

THE DAILY RECORD

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Paralegal PERSPECTIVES

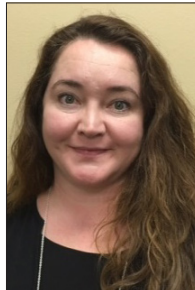
Joining a professional organization has many benefits

When I attended college to obtain my Paralegal Certificate many years ago, a professor recommended to me that I become a member of a professional organization so I could meet other professionals and have the opportunity to continue to learn and build my knowledge as a paralegal. After several years, I did just that — I became a member of the Paralegal Association of Rochester, Inc. (PAR).

It's true that over the years PAR's Board of Directors and its members have changed. It is also true that PAR continues to work toward growing our membership so that paralegals can experience the benefits of being part of a professional organization and network with one another. The number of experienced paralegals currently employed outnumber paralegals with less experience, however, this discrepancy can be bridged when paralegals work together to enrich our profession through continued education and in sharing our knowledge with one another.

I have found over the years that the best way to effect change in our professional lives is to be proactive and open to change. It's crucial to have conversations where you listen more than you speak; to mentor one another so that your expertise is not lost when you leave the profession; to assist each other and build relationships. The way I've learned how to do this is in joining a professional organization, such as PAR. If you are not currently a member of PAR, I ask that you consider becoming one. Old and new members are always welcome! Attend our upcoming CLEs and events (which will continue to be updated on our website's calendar), and reach out to PAR's sponsors. We want to share our knowledge with you, but we also want to learn from you!

As you know, we continue to see regulation programs develop and implemented in states throughout our nation (i.e., California, Florida, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Washington).



By **BOBBI L. AHEARN**
Daily Record
Columnist

On Sept. 14-16, PAR hosted the Empire State Alliance of Paralegal Associations, Inc. (ESAPA) Fall meeting at Nixon Peabody LLP, which included a special meeting that was open to all NYS paralegals on the topic of Voluntary Regulation. The speakers and commentary thereafter were encouraging. Therefore, ESAPA will continue its work in collecting feedback from paralegals across the state to gauge

support for voluntary regulation in New York.

Please note that voluntary regulation is a process of credentialing paralegals who meet certain guidelines established by the overseeing organization, such as: educational requirements; passing a proficiency based examination; satisfying continuing education requirements; and adherence to a code of ethics. The "voluntary" designation means that Paralegals could be employed in New York state without requiring an official regulatory credential, however if they chose, having the credential would distinguish themselves and the credential would provide a benchmark against which employers and the general public could assess that person's qualifications. There will be more on this topic in the coming months so please continue to visit PAR's website at: www.rochesterparalegal.org and the ESAPA website at www.empirestateparalegals.org.

Also, on Sept. 21, PAR hosted its 3rd Annual "Par for PAR Nine and Dine" Golf Tournament at Shadow Lake Golf Club. The weather held out almost to the very end and fun was had by all that attended. We will post the charity information and a "Save the Date"

card for next year's tournament to PAR's website later this month and will include pictures from this year's event. Thank you to our sponsors: Woods Oviatt Gilman LLP, Nixon Peabody, Merzbach & Solomon P.C., Counsel Press, LegalMed, All New York State Process Servers, GRB, and Probe Services Professional Investigations. This annual event is successful because of you and we look forward to your continued participation!

On Oct. 10, PAR will again host our annual kick-off dinner, which will be held at the City Grill in Rochester. At this event PAR gives a \$500 scholarship to a student that is currently enrolled in a paralegal program. There are certain criteria that the student needs to meet in order to be nominated to receive this scholarship award.

PAR will have CLEs posted on our website for the upcoming months so please continue to check PAR's website. These CLEs are open to members and non-members and information about upcoming CLEs can be found on our website.

And last, but not least, there is still time to register for the 2018 NFPA Convention and Policy Meeting, which will be held in Seattle, Oct. 25-28, 2018. As part of the National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc. ("NFPA"), representatives from PAR will be attending the annual convention in Seattle this fall to vote on issues brought before the assembly. Attendees from PAR will be working behind the scenes in preparation of hosting the 2019 Annual Convention here in Rochester, next October! You will hear more about the 2019 Convention and how the community can get involved to support this terrific event in the coming months as well.

Please go to PAR's website www.rochesterparalegals.org for more information.

Bobbi L. Ahearn is PAR president and pro bono coordinator.