



PARASIGHT

AUGUST 2025

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President's Message *Reflection and Legal Landscape*

**By: Amanda Bentley
NCCP**

As we move through the heart of summer, I want to take a moment to reflect on some pressing and transformative topics currently shaping our legal landscape and how it continues to influence and inspire our work as legal professionals.

Our Association

We are proud to share that our association continues to grow, now reaching **35 members** strong this year! A heartfelt thank-you goes to **Laurie Hayden** for her tireless efforts to reach paralegals across North Carolina—your dedication does not go unnoticed. I'd also like to recognize **Elizabeth Vance** for stepping into a new role on the **Publicity Committee**, and **Shayla Hewett** and **Grayson Brown** for joining the **Social Media Committee**—welcome and thank you for your leadership!

Earlier this year, we participated in the **NCAJ High School Mock Trial** regional competition, moderated by attorney **Jason Taylor**, who shared: "Thank you for the incredible effort you all made to make

this year's mock trial competition come to fruition. You had a huge positive impact on these kids' lives and made our profession shine brightly in our community... I will remain grateful and mock trial will need you again next year." Witnessing the students' command of case law, preparation of witnesses, and courtroom presence was truly inspiring. It gave me tremendous hope for the future of our legal community. To all who volunteered, thank you.

Western NC

Our neighbors to the west continue to recover from the aftermath of Hurricane Helene which hit in September 2024. There were pockets of disaster and also pockets that you wouldn't even know a storm came through. Currently, most areas are open, music is playing, and our neighbors want to encourage us to visit. However, there are also pockets deep in those mountains that are still recovering and some that are possibly gone forever. As we enjoy our summer, I encourage us all to continue supporting these areas however we can, whether through donations, volunteer work, or simply by visiting

and boosting local economies.

Odyssey

Whatever area of practice you are working in, you will be jumping on the Odyssey/Enterprise bandwagon. I know some of you are already familiar with this case management system. Already active in 87 counties, the remaining counties will be going live very soon. As with any change, there will be some growing pains as the NC judicial system moves through this new technology. Please remember to give yourself some grace, as well as the Clerk's staff, as you deal with this new system.

Legal Tech & AI in Practice

Artificial intelligence and legal automation tools are becoming more prevalent in North Carolina law firms and corporate legal departments. Our Lexis-Nexis software even has an A-I platform built in for the sole purpose of law practice. From document automation to smart research, technology is streamlining how we support our attorneys and clients.

But with this advancement comes responsibility. As paralegals, we must stay current with these tools while

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT - CARRIE REGAN

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Q: Where is your hometown? If not in North Carolina, what brought you here?

A: I am originally from a one-stoplight town outside of Lynchburg, VA. I went to Lenoir-Rhyne for college and have been a Hickory resident for 25 years.

Q: What prompted you to choose a paralegal career?

A: I wanted to pursue a career in the legal field, and at the time, life's circumstances allowed me to obtain the necessary education. So, I went for it!

Q: Do you have a college degree or paralegal certification?

A: I have a Bachelor's degree from LR, MBA from Appalachian State University, and my paralegal degree from Caldwell CC&TI. I am a certified paralegal.

Q: What experiences or skills have your current or previous legal positions given you?

A: There's never a dull moment and I like being able to check things off a list. Prior positions were also project based, but the lead time to completion was very long. Then, after waiting, there were a lot of disappointments (ex: didn't get the project).

Q: What do you like most about your job?

A: I love that I get to embrace my detailed-oriented nature and that people appreciate that.

Q: What do you like least about your job?

A: Anything related to environmental compliance.



**Carrie Regan
NCCP**

Q: How has your membership in the CVPA benefited you?

A: I've enjoyed attending the meetings when I can and learning from each other. We are all in the game together and anytime one person can share wisdom gained only benefits the whole.

Q: What has been the highlight of your career?

A: My company completed a very difficult and cumbersome acquisition in 2018, but I loved being in the thick of it and learning so much from our team of attorneys. The entire team celebrated together on the closing date.

Q: If someone contemplating a paralegal career asked you for career advice, what would you say?

A: Go for it, especially if you have an interest in law and working in a collaborative environment!

Q: What tips do you have on how a paralegal can keep his/her career interesting?

A: Continuing education about a variety of topics, not just the ones you work in everyday.

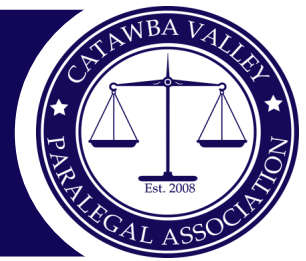
Q: Is there a quote or song that inspires you?

