



THE PARALEGAL PULSE



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A Letter From the President

Dear Members,

The Commonwealth of Virginia Paralegal Association extends a heartfelt thank-you to each of our members. Your dedication, professionalism, and continued commitment to the mission of CVPA strengthen our community and elevate the paralegal profession across the Commonwealth.

Over the past year, our members have demonstrated remarkable service and engagement. You have volunteered at the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation's Wills Clinic, connected with one another at networking events, enriched your careers by attending a variety of CLE programs, and contributed your time,

ideas, and energy to the growth of CVPA through active participation in our committees. Your efforts are noticed, appreciated, and deeply valued. This has also been a year of tremendous expansion. CVPA is truly on the map now, and it's because of you. We have proudly launched the beginnings of new branches in both Tidewater and Northern Virginia, and we are excited to see them take root and grow in the year ahead. With your continued enthusiasm and involvement, these regions will help shape an even stronger statewide network of paralegal professionals.

This year promises even more opportunities for learning, connection, and service. We are excited to bring you additional CLE offerings, expanded networking events, and meaningful volunteer initiatives.

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A Letter from the President (continued)

One special event to mark on your calendar is the Motion for Justice 5K on May 16 at Stone Brewing. All race proceeds will benefit the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation, and we hope to see you, your families, coworkers, and friends out there supporting a great cause.

We want to remind all members that CVPA is your association. Your feedback guides our growth and ensures that the programs we offer support your professional goals and reflect our shared mission.

If there is a CLE topic you would like to see, an organization you believe CVPA should support, or an event that would benefit you and your colleagues, please let us know. You may reach out directly to any Board member or contact us at cvparalegals@gmail.com.

Thank you for all you do for CVPA and for the paralegal profession. We look forward to another strong year together.

Warmest regards,
Jessica Glickman
President

2026 Events

Be on the lookout for upcoming events in Tidewater and Richmond!

CVPA is planning a 5K in Richmond in May to benefit the Richmond Bar Association. Details to come soon!

Board Members are planning an annual Retreat on Saturday morning, March 21, 2026 to discuss growth opportunities and how to better serve our members and sponsors.

CVPA is planning a networking event in both Tidewater and Richmond. More information to be provided soon.

CLEs are generally held on the 2nd Friday of each month (except December). CLEs this year will cover IP with a European perspective, Family Law, Ethics, Artificial Intelligence, Workers Compensation, Mechanics of an Appeal, and more!

CLEs are always free for members. Non-members must pay \$10 per CLE.



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The Benefits of Being a NALA Affiliate

By Rich Hahn, ACP

Back in the summer and fall of 2024 when the Commonwealth of Virginia Paralegal Association (CVPA) was forming the members of CVPA's initial Board of Directors decided they wanted to Affiliate with the National Association of Legal Assistants (NALA) also known as NALA "The Paralegal Association".

Why did CVPA's Board of Directors decide to become a NALA affiliated association? The answer is because of the many benefits of being a NALA affiliated association offers CVPA and its members chief among it is the NALA offer the only nationally accredited "Certified Paralegal" (CP) examination where Paralegal after taking and passing both the knowledge and skills portion of the CP obtain their "CP" credential.[1] After earning their CP credential a Paralegal can earn their "Advanced Certified Paralegal" (ACP) credential in a specialized area of law by taking one of the ACP online course offered by NALA[2]

What are the other benefits of being a NALA affiliated association or a member of NALA affiliated association. Let's take a look:

[1] The CP be credential must be renewed every five years by the holder earning 50 hours of "Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credits 5 of which must be in "Legal Ethics" and no more which can be 10 hours "Non-Substantive" CLE and paying a renewal fee.
[2] ACP credentials are renewed at the same time CP credentials are renewed

1. Webinars and Online CLE Courses: Access various educational topics relevant to the legal industry.
2. Discounted NALA membership for members of NALA affiliated associations (\$5 for Students, \$50 off Active type).
3. Publications: like Facts & Findings and the NALA Utilization & Compensation Report.
4. Affiliate Connection: A quarterly newsletter focused on strengthening your association, offering resources, celebrating affiliate success, learning from challenges, and upcoming events and awards.
5. CLE Approval: NALA CLE approval for all your substantive, technology, legal ethics, and non-substantive educational events.
6. Free CLE Sessions: NALA provides affiliated associations with up to two on-demand webinar courses (*excluding course bundles) per calendar year at no cost.

