



# SFPA Legal Journal

March 2012, Volume I

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## Calendar

*SFPA Election, Approval of Bylaw Changes & Member Appreciation Event*

[3/27/12, 6 p.m.](#)  
Kork Wine & Cheese  
2 S. Miami Ave.

*The Evolving Landscape of Law Firm: the Future of the Paralegal*

[4/24/12, 12 p.m.](#)  
@ Shutts & Bowen  
201 S. Biscayne Blvd.  
15<sup>th</sup> Floor

*Patent Trolls: What Are They, and Why Should You Be Concerned?*

[5/22/12, 12 p.m.](#)  
@ Holland & Knight  
701 Brickell Ave.  
30<sup>th</sup> Floor

*Preparing Witnesses for Trial: Clients and Third Parties*

[6/26/12, 12 p.m.](#)  
@ Shutts & Bowen

*The Client's Holding on Line 2: They want to Know if You Received their Email*

[7/24/12, 12 p.m.](#)  
@ Holland & Knight

*E-Discovery Topic TBA*

[8/21/12, 12 p.m.](#)  
@Shutts & Bowen

## President's Message

It's hard to believe we are about to conclude the first quarter of 2012. I'm sure you've all set resolutions for 2012. One of my resolutions was to take Salsa lessons. I've signed up for them but for one thing or another, I've only taken two lessons. It's on the top of my list, however, and I'm determined to do it. One way to meet my goal is by going public and recruiting a friend for support. How are you meeting your goals?

It feels like only yesterday we were preparing for the Thanksgiving Charity event at AMIKIDS's W.I.N.G.S., collecting toys and preparing for our annual membership holiday party at KORK. If you weren't able to make it to our events last year, [annual elections and membership appreciation meeting](#) is right around the corner. Join us on March 27th at the beautiful and cozy Kork wine cellar in Downtown. We loved that location so much for our holiday party we elected to hold our elections there as well. This location was once a bomb shelter so it has a warm feel of history to it with its dimly lit décor.

Additionally, we also have a full year of educational lunches lined up for you. Remember to invite your co-workers and colleagues to earn CLE credit, further your legal knowledge and network with fellow paralegals and vendors in our community. If you there is a topic you'd like to see, please contact our education committee chairperson, Vivian Fusco, with your suggestions at [vfusco@sfpa.info](mailto:vfusco@sfpa.info).

It is with great honor that I thank you for allowing me to serve your association as President for the 2011-2012 year. I know your next President will take as much pride and joy in serving your association as I have.



*Mayda Nahhas, CP, is a senior litigation paralegal for Stearns Weaver. She has been a paralegal for over 14 years. Mayda also teaches the legal secretary course at FIU Legal Studies Institute and sits on the Bar's UPL Committee. Email her at [mnahhas@sfpa.info](mailto:mnahhas@sfpa.info).*

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## *SFPA serves smiles at W.I.N.G.S.*

***"Giving frees us from the familiar territory of our own needs by opening our mind to the unexplained worlds occupied by the needs of others." Barbara Bush***

On Friday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, the members of SFPA and paralegal students of the Miami Dade College national honor society, Lambda Epsilon Chi (LEX), collected baby items and teen clothing and accessories as well as served a Thanksgiving banquet for the Women in Need of Greater Strength (W.I.N.G.S.). W.I.N.G.S. is a non-profit program for at-risk adjudicated young women ages 14-19 who are either pregnant or are teen mothers.

This event has become one of the most heartwarming events of the SFPA year, as members and students come together and selflessly give their time and money to others in the community.

The paralegal students at MDC went beyond the call of duty by collecting and putting together Baby-Bundle packages for the babies at W.I.N.G.S. Each package included diapers, a pacifier, gum soother, body wash and lotion in a beautiful purple tote. A special thanks goes to LEX advisor Mercedes Medina and LEX member Karina Reyes.



*MDC student Jason Muriel, member Mary Ann Myskowitz-Jones, member Leonie Wellington, student Erica Albuquerque & LEX Advisor Mercedes Medina.*

Sixteen young women, 10 babies and 15 W.I.N.G.S. staff's bellies (baby bumps included) were filled with the delicacies of a traditional meal: baked turkey and honey ham, buttery mashed potatoes and candied yams, green beans and cranberry sauce with a red velvet and lemon cake to top it all off. One thing is certain: service was made with a smile.

Thank you to all SFPA members, MDC paralegal students, SFPA board members and the wonderful staff at W.I.N.G.S. for giving back to a community of young mothers and their babies.



