ghuman



NEW MEMBERS

Student

Cheryl Allen

Kim Baker

Donna Baumgartner

Dorena L. Biggs

Laurie Brown

Lily Gonzalez

Jamie Grant

Angela D. Guernsey

Maria Harris

Melinda Myers

Iva Nickels

Martha Koole

Amanda Kopf

David Leapley

Dave Levingston

Shaunte McKnight

Roberta "Joy" Miller

Stacey Silveri

Kristina L. Sizemore

Gloria Smallwood

Christina Walker

Active

Tiffany M. Johns, Dyer, Garofalo,
Mann & Schultz

Sustaining

Gina Shultz, National Corporate
Research Ltd.

Committee Reports

CLE Committee

We are currently working on CLE classification requirements and will continue to update the membership on our progress. Contact Chair Barbara Furman-Ashby at

bjashby@ssallc.com with speaker or topic suggestions.

Membership Committee

A meeting will be scheduled soon to discuss how to gain new members, and benefit current members. Contact Chair Krista Smith at kristas@lsplaw.com with ideas.

Fundraising Committee

We are pleased to announce that GDPA received a check for \$160.05 from its fundraising efforts from gift wrapping at Town & Country during the holidays. Thanks to everyone who participated and who stopped by to donate. If you have any ideas for fundraising for 2010, please contact Chair Stephanie Tracy at sdtracy@ssallc.com.

Events Committee

We would like to have your ideas for events in 2010. Please direct suggestions for future events to Chair Jenni Blessing at jablessing@ssallc.com.

Pro Bono

Future dates for pro bono opportunities will be posted online and in upcoming newsletters. Contact Chair Kathy Miller at 937-461-3857 or gdvlp@sbcglobal.net for more information.

Mentorship Committee

Mentorship applications are still being accepted. For more information, contact Chair Stephanie Tracy at sdtracy@ssallc.com.

GDPA Facebook Page

We're now on Facebook! Check us out at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Greater-Dayton-Paralegal-Association-Inc/140137151217?v=info>

Notices, Updates & Changes

Have You Changed Jobs or Moved?

If you have changed jobs, moved, or have new contact information, contact Krista Smith, Membership Chair at kristas@lsplaw.org so that you stay updated with the latest announcements from GDPA.

Elections

GDPA Elections are rapidly approaching! If anyone is interested in pursuing a Board position, please contact Krista Smith at kristas@lsplaw.com for further information. For description of positions, please see page 5.

OSBA Annual Convention

This event will be held on May 5-7, 2010 at the Dayton Convention Center. The OSBA Paralegal Committee is hosting a CLE session for attorneys entitled "Paralegals: What Can We Do For You?" This session will be moderated by GDPA President Rima Davidson.

Statewide News

2010 Spring Statewide will be held in Toledo on Saturday, April 17, 2010. Detailed information to follow via email and on www.gdpa.org.

Paralegal Day

The State of Ohio recognizes the contributions of paralegals, and proclaims the 3rd Monday of May as Paralegal Day. GDPA will provide scholarships to paralegal students at RETS College and Sinclair Community College.

Additionally, Sinclair will host its annual Paralegal Day event on Monday, May 17, 2010 from 5:30 – 7:00 pm in the Ponitz Center (Bldg. 12).



PARALEGAL SPOTLIGHT JENNIFER “JENNI” BLESSING

Please join the GDPA board in congratulating GDPA’s Secretary, Jennifer “Jenni” Blessing, as we spotlight her as our Paralegal of the Month.

Jenni is a graduate of Sinclair Community College and also holds a Bachelor’s degree in Business Management from Wright State University.

Jenni has been working as a paralegal for nearly five years. She is a corporate paralegal for Speedway SuperAmerica LLC, owner and operator of gas station/convenience store locations in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, South Dakota, West Virginia and Wisconsin. She currently handles alcohol and tobacco licensing for more than 1,500 Speedway stores. She ensures that violation notices are taken care of; prepares field personnel for administrative hearings; and prepares corporate change documentation for each state annually. She is also in charge of preventive law training, both in the

corporate office and in the field. This requires her to travel every once and awhile, which she states is nice. She is in charge of preparing the annual franchise circular filings for Minnesota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. In her spare time, she conducts various legal research projects for her Marketing, IT and Safety & Security components.

She is not married, but has two “furry” kids... Mittens (10) and Soot (7). Both cats are polydactyls (aka Hemingway cats). Mittens was dropped off in a box on the front step of a pet shop she was working at in 2000. Her nickname is the “Prissy Princess” – everything has to be for her and her way. Soot was a stray picked up by Last Chance Pet Rescue. She brought him home on Super Bowl Sunday 2004. His nickname is “Lover Boy” – because he has to be attached to someone at all times.