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The Benefits of Being a NALA Affiliate (continued)

CVPA also receives recognition and creditability through the following items:

1. Permission to use NALA's "Affiliated Association Logo and Digital Badge".
2. Through NALA Affiliate Awards which recognize a member or committee of NALA affiliate for substantial contributions to the Paralegal profession.

NALA also offers CVPA and its members networking opportunities via the following events:

1. The annual NALA Conference and Expo which is being held in Denver, Colorado this year.
2. The Affiliated Associations Annual meeting at the NALA conference. This meeting features the announcement of elections, recognition of award winners, and an affiliate presentation.
3. Regularly Scheduled Online Forums: that help NALA affiliated associations engage with other paralegal associations and legal professionals through the following:
 - a. NALA Commons: NALA's online community forum and network
 - b. Affiliated Association Town Hall Meetings: which provide a platform for open discussions, sharing of ideas, and addressing common challenges, fostering a sense of community among affiliated associations.
 - c. Affiliated Association Presentations: a wide range of topics relevant to paralegal associations, providing valuable insights and knowledge-sharing opportunities. NALA online discussions, meetings, and focus groups.
 - d. The Affiliates Showcase: where NALA affiliates get to market their association and share ideas with other NALA affiliated associations.

CVPA receives support from NALA in the following ways:

1. Technical Assistance: receiving free consultations from NALA's experienced staff, Affiliate Director and Secretary, and NALA Board members.
2. Promotional Materials: By requesting NALA promotional materials that will help both CVPA and NALA attract new members.
3. By request speakers from NALA for virtual and onsite speakers for events.
4. And as mentioned above discounts: affiliated association members receive \$50 off an active type NALA membership, and affiliated association student members receive \$5 NALA Student membership.

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Marquia Franklin



I became a paralegal after realizing that while law school was no longer the path I wanted to pursue, I still felt strongly about working in the legal field and making a meaningful impact. I quickly saw just how essential paralegals are to an attorney's day-to-day schedule and overall success, from keeping cases organized to proactively finding solutions before issues arise. I've always been passionate about helping others navigate challenging situations with clarity and confidence, and I truly enjoy being part of the process that helps clients feel heard and supported during difficult times. A fun fact about me is that I love to travel and enjoy learning different trades—I'm always excited to pick up a new skill and experience something new!

Membership Report as of March 1, 2026 **By Amanda Dessert, Secretary, Membership Chair**

Active Members: 55
Student Members: 34
Associate Members: 4
Sustaining Members: 2
Legal Assistants: 4
Total Members: 99

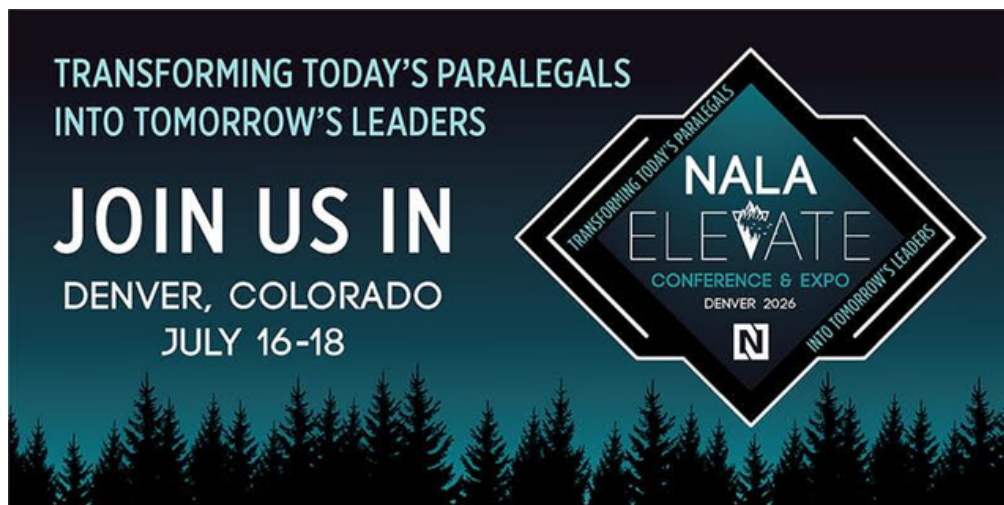


The Benefits of Being a NALA Affiliate (continued)