*Dania Vazquez, Secretary Vivian Fusco, Membership Chair Sharon Staples & W.I.N.G.S. Exec. Director Karen Markus.*



*A Happy Thanksgiving to W.I.N.G.S.!*



*Lisa serves a mean dish!*



*And the feast was on!*



*Baby care packages by LEX*



*Dania, Sharon & Leonie Wellington busy at work!*

## SFPA puts a "Kork" in it at annual Holiday Party

Continuing the spirit of the season, sponsors, members and friends of SFPA attended the Party in the Cellar at Kork Wine & Cheese. Kork had lots to offer in terms of ambiance too in addition to the wine (of course): dimly lit, the former bomb shelter sports a dark wooden interior and is reminiscent of a speakeasy club, circa 1920. The basement downstairs provided an intimate but roomy area for guests to linger, catch up, reminisce and dream of the year to come. The atmosphere was the buzz of the night.

The annual holiday party is, however, more than just an excuse to celebrate with food and drink. Toys, games, diapers, clothing and accessories were donated by members for W.I.N.G.S. The AMI Kids/W.I.N.G.S. executive director **Karen Markus, Ms. Patricia**, and their entire staff, said "THANK YOU" for all that was done to help meet the needs of those young teenage mothers and their babies. They were so excited and humbled to receive everything, especially the big teddy bear - they fell in love with it. Talk about being a "Toys 'R Us Kid!"

We'd also like to thank the sponsors who made it all possible: Eliana Poveda of Poveda Mediations, Felice Solomon of Solomon Mansure, & Zeke Alicea of IRIS Data Services. For the Broward party, please thank Atkinson Baker & Special Counsel for their support.

We loved Kork so much that the party will continue during annual elections on March 27<sup>th</sup>. Until then, put a Kork in it!



Enjoying the festivities here are: mediator **Eliana Poveda**, **Mary Ann Myskiw-Jones**, **Mayda Nahhas**, **Nanette Orange** (back), **Jessica Giraldo**, **Sharon Staples** & **Vivian Fusco**.



**Lisa** & **Mayda** with raffle winners: **Matthew McDermott**, **Eunice Tillotson**, **Nanette Orange** & **Pedro Arturo Rodriguez**.



**Jane Byrne** gets a little visit from Santa.



**Felice Solomon** with raffle winners (from left): **Nanette Orange**, **Margo Savari**, **Jane Rose** & **Margarida Veliky**.



**Karen George**, **Pam Stratton** & **Lisa** brighten the room.



**Steve Cakov** & **David Johnson** (left) and **Zeke Alicea** with **Eleana Poveda** (right) enjoy the night.

## SFPA Party Rocks it at Battle of the Bands



*Dade Legal Aid's Development Director Lori Markowitz Gerson & Lisa Vessels party rocking it at Battle of the Bands!*

Band Together for Legal Aid, with Sabadell United Bank, hosted its first annual **Battle of the Bands**. The event showcased live music featuring lawyers and rocking paralegals on February 12th. The event was held at The Stage in Miami's Design District. SFPA contributed as a "Lead Singer" sponsor, helping to raise funds for Dade Legal Aid's program Put Something Back.

Put Something Back, provides pro bono services to the needy communities in South Florida. The event brought together more than 300 supporters to witness the American Idol-style competition, judged by the audience via text and Judges Stanford Blake & Richard J. Suarez (who has a graduate degree in music).

The winning band was Blackstar, a multi-faceted Miami-based cover band, which has been playing in South Florida venues since 1989. Their members include a banker, dentist and advertising executive, as well as **Angie Veal, a paralegal with the well-known Ferraro Law Firm.**

To all the rocking paralegals: let's get a win next year!  
Source: Dade Legal Aid Put Something Back [website](#)



*Certification of Appreciation from Legal Aid*

*Check out videos of the event and more photos on our SFPA Facebook page!*



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It's time for fireworks!

*Join us for SFPA's*

## Annual Elections & Member Appreciation Event!

**Tuesday, March 27th  
5:30 p.m.**

Prizes, food, drinks & more!

Free for SFPA members/\$30 nonmembers



**[Kork Wine & Cheese Bar](#)**

2 S. Miami Ave., Miami, FL 33130



*Please RSVP by registering online [here](#)*



May 12, 2012  
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## Come to our Spring Seminar!

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## What Makes a Good Leader?

