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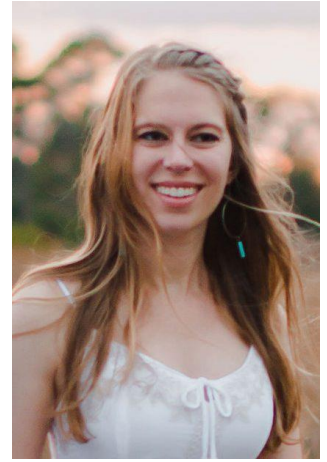
January 2025 Edition



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Vice President's Message

By Heather Bragg



On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, I want to thank all of you for your support of the Volusia County Paralegal Association, Inc. We are entering our second full year, which provides an opportunity to reflect on lessons learned and explore opportunities for growth as both individuals and an organization.

First things first - I'd like to extend a special thank you to our President, Kathy Reimann, for spearheading so many of the good things we've enjoyed during our first year. We had a robust schedule of continuing education and networking events, a Saturday seminar, and charitable activities. Without her initiative and tenacity, this simply would not come to fruition. Kathy, please accept our sincere thanks.

I'd also like to extend a warm welcome to our newest Board members, Kimberly Weiss, Troy Egeberg and Debbie Tindell. They will be sworn in on January 16, 2025 at our Association's first meeting of 2025. We are honored to have Judge Elizabeth Blackburn preside over the swearing in ceremony, as well as speak on the subject of ethics and professionalism. We'd love to see you all there.

As we look back on the past year, it is clear that the purpose of this Association is not limited to providing

opportunities for networking or continuing education, although those things are undoubtedly valuable. The purpose of our organization extends further. It involves us doing our part to improve the local legal community. The better educated and informed we are as paralegals, the better we will be able to assist the attorneys we work with and the clients we have the privilege to serve. As we bring increasing value to a firm, we can also advocate for better compensation, more opportunities for professional and personal growth, a healthier work/life balance and ultimately foster more mutually beneficial relationships with the firms we work with.

Our continued improvement and professionalism also enable us to serve our community better. As paralegals, we often have the opportunity to be the first line of communication with clients at unique periods in their life. Whether we are involved with momentous events like a long-awaited adoption, helping an eager entrepreneur bring her idea to fruition, or working with clients going through some of the worst times of their life - recovering from an accident, or dealing with a death or divorce - we have the privilege to make a meaningful impact on someone's life. Being the best we can be at our

profession can have a positive effect on many others in our community, which is really at the heart of this Association.

In order to move forward effectively, we need your feedback. We'd like to know what topics you'd like to explore at our continuing education events, and what days, times and locations are most convenient for you. For instance - would you prefer to see some of our education events at lunch via Zoom in the coming years? Do you know of a great location for our 2025 seminar? Do you have ideas for a networking event? If you see a charitable need in the community that we can fill, please tell us. We also want to know if you hear of paralegal positions opening in Volusia County so we can inform our other members. Please reach out to me so we can make sure that the time you allocate in connection to this Association is as beneficial as possible for all.

With appreciation,

Heather Bragg
Vice President

VCPA Events

<https://volusiacountyparalegal.com/event-timeline/>

Member Meeting – January @ 6 p.m. located at Houligan's, Daytona Beach – Installing the new board members and Ethics and Professionalism by Judge Blackburn

Volusia County Bar Association Upcoming Events

<https://www.volusiabar.org/>

Bench & Barbeque – April 17 @ 6 p.m. in the Brannon Center, New Smyrna Beach – An Annual Event Celebrating the Volusia County Legal Community and the VCBA's 50 year members

Farewell from Your Outgoing Board Members

Taylor Apking as the outgoing treasurer

Hello VCPA Members! What a wonderful 2024 we had! I have loved getting to know you all and working with the other board members over the past year. I hope you all have enjoyed our meetings, socials and seminars as much as we have! I encourage you all to get involved and gain the most you can out of our group, I know our amazing team of board members can always use a helping hand.

As we step into 2025, I know Kimberly will do an amazing job as Treasurer and I look forward to seeing you all at the meetings, when I can. I am preparing to welcome my first child next month and will begin the new, fun journey of motherhood!

It has been an honor serving as Treasurer for our great association for our inaugural year. I wish you all the best year ever and I will see you around!

Jessica Rodriguez as the outgoing secretary

It was a great experience to be able to be a part of the creation of the Volusia County Paralegal Association. It has been a pleasure working with all the board members this past year. I am thankful for the opportunities I had with the association. The member meetings were very inciteful and the Seminar this year was a great experience in teamwork. It has been my pleasure to serve at the Secretary for the association. I wish you all good luck in the upcoming years and will see you at the meetings.

