



Utilizing Paralegal Skills in Community Service

by Cheryl Jeffs and Laura Summers

The Paralegal Division of the Utah State Bar recognizes the value of community service and pro bono activities for paralegals.

Pro bono, short for *pro bono publico*, translates to “for the public good.” Generally, pro bono means lawyers, law students, and paralegals (under the direct supervision of an attorney) volunteer their time and resources, at no cost, to clients who could not otherwise afford legal counsel. In some cases, lawyers, law students, and paralegals assist organizations involved in social causes.

The Paralegal Division participates in varied non-representational pro bono activities. Non-representational is defined as “civic, educational, and community activities that improve the law, the legal system, or the legal profession.”

Paralegals may also assist in legal representation for governmental entities or under-represented individuals, groups, or causes but only under the direct supervision of a licensed attorney.

Examples of how utilization of paralegal skills in community service applies to representational pro bono work include:

- Assisting a licensed attorney with direct representation or assisting an attorney who works for a civic, charitable, governmental, educational, or other public-service organization with limited income;

- Assisting a licensed attorney with direct representation for low-income clients through a legal aid office, clinic, or pro bono program;
- Assisting a licensed attorney with direct representation for a group or organization seeking to secure or protect civil rights, civil liberties, or public rights; or
- Assisting a licensed attorney with direct representation for an indigent client where the attorney intentionally opts not to charge before providing legal services.

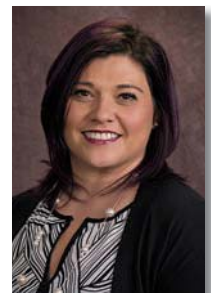
Examples of how utilization of paralegal skills in community service applies to non-representational pro bono:

- Volunteering for law-related work for a federal, state, or local government, including government agencies, courts, and judges but not including law enforcement work;
- Volunteering to participate in the administrative rulemaking process or to assist with legislative lobbying activities for governmental organizations or organizations seeking to secure or protect civil rights, civil liberties, or public rights;
- Volunteering for “know your rights” hotlines and volunteering for activities designed to preserve civil and legal rights;

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- Volunteering as a coach or judge of an off-campus mock trial team;
- Volunteering as a mediator; or,
- Volunteering to assist court staff or organizations to assist court users.

More specifically, the Paralegal Division of the Utah State Bar assists in the following local community service projects:

Wills for Heroes (WFH)

Wills for Heroes is a national program helping provide to first responders (police, fire, and military) essential legal documents, which includes wills, advance health care directives, and powers of attorney. The idea of “protecting those who protect us” is what makes the Wills for Heroes program such a rewarding experience. In conjunction with the Young Lawyers Division, the Paralegal Division provides paralegal support for these events, such as notaries and witnesses needed to complete these crucial estate



planning documents.

Wills for Heroes events take place up and down the Wasatch Front and in other locales across the state. The events are staffed solely by volunteer attorneys and paralegals, who welcome the opportunity to provide this much-needed service to the members of our community.

Wills for Heroes events take place at least four times each calendar year and are very well-received. It is such a great pleasure to meet and get to know the first responders who make it their mission to protect and serve our community. The Paralegal Division is honored to be a part of this worthy cause.

Serving our Seniors (SOS)

In a similar fashion, Serving our Seniors is aimed at providing senior citizens important estate planning documents. Serving our Seniors helps to provide advance health care directives and powers of attorney. This event is generally marketed to the community population over the age of fifty-five and held twice a year at the Utah State Bar. The Paralegal Division staffs this event with paralegal volunteers providing notarial and witness services.

Utah State Bar Fall Forum 2016

by Greg Wayment

I was fortunate this year to be able to attend the Utah State Bar’s Fall Forum, which took place on November 17 and 18 at the Little America. The Division is pleased to report that a handful of a Paralegals were able to attend. There were several excellent keynote speakers including (among others) Erin Brokovich, Professor Daniel Medwed, and our own Governor Gary Herbert.

I was able to attend all nine hours of the “Trial Academy: The Art of Persuasion.” The Trial Academy featured a rotating panel of judges and attorneys sharing ideas, stories, and tips on topics ranging from developing the case narrative, finding compelling experts, dealing with damages, and use of technology and demonstratives.

The Paralegal Division wants to extend a thank you to the Bar and the Fall Forum Committee for making the Forum available to members of the Paralegal Division at a reduced price. We continue to strongly urge all members of the Paralegal Division to support the Bar by attending as many Bar functions as possible.

NEW BAR POLICY: BEFORE ATTENDING A SEMINAR/LUNCH YOUR REGISTRATION MUST BE PAID.

SEMINAR LOCATION: Utah Law & Justice Center, unless otherwise indicated. All content is subject to change.

January 10, 2017 | 4:00–6:00 pm **2 hrs. CLE**

Litigation 101: Dealing the Experts. \$25 for YLD members, \$50 for others.

January 11, 2017 | 11:00 am **1 hr. Self-Study CLE**

WEBINAR: Discover Hidden and Undocumented Google Search Secrets. \$51.

January 13, 2017 | 11:00 am **1 hr. Self-Study CLE**

WEBINAR: Advanced Google Search for Lawyers. \$51.

January 18, 2017 | 11:00 am **1 hr. Self-Study CLE**

WEBINAR: Cybersleuth Investigative Series – Using Free Public Records and Publicly Available Information for Investigative Research. \$51.

January 20, 2017 | 11:00 am **1 hr. Self-Study CLE**

WEBINAR: Cybersleuth Investigative Series – Investigative Due Diligence on a Budget. \$51.

January 25, 2017 | 11:00 am **1 hr. Self-Study CLE**

WEBINAR: Social Media as Investigative Research and Evidence. \$51.

January 26, 2017 | 11:00 am **1 hr. Self-Study Ethics**

WEBINAR: The Ethics of Social Media Research. \$51.

February 15, 2017 | 4:00–6:00 pm **2 hrs. CLE**

Litigation 101: Opening Statements & Closing Arguments. \$25 for YLD members, \$50 for others.

February 24, 2017 **7 hrs. CLE + 1 hr. Ethics**

I.P. Summit. Sheraton Hotel, \$340 for non-I.P. Section members, \$330 for I.P. Section members, \$175 for paralegals and Patent Agents. The full agenda is online



March 9–11, 2017

2017 Spring Convention in St. George, Utah. Save these dates! Co-Chairs: Hon. Michael F. Leavitt and Melinda Bowen. Accommodation information can be found on pages 48 and 49 of this issue of the *Utah Bar Journal*. Watch for the agenda and registration information in the Jan/Feb 2017 issue of the *Journal*.

March 15, 2017 **5 hrs. Ethics + 1 hr. Prof./Civ.**

OPC Ethics School: What They Didn't Teach You in Law School. \$245 on or before March 3, \$270 after March 3.

March 29, 2017 | 4:00–6:00 pm **2 hrs. CLE**

Litigation 101: Ethics. \$25 for YLD members, \$50 for others.

July 26–29, 2017

2017 Summer Convention in Sun Valley, Idaho. Save these dates and plan to attend!

Co-Chairs: Hon. Robert J. Shelby and Amy Sorenson.