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We can all name several people, locally or nationally, who we admire for their leadership qualities, and it always interests me how they acquired those skills. Unfortunately, there's no exact recipe; 1 tablespoon of intelligence, ¼ teaspoon of wit, ½ cup of respect, because none of us come to the table a blank slate. We have both personal and professional life experiences in our history so we are left to figure out what we need more of and in what quantity! What I *can* offer is some suggestions of the “ingredients” needed – the quantities will be up to you.

**LISTEN.** When someone says something, it isn't just the words they are sharing; it's a feeling or a passion or even a lack of passion. If you're unsure what the other person really means by their comments, repeat their statement back to them in your own words to see if you've got it.

**“STEP BACK.”** What? While serving as a member of my local association and as a current member of the NFPA board, I've watched observed leaders stepping back or “not speaking.” This not only creates more opportunities for others to voice their opinion but it gives everyone a moment to reflect on previous discussion.

**SHARE.** No one person makes up a board or committee so when your goal is reached or the event is a success, share the accolades with the others on your team. Maybe even incorporate the royal “we” into your vocabulary now and then.

**TAKE RESPONSIBILITY.** Whether you are the committee chair or the president of your board, if a project fails, take responsibility. Everyone know that typically it's not just one person's fault when an action is unsuccessful, so the members of your team will respect the fact that you are willing to step up and not point fingers at others. You and your team can dissect the situation in private so you can do a better job next time.

**BE OPEN TO IDEAS.** Just because you didn't think of it first doesn't mean it isn't a great idea. Consider the new team member who makes a suggestion and three or four of the long-time members immediately shut it down “because we tried that and it didn't work.” Talk it out-while it may not have been successful many years ago, that same idea might work now if tweaked a little.

### **LEARN ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION.**

While I had been a member of my local association for over a dozen years before I became president, I was truly surprised at how much I *didn't* know about it. I made a point of visiting specialty sections I hadn't attended before, welcoming each new member (via email), meeting the attendees as they arrived for meetings, reading and re-reading the procedures and the bylaws and helping our executive director with registration.



**TRUST YOUR TEAM.** Trust that since they volunteered for that job or position, that they feel they can handle their duties. Give them a chance to succeed – they might surprise you. If you feel they need some assistance, give them a “buddy” on the board. Likewise, find yourself a buddy or mentor if you need help in a specific area.

**RESPECT OTHERS.** There is no rule that says you have to be best friends with those on your team – or even like them – but you do need to respect them. Respect their ideas, their commitment to the board, and their time and efforts.

**LEAD BY EXAMPLE.** Just as children learn this way, so do adults. Your respect and trust of others will be reciprocated. If you expect your team members to finish their assignments on time, then you need to do the same. The supervisors that I respected the most always got in the trenches with their employees.

Try tackling one of these attributes every month and even ask for some suggestions from your group. Make it a safe place for them to speak their mind and for you to shine as a leader.

**Contributed by NFPA**

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## Certification: 10 Exam Prep Tips

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By Vicki Voisin, ACP

The thought of preparing for a certification examination may seem overwhelming. The idea of taking such a critical step (and risk!) may be frightening.

However, the road to certification is made easier by the amount of study materials and courses, in addition to being able to choose online testing -- right where you live -- but it is no less daunting.

The key to success is in the preparation and planning. Here are 10 tips to help you prepare:

**Decide which credential (CP, CRP, FRP, ACP) you will pursue.** This is your very first step. Which credential is most recognized where you live and work? Which one best suits your career goals?

**Decide when you will take the examination.** This is crucial to planning your preparation.

**Decide how much time you will need to prepare.** Working backward from the examination date you have chosen, block a period of time for study and set up a study schedule. I recommend no less than three months but that is an individual decision.

**Plan how you will study.** Will this be in a group, with a study buddy, by yourself?

**Be a joiner.** If possible, join a study group and enlist 'study buddies' to hold you accountable.

**Assemble all of your examination study materials.** Certifying entities have suggestions for study materials and may even offer some mock study questions. Purchase as many of the study materials as economically feasible, remembering that you may be able to sell them when you have successfully completed the examination. You may even consider buying used materials.

**Prepare your own study materials.** Some examinees find it helpful to record notes and listen to them when they are traveling, such as on their commute to work. Others prepare flash cards, with a legal term or question on one side of a 3x5 card and the answer on the other.

**Take advantage of preparation and educational opportunities offered by the credentialing organization, as well as your professional association.** For instance, NALA offers a 3-day CLA review course, as well as CLA

preparation courses at its convention. NALS and NFPA also offer study opportunities. Information is available at each association's website. Do any of your local and state associations offer certification study programs?