Mental Health and Wellness for Paralegals

By Dawn Burger

OFTEN we hear about the importance of attorney mental health and well-being. It seems that the mental health and well-being of Paralegals is overlooked, possibly even overshadowed by this importance.

Prior to receiving my FRP designation, I viewed many videos and listened to various podcasts to reach the CLE requirements prior to applying. These included topics such as neurodiversity, increasing well-being, tips for mood elevation and mental health services, all geared towards attorney mental health. Don't get me wrong, I am not downplaying the importance of attorney mental health in any way. A close family member was an attorney in a large metropolitan area, and I saw first-hand the impact of the profession's stress. Unfortunately job stress played a role, in addition to other health issues, which resulted in a fatal heart attack.

Mental health and wellbeing are important for Paralegals as well. Paralegals,

as a legal professional working under the supervision of a lawyer(s), are often under a tremendous amount of stress at their places of employment. Typically, Paralegals are often juggling a multitude of tasks and projects, and in the midst of working on those tasks and projects, asked to do various other assignments, all at the same time. This can lead to mental stress and resultant negative health effects, and reduced work performance.

There are resources available to people in general for mental health and wellness, however, the topic is not discussed often enough in continuing legal education for Paralegals. I would like to see this topic brought to the forefront and get more individuals involved with the journey of bringing awareness to the legal profession. I believe this is essential in preventing Paralegal burnout and negative mental health effects. This could be achieved by collaboration, Paralegal-specific CLE courses and/or podcasts.

According to the Florida Registered Paralegal Program information on The Florida Bar website, Member benefits available to members of The Florida Bar are also available to Florida Registered Paralegals. It does not specifically list that mental health resources are available to FRPs; however, it is recommended that any individual seeking help or mental health resources check with The Florida Bar at:

<https://www.floridabar.org/member/healthandwellnesscenter>

NALA Liaison Update

By Debbie Tindell

On December 10, VCPA President, Kathy Reimann, and I attended NALA's Affiliated Associations (AA) Town Hall virtually. The Town Hall celebrated NALA's 66 affiliates, reflected on 2024's achievements, and shared what is coming up in 2025. It was my first participation with NALA as VCPA's NALA Liaison Elect for 2025, and "Wow!", I learned a lot about the organization and what they offer in support of their affiliates. Most helpful to me as a new Liaison, was the facilitators providing log in information for the website during the meeting and demonstrated how to access resources, e.g. "NALA Liaison Guidebook". Included in the guide is a list of Important Dates to Remember (see attached). This should be an action-



packed year of learning and sharing information with affiliates nation-wide and looks like I am heading to NJ in July for the NALA Conference and Expo!

Upcoming CLE Credits offered by NALA & Other NALA Affiliated Associations

[https://nala.org/education/
national-affiliate-cle-sessions-events/](https://nala.org/education/national-affiliate-cle-sessions-events/)

January 22 – Tiktok, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram,
and More: The Complete Internet Evidence Guide for
Paralegals - Virtual – 6 Substantive CLE hours

January 23 - The Intellectual Property Paralegal
Virtual – 3 Substantive CLE hours

January 24 – GIS and Mapping Insights for
Paralegals - Virtual – 1 Substantive CLE hour

January 28 – How to Collect Evidence From Smartphones,
Smartwatches, and Other Smart Devices – Virtual
3 Substantive CLE Hours

January 28 – Professional Corporations and LLC's
What They Are and How to Navigate Them
Virtual – 1 Substantive CLE hour

January 28 – Using Skilled Interpreters
Virtual - 1 Substantive CLE hour

January 29 - Family Law Case Management for
Paralegals - Virtual – 2 Substantive /1 Legal Ethics
/ 3 Non-Sub CLE hours

January 30 – Paralegals' Guide to Wills and Trusts
Virtual – 3 Substantive CLE hours

January 31 – Client Intake and Management
Tool Kit for Paralegals – Virtual 1 Substantive

February 7 and 8 - 2025 AAPi CP Review Workshop
Virtual - 8.75 Substantive /1 Legal Ethics CLE hours

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Smith Bigman Brock is known for our strengths in family law and criminal law, complex transactions and business litigation, commercial real estate and HOA law, as well as a formidable concentration in insurance defense. Clients rely on our cohesive, efficient team for responsive and knowledgeable counsel. Our commitment to excellence guides our approach in everything we do, pursuing favorable results while upholding the highest professional standards.

Our story begins with the credentials and accomplishments of our attorneys. Our named partners are board-certified specialists in one or more key areas of practice. Horace Smith, Jr., Jeffrey Bigman, and Jeffrey Brock are widely known for both their legal acumen and community contributions. They embody the professionalism, ethical standards, and character required to earn this distinction.