Finally, by being a NALA Affiliated Association CVPA also gains influence and advocacy through NALA's recognition as a national Paralegal association such as:

1. Policy Development: by participating in developing NALA's policies and positions.
2. By electing the "Affiliated Associations Director, who sits on the NALA Board of Directors, and the "Affiliated Associations Secretary" whose roles are to advocate for NALA affiliated associations.
3. Legislative Support: by NALA advocating for legislation that benefits the paralegal profession and issues such as "Access to Justice".

With all those benefits that is why the forming Board of CVPA chose to become a NALA affiliated association. Please feel free to contact me or CVPA's Board of Directors regarding more about NALA on these benefits.



What You Can't Learn in Paralegal School | From an Experienced Paralegal

By Dawn Smith

One of the unspoken pressures in the paralegal field (and in the legal field in general) is this: the feeling that everything will fall apart if you step away. But it is important to remember that you are not valuable because you never stop. Rather, you are valuable because you know how to sustain excellence over time.

Here's the reality of this field: deadlines are constant; calendars are full; there is always one more contract, one more filing, one more regulatory detail that needs attention. Consequently, when your paid time off approaches, instead of feeling relief, you may feel guilt.

Today's Tip: Take your paid time off. Rest. Reset. Return Stronger.

A very important truth that you should learn early in your career before you burn out is this: taking your paid time off is not a failure of dedication. It is part of maintaining your professional effectiveness. You are not just managing tasks. You are managing risk, accuracy and compliance. That level of responsibility requires mental clarity. Fatigue and burnout do not make you stronger. They make you more vulnerable to mistakes.

Even the most seasoned paralegals cannot operate at peak performance without periods of reset. Your brain needs distance from the constant urgency and pressure of the job in order for you to return with sharper judgment, stronger skills and perspective.

You need to know that taking your paid time off is not shirking your responsibilities. Taking your paid time off protects your ability to perform well. The strongest paralegals understand and protect this balance between reset and work. They prepare their matters, communicate clearly with their teams, document status appropriately and then allow themselves a period of rest. Rest and reset support consistency, accuracy and sound decision making. These attributes are foundational to protecting your organization, firm, attorney and your professional reputation.

You deserve the rest you have earned. When you return, you will serve your team better because of taking the break.

Action Step for You:

Before your next paid time off, create a brief coverage summary listing out:

- Key deadlines
- Matter status
- Any priority items

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What You Can't Learn in Paralegal School | From an Experienced Paralegal (continued)

Communicate your summary clearly. This does not have to be an onerous task either. Make good use of the tools your firm/organization provides you to list and then communicate. If you've communicated to your team, when you take your time off you will be able to DISCONNECT confidently knowing that you have left things in a good place. Most importantly, **enjoy your time away!**

[Reprinted with permission from Dawn Smith from LinkedIn February 27, 2026]



CVPA Announces Motion for Justice 5K in Richmond

CVPA is excited to announce its upcoming **Motion for Justice 5K**, taking place on Saturday, May 16, 2026 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. along the scenic Capital Trail in Richmond. The race will kick off at Rocketts Landing, offering participants a beautiful waterfront course to run or walk.

This community-focused event welcomes runners, walkers, pets, and even virtual participants, making it an inclusive opportunity for everyone to get involved. Registration is \$30 per person, and all proceeds will benefit the Greater Richmond Bar Foundation, supporting programs that expand access to justice in the region.

Whether you're aiming for a personal best, enjoying a leisurely walk, or participating from afar, the **Motion for Justice 5K** is a meaningful way to stay active while giving back!

Participants can register online at:
<https://bishopsevents.com/event/2026-motion-for-justice-5k/>

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Rebecca Hubbard Class of 2018



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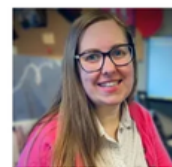
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