A: Isaiah 41:10

Q: What is your favorite movie and why?

A: My all-time favorite movie is The King & I. I grew up loving musicals and used to watch that over and over. To this day, I love it!

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Will Generative AI Replace Paralegals?

**By: Matthew Lisk
NCCP**

It is no secret that we are amid a Generative AI craze. Ever since last year, we have seen a massive influx of AI based startup companies, AI created images and essays, and other complex tasks being conducted by computers at the command of a small text prompt. ChatGPT, one of the earliest and most famous examples, was quickly used by students to write essays on their behalf. It goes without saying that writing letters and filling out legal documents are also some of the main responsibilities of a paralegal, in addition to research. Tools like ChatGPT can access the wider internet for research in addition to writing out letters and documents. For many, it

may seem that the role of a human paralegal is doomed.

However, despite all the craze, AI is not really that great at most legal tasks. For instance, when ChatGPT was finally used by an actual lawyer for legal research in the case *Mata v. Avianca, Inc*, 2023, the tool produced several documents of fake case law (Maruf, 2023), which the New York based attorney Steven Schwartz then cited in an Affirmation in Opposition (Hinshaw, 2023). It was submitted in response to a motion by the defense to dismiss the case (Hinshaw, 2023) since the two-year Statute of Limitations to bring such a suit had expired (Stone, 2023). The problem arose when the cases were reviewed by the defense and the

court and they both found that at least six of the cases cited looked to be fake (Moran, 2023), and the few real cases that were cited did not contain the rulings they were cited for (Stone, 2023). As it turns out, the rulings were fake and ChatGPT suffered a “hallucination” as it is called in the industry (Moran, 2023), where the chatbot just makes things up (Moran, 2023) (Stone, 2023). Since Affirmations are filed under penalty of perjury if any claim within the documents is found to be inaccurate, Schwartz and his partner were sanctioned by the court for their misconduct (Russell, 2023).

In this situation, ChatGPT produced a few pages of completely fake rulings (Stone, 2023). Nothing within the rulings was real (Stone, 2023), and had Schwartz used a paralegal to conduct research as opposed to the chatbot, he would not have been sanctioned by a federal court as the paralegal would have done actual research and would have told him that there is no legal leg to stand on in this case.

Despite what it may seem, the role of the paralegal is not being reduced to an attorney writing in instructions into a textbox any time soon, however, not all forms of AI are useless in the paralegal profession either. Specialized AI bots are already helping automate the discovery process, such as reviewing discovery documents, pointing out patterns and automating many repetitive tasks (Black, 2024). These are specially designed bots that automate the busy work, allowing for more strategic decisions to be made (Black, 2024). All in all, these tools will make a paralegal’s job easier while not outright replacing them.

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COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

News

**By: Kyle Phipps
NCCP**

Nestled in the heart of Hudson, North Carolina, Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute (CCC&TI) is shaping futures through its dynamic Paralegal Technology Program, led by the passionate and dedicated Angie Bedford.

Bedford, the program's new director, has long been a champion of second chances and educational empowerment. "Our mission is not just to teach legal skills but to cultivate confidence and inspire personal growth," she says.

"I understand the importance of education, having been an adult who returned to college later in life," she iterates. "It was the best decision I ever made for myself and for my family. Although I continued to work for a law firm after obtaining my degree, the work experience I gathered and the education I was provided, opened the pathway for me to be able to accept the position of Director at this outstanding institution. I am hoping to implement real world situations into the classroom and more effectively train graduates of the Paralegal Technology Program for their entry into the work force."

The Paralegal Technology Program offers students comprehensive training in legal procedures, research, and ethics.

However, what sets CCC&TI apart is the community it fosters. Students are not just learning; they are rebuilding, transforming, and paving new paths for themselves and their families. They are increasing their knowledge base as they also increase their earning potential.

Bedford believes the key to the program's success lies in its personalized approach. "We meet students where they are," she explains. "Every challenge is an opportunity for growth, and every success, no matter how small, is celebrated."

The impact of the program extends far beyond the classroom. Graduates emerge not only as skilled paralegals but as empowered individuals ready to

contribute meaningfully to society. "These students are more than their past mistakes," Bedford emphasizes. "They are tomorrow's legal professionals, advocates, and changemakers."

As CCC&TI continues to pave the way for aspiring paralegals, it stands as a beacon of hope and transformation. Under Bedford's leadership, the program is more than an academic pursuit – it is a testament to the power of education, compassion, and second chances.