Smith Bigman Brock Fosters the same pursuit of excellence and integrity by every member of our team. Another partner, Frank Ganz, became board certified in condominium and planned development (HOA) law in 2021. Siblings Hunter Blaze Morrill and Ruddledge "Ruddy" Smith are associates following in their father's established footsteps. Call us, or visit our website, to receive additional information about our firm.

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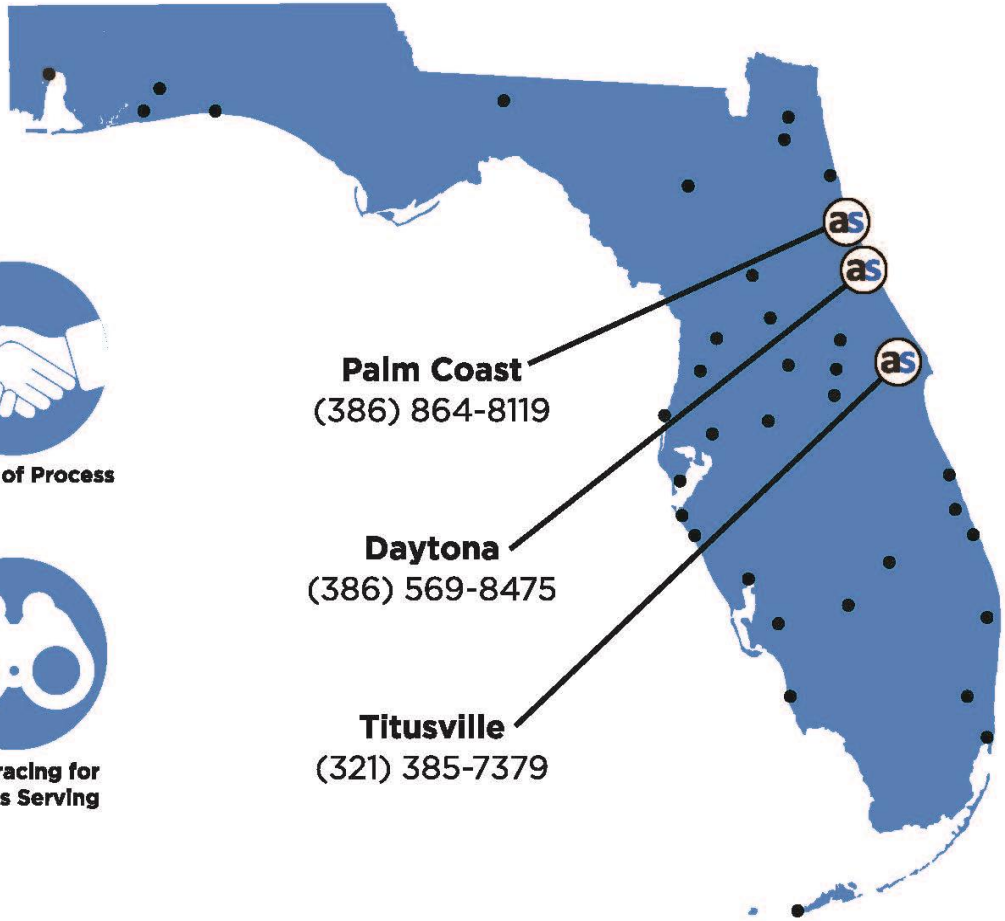
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Interested in Becoming a Sponsor?

Dear Sponsor, We have been working diligently to establish a new paralegal association in Volusia. Our Association is being established to promote the paralegal profession through student and professional scholarships, offering educational opportunities to enhance the professional growth of paralegals and providing a network for not only advanced-level professionals, but students just entering the career field. Our Association will also be very involved in supporting our community. We are asking for your help with this startup effort by becoming a sponsor for an upcoming Association. To that end, we have developed a list of opportunities and benefits for your information and consideration. We thank you for your consideration as your sponsorship is important in helping to ensure the success of our events and the continuing efforts of our Association.

Advertising Opportunities \$200.00 for large block advertisement on the Association's website for one (1) year and Recognition on our Association's Facebook Page \$100.00 for small block advertisement on the Association's website for one (1) year and Recognition on our Association's Facebook Page \$50.00 for advertisement and recognition on our Association's Facebook page If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call or e-mail. Thank you for your support!

Heather Bragg
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Curious About Contributing?

We hope you found this issue of the Paralegal Wave engaging. We welcome your feedback and contributions! If you have authored an article that has been published elsewhere and would like to feature it in our newsletter, or if your attorney has written articles they wish to share with our community, please let us know. Additionally, if you are interested in contributing an article to our newsletter, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Feel free to email us at volusiaparalegals@gmail.com with any feedback or interest.