Her hobbies include going to see live bands (local and national) with friends, cooking and entertaining family and friends which she states is her “therapy”. She loves Zumba, Nia and roller-skating. She watches CSI (the original), Criminal Minds, and NCIS. She enjoys watching Two and a Half Man, Accidentally on Purpose and How I Met Your Mother for a good laugh. She describes herself as being very family-oriented... she loves spending as much time with family and friends as possible.

On behalf of the Board, thank you Jenni Blessing for sharing your story with us and congratulations for being Paralegal of the Month.

Submitted by:
Donna L. Middlebrook,
GDPA Trustee



GDPA Board Members

Rima Davidson, President
rdavidson@ssdlaw.com

First Vice-President (Vacant)

Krista Smith, Second Vice-President
kristas@lsplaw.com

Jennifer Blessing, Secretary
jablessing@ssallc.com

Stephanie Tracy, Treasurer
sdtracy@ssallc.com

Donna Middlebrook, Trustee
dmiddlebrook@yandalaw.com

Barbara Furman-Ashby, Trustee
bjashby@ssallc.com

Nicole Wilson, Trustee
KNicoleWilson1977@gmail.com

Trustee, 2008-2010 Term (Vacant)

Interested in serving the GDPA Membership in a rewarding position as a Board Member? Contact any Board Member listed above for more information about how you can fill a vacant position.

Upcoming Events

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Wednesday, April 14, 2010

Time: 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm

Speaker: Lumen Legal, VP Global Operations

Topic: Changes in the paralegal job market, resume tips, and creative job search strategies

Kettering Tower, 13th Fl. Conf. Rm.

Details in an upcoming membership email and online at www.gdpa.org

PRO BONO

JUVENILE CLINIC

GREATER DAYTON VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROJECT

March 25, 2010

Contact Cathy Miller at (937) 461-3857 or by email at gdvlp@sbcglobal.net for more information

GDPA BOARD ELECTIONS

It's that time of the year again!

Time for GDPA members who want to be more involved in their organization to step forward and throw their name into the running for a Board position.

Following are brief descriptions of the Board positions from Article V of the Code of Regulations, please review and see if you believe that one of these positions would be a good fit for you:

President: The President shall preside as Chairperson over all Board meetings and membership meeting. The President is a non-voting member of all committees, except the committee on Nominating and Elections. The President is authorized to sign checks on GDPA's accounts in the absence of the Treasurer. The President performs all of the duties usually performed by presidents of similar organizations and any other duties required by the Board.

First Vice President: The First Vice President shall preside as Chairperson over all Board and membership meetings and shall assume all duties assigned to the President in the President's absence. The First Vice President organizes the first meeting of each of the Standing Committees. The First Vice President performs the duties usually performed by a vice president of similar organizations and any other duties required by the Board.

Second Vice President: The Second Vice President is the Chairperson of the Membership Committee and is charged with the responsibility of developing programs to encourage membership in GDPA. This Board member receives applications for membership and presents the applications to the Board for acceptance. The Second Vice President shall also perform all of the duties usually performed by vice presidents of similar organizations and any other duties required by the Board.

Secretary: The Secretary shall be responsible for taking and maintaining minutes of all Board meetings and membership meetings and keeping permanent minutes. The Secretary shall assist the President in any way, including giving notice of meetings. The Secretary shall perform all of the duties usually performed by secretaries of similar organizations and any other duties required by the Board.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall deposit all funds and make all disbursements, subject to the approval of the Board and as provided in the Budget. The Treasurer is the Chairperson of the Finance Committee and Ways and Means Committee, which prepares a budget for the ensuing fiscal year to be approved and adopted by the Board. The Treasurer shall maintain an accurate account of all monies received or disbursed on behalf of GDPA and shall submit a written financial report at each Board and membership meeting. The Treasurer shall perform all of the duties usually performed by treasurers of similar organizations and any other duties required by the Board.

Trustees: The Trustees shall chair Committees, help with arrangements for GDPA meetings and functions, and assist the President as needed.

Do not hesitate to place your name in the drawing for fear of being thrown into a position not knowing what you are doing. Following the election, there are two "dual" Board meetings in which the current Board and the incoming Board meet so that the transition is smooth. Also all of the current Board members have been in your position and will gladly offer their assistance in any means necessary as it is all for the good of our organization.

Only Active Members are eligible to be nominated, elected or appointed pursuant to Article IV of the GDPA Code of Regulations. If you are not an Active Member, no worries, all members are welcome to participate by joining one of our many standing or special committees, some of which are the Nominations Committee and the Elections Committee.

Please feel free to contact a current Board member if you need more information or wish to put your name on the ballot for the upcoming 2010-2011 GDPA Board elections.