For more information on the Paralegal Technology Program, visit CCC&TI's website or contact Angie Bedford directly at abedford@ccci.edu.

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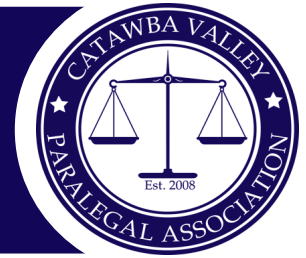
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Angie Bedford

"Our mission is not just to teach legal skills but to cultivate confidence and inspire personal growth,"



NEWS FROM AROUND

SAY GOODBYE TO BOI REPORTING (for most entities anyway!)

On March 26, 2025, the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) adopted an interim final rule to narrow the existing beneficial ownership information (BOI) reporting requirements under the Corporate Transparency Act. Domestic reporting companies are now exempt from the reporting requirement and do not have to file an initial BOI report or update any previously filed reports with FinCEN. Under the interim final rule, only entities previously defined as “foreign reporting companies” (companies that were formed in a foreign country and have filed a qualification document with a Secretary of State’s office in the United States) are required to file a BOI Report with FinCEN. However, if a foreign reporting company has U.S. persons who are beneficial owners, those U.S. persons do not have to be included on the BOI report.

FinCEN accepted comments on the interim final rule up through May 27, 2025 and intends to finalize the rule sometime in 2025.

ARIZONA

Originally called a Limited License Legal Practitioner (“LLLP”), Legal Paraprofessionals (“LP”) became eligible for licensure on December 31, 2024 in the areas of Family Law, Administrative Law, Limited Jurisdiction Civil Law, Criminal Law, and Juvenile Dependency Law. Licensed LPs are affiliate members of the State Bar. To become an LP one must have a specific combination of education and/or experience and must pass an exam in each area of law in which they intend to practice.

Legal Paraprofessionals are licensed to draft, sign and file legal documents; provide advice, opinions, or recommendations about possible legal rights; arrange for service of legal documents; appear before a court or tribunal; and negotiate legal rights or responsibilities.

COLORADO

Sixty-two people passed a six-hour exam on April 30, 2024 to become Colorado’s first licensed legal paraprofessionals (“LLP”), with the first three LLPs being sworn in on June 20, 2024 by the Colorado Supreme Court’s Office of Attorney Regulation. The new legal license allows LLP’s to provide limited legal representation in some divorce and child custody cases.

The Colorado Supreme Court approved the new program in 2023 with the goal of reducing the number of people who go through family law cases entirely without legal representation. LLP’s can draft, sign and file court documents without an attorney’s oversight, represent clients in mediation, give legal advice, appear in court with their clients and answer a judge’s factual questions. They cannot examine witnesses.

The long-term goal is to have enough LLPs so that all individuals who go through Colorado’s family court unrepresented can obtain assistance with their case. Currently, there are only enough LLP’s in Colorado to assist 25% of the individuals who are not represented by an attorney.

MINNESOTA

Minnesota’s Legal Professional Program formally went into effect on January 1, 2025. It had been a pilot program since 2019. The program is intended to increase access to legal representation in case types where parties typically self-represent. The program permits legal paraprofessionals, under the supervision of a Minnesota licensed attorney, to provide legal advice in certain legal matters and, in some cases, represent a client in court. There is no licensure requirement at this time, but there are specific education and work experience requirements.

Legal paraprofessionals are allowed to handle certain cases under the supervision of a licensed attorney, including family law matters like child support modifications and parenting time disputes, as well as landlord-tenant disputes and certain housing court cases. They can also provide advice and representation in family law cases that involve allegations of domestic abuse or child abuse, and provide advice and representation for petitioners in protection and harassment restraining order cases.

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STOKES COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Courthouse History

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**By: Grayson Brown
NCCP**

A Historical and Cultural Landmark in North Carolina Nestled in the heart of Stokes County, North Carolina, the Stokes County Courthouse located in Danbury North Carolina stands as a testament to the county's rich history and the evolution of its legal and civic landscape. Located in the county seat of Danbury, the courthouse has

witnessed centuries of legal proceedings, political shifts, and community developments. Stokes County, named after the American Revolutionary War hero John Stokes, was a captain who was severely wounded when British Colonel Banastre Tarleton's cavalry practically destroyed Col.

Abraham Buford's Virginia regiment in the Waxhaws region in 1780. The town of Danbury was founded in 1851 specifically to serve as the new centrally located county seat after Stokes County was divided in 1849, creating Forsyth County to the south and a smaller Stokes County from Surry County. Danbury was briefly known as Crawford. During its early years, the county was an agricultural center, with tobacco farming playing a significant role in the economy. Its proximity to both the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Piedmont made it a prime location for settlement and trade. Located on the courthouse grounds are memorials to the war veterans of Stokes County. Today, the building houses the Stokes County Board of Education.

The Stokes County Courthouse, though not one of the oldest courthouses in North Carolina,

holds a unique place in the state's history. Over the years, it has undergone several renovations and changes, reflecting the county's growth and the changing nature of the justice system. The original Stokes County Courthouse building, constructed in 1904, is an example of Neoclassical Revival architecture. This architectural style was popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It was listed on the

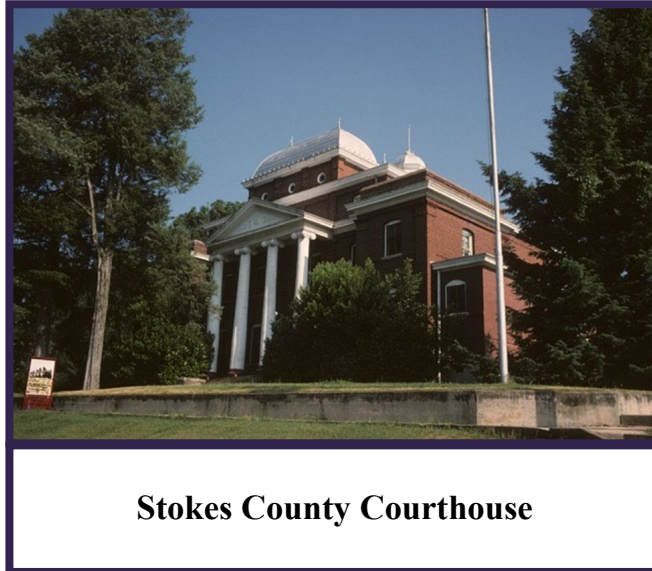
National Register of Historic Places in 1979.

The courthouse was not only a functional building but also an aesthetic landmark in Danbury and has become a part of the Danbury community's identity.

During the early 1900's when Danbury was starting to take off with developmental growth, a devastating

fire broke out on the evening of February 8, 1925, destroying six frame structures including damage to the courthouse. While the courthouse itself was never destroyed, the fire led to the loss of many important historical records. Local legend suggests that the fire may have been intentionally set, though no one ever discovered the truth.

Today, residents of Stokes County use the newer courthouse that was built in 1981-1982 as the replacement to the original. The original Stokes County Courthouse serves as a physical reminder of its past life as the hub of civic life in Stokes County, connecting the past with the present. Whether through its past legal proceedings or cherished memories, the Stokes County Courthouse remains a cornerstone of Danbury's identity and history.



Stokes County Courthouse



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (continued)

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safeguarding the ethical standards that guide our profession. Our ability to adapt is critical. We must remain at the forefront, embracing innovation while advocating for clear ethical guidelines and ongoing training to maintain the integrity of our work.

Opioid Overdose Crisis

The opioid crisis is not just a public health crisis, but it's a local and personal one for many of our communities. This crisis continues to deeply affect our communities, intersecting with mental health in complex ways.

Dr. Nabarun Dasgupta, a leading researcher from UNC, has been instrumental in guiding state and national policies focused on harm reduction and evidence-based treatments. His research has been instrumental in shaping state and national policies related to drug use and harm reduction. In November 2024 the US Attorney's office announced that \$6.8 Million in federal grants had been awarded to 6 counties in the Western District of NC to support local treatment programs.

Catawba Valley Healthcare continues its important Mobile Crisis service, which has served Catawba and Burke Counties since 2006. Those clinicians can respond to mental health issues, brain illnesses as well as substance use crisis. They also have an intervention program for children and young adults ages 5 to 21 called MORES, both can be reached at 828-695-2511. Mobile crisis management consists of assessment, intervention and prevention. This program is committed to keeping individuals in the least restrictive environments needed to ensure the safety of the individual and their surrounding community.

Workplace Culture, DEI & Wellbeing

We are also seeing a much-needed shift in how law offices approach mental health, inclusion, and workplace culture. The CVPA is committed to fostering environments where every paralegal—regardless of background—feels supported, seen and valued. This means advocating for diversity in leadership, equitable pay, and real work-life balance. The legal profession can be demanding with high-

pressure, but by fostering supportive, diverse, and respectful environments, we not only improve our own lives but also better serve clients, our attorneys and communities.

There's much more happening in our world, but I want to pause here to say this: **I am proud** of the resilience, professionalism, and dedication paralegals bring to their roles each and every day. **Your work matters—now more than ever.**

Thank you for your continued dedication to our profession and to one another. Please stay connected with us through our upcoming CPEs, local CVPA events, and annual meeting.

Let's keep learning, growing and leading. As always, I invite you to feel free to reach out with your ideas, questions, concerns or simply to connect. Our association is strongest when every voice is included.

**In your service,
Amanda Bentley
President, Catawba Valley
Paralegal Association**

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Member Spotlight (continued)

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Q: Do you attribute your success as a paralegal to a specific person or event?

A: I contribute my interest in law to my dad. He was a police officer, community diversions officer (the one who tracks a criminal's community service judgement), and a magistrate. So, I always heard about law matters in our house. I get to use that mindset along with my corporate experience and do a job I love.

Q: Other than being a paralegal, what would be your dream job?

The paralegal profession remains a promising legal path. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Outlook Handbook (updated in May 2024) there were approximately 366,200 paralegals in the United States in 2023 and that number is expected to grow up and through 2033, although the growth rate is only projected to be one percent between 2023 and 2023.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics shows the national median annual wage of a paralegal in 2024 as \$61,010 (\$29.33 per hour). Depending on the state, the average salary of a paralegal

A: Own a landscape nursery and play with plants all day.

Q: Are you currently reading a book? If so, what are the title and author? What do you like about the book?

A: I'm about to start reading "The Best Yes" by Lysa Terkeurst. I'm looking forward to some porch-sitting with this in hand before the chaos of kids in school begins.

Q: What nonlegal jobs have you had in your lifetime?

A: My high school job was at Dairy Queen, which was super fun. I still remember

a lot of the recipes! Shortly after graduating from LR, I was the Manager of Events at the Convention Center and that was equal parts exhausting and rewarding.

Q: What hobbies or activities do you enjoy doing?

A: I love yardwork and anytime I get the opportunity to dig in the dirt.

Q: What is your favorite vacation spot?

A: 100% the beach, especially when the ocean water is clear. I'd also love to go back to Vienna, Austria.

Paralegal Salary Statistics

can vary significantly as paralegal wages tend to follow the cost of living of a state or even a local area. For instance, paralegal salaries will be lower in states like Mississippi and Alabama, which have a low cost of living, and higher in California and New York, where the cost of living is much higher.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the 2024 annual mean wage for a North Carolina paralegal is \$56,810. According to Indeed.com, the five highest paying cities in North Carolina for paralegals are Charlotte, Durham, Raleigh, Winston-

Salem and Greensboro. Asheville comes in 6th place.

Below is a list of the top 10 highest-paying states (including the District of Columbia) for paralegals (annual mean wage is shown):

1. District of Columbia: \$94,290
2. California: \$79,210
3. New York: \$78,850
4. Washington: \$75,560
5. Massachusetts: \$74,710
6. Colorado: \$72,220
7. Delaware: \$71,360
8. Connecticut: \$71,140
9. New Jersey: \$70,380
10. Rhode Island: \$70,220



UPCOMING CPES

UPCOMING SEMINARS



August 12, 2025

Odyssey and Remote Electronic Notarization Act
Presented by Adam Hall, Esq.
Chicago Title Insurance Company

September 9, 2025

All about Trusts
Presented by Casey W. Pope
Patrick Harper & Dixon L.L.P.

November 11, 2025

Writing Tips for Drafting Emails, Correspondence and Legal Documents
Presented by Susan Janney, Esq.
Adjunct Faculty, Paralegal Technology Program
Western Piedmont Community College

Upcoming Events:

October 14, 2025
Annual Meeting

December 2025
Holiday Social

Recommended Reads:

???????

If you have read an interesting book recently, please share that information for the next ParaSight.

Book reviews also welcome!

Upcoming CPES

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CVPA ROSTER OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committee Roster

CPE

Laurie Hayden (Chair)
Patrick Harper & Dixon L.L.P.
lhayden@phd-law.com

Community Outreach

Amanda Bentley (Chair)
Catawba County Attorney's Office
abentley@catawbacountync.gov

Fundraising

Amanda Bentley (Chair)

Membership

Laurie Hayden (Chair)

Newsletter

Beverly Cook (Co-Chair)
Patrick Harper & Dixon L.L.P.
bcook@phd-law.com

Laurie Hayden (Co-Chair)

Grayson Brown
City of Winston-Salem
Wastewater Division
GRAY485@aol.com

Kyle Phipps
Caldwell