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Review Course  
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you can take it to  
the next level.*

**Stick to your study plan.** You will find all sorts of excuses for not studying, and most of them will be legitimate. This is like training for a marathon, though: *you have to follow your training schedule.*

**Seek advice from those who have "been there, done that".** While it is unethical for anyone who has taken a certification examination to reveal any information regarding the specific questions on the exam or any other contents, they can tell you how they studied and what review materials they found helpful. Just ask!

**Further Thoughts:** Please do not think you will prepare for a certification examination by just "winging it". This is an important (and not inexpensive) step and you should be as well prepared as possible. This means you **MUST** study for the examination, no matter how much experience and/or education you possess.

**Your challenge:** If you already have a professional credential, congratulations! If you don't, please put that at the top of your list of professional goals and start thinking right now about how you will prepare.

Vicki Voisin, "[The Paralegal Mentor](#)," delivers simple strategies for paralegals and other professionals to create success and satisfaction by setting goals and determining the direction they will take their careers. Vicki spotlights resources, organizational tips, ethics issues, and other areas of continuing education to help paralegals and others reach their full potential. She publishes *Paralegal Strategies*, a weekly e-newsletter for paralegals, and co-hosts *The Paralegal Voice*, a monthly podcast produced by [Legal Talk Network](#).



The NFPA 2012 Joint Conference will be held **April 20-23** in Nashville Tennessee. The Conference will kick off with Regulation, followed by Leadership and the Paralegal Certification Ambassadors Conference.

**Regulation** will be held on Friday, April 20, 2012. We are still sourcing a speaker to address “becoming your own lobbyist,” but the other seminars are finalized. In addition, we will have a topic comparing the regulation of non-lawyers such as legal document preparers vs. paralegals, a panel discussion on statewide alliances and how they can help or hinder attempts at regulation, and a workshop on legislation/proposal drafting.

A full list of topics and speakers will appear on the NFPA website in the near future. This is one member benefit you will not want to miss!

[Conference agendas](#), [hotel information](#) and [online registration](#) now available. NFPA members may attend all three conferences for **free!** (one of the many [benefits](#) of being a [NFPA member](#))

Scholarships and awards for 2012 [have been announced](#). See the [Thomson Reuters/NFPA scholarship application](#). The **submission window is from March 1 to July 1**.

Scholarship winners will be announced at the October NFPA annual convention. Visit our [awards and scholarships page](#) for more information!



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A promotional banner for the 37th Annual Meeting of the Association of Legal Assistants - Paralegals (NALA) in Omaha, NE. The background features a night view of a bridge over water with fireworks exploding in the sky. The text 'NALA OMAHA' is written in large, blue, 3D-style letters at the top. Below it, '37TH ANNUAL MEETING' and 'JULY 25-28 • OMAHA, NE' are written in white. The NALA logo is centered below the text. At the bottom, the full name of the organization and contact information are provided.

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## NALA Quick Links

[NALA Website](#)

[NALA Vendor Directory](#)

[NALA Campus Live! Spring 2012 Schedule](#)

A banner for the NALA Certified Paralegal Scholarship Award. On the left, there is an image of a black graduation cap and a rolled-up diploma tied with a red ribbon. The text on the right reads: 'Delmar, Cengage Learning is proud to introduce: NALA Certified Paralegal Scholarship Award'.

Delmar, Cengage Learning is proud to introduce:  
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As a proud partner with NALA, [Delmar Cengage Learning](#) will annually recognize and reward two graduating paralegal students who excel in their academic paralegal studies, have demonstrated strong leadership potential through academic, professional, business, or community activities, and plan to take the CP Exam.

The two award recipients of the [NALA Certified Paralegal Scholarship](#) will receive:

- Certified Paralegal Review Manual, published by Delmar, Cengage Learning,
- CLA/CP Study Guide and Mock Examination, published by Delmar, Cengage Learning,
- application fee to be admitted to the Certified Paralegal program.

# Say Hello to our New Members!



**KAVITA BEDASIE**

Broward College

**TRECIA BENNETT**

Broward College

**KENNETH HART**

Miami Dade College

**KRISTINE HISHINUMA KADLAC**

Shook Hardy & Bacon, LLP

**KENNETH KOONCE**

City College

**STEVEN MIRO**

University of Miami

**JENNIFER PATTI**

Nova Southeastern University

**KARLA REYES**

Brown Mackie College

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Broward College

“Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.”

- Vince Lombardi

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## About SFPA Legal Journal

The *SFPA Legal Journal* is published quarterly & is the  
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can serve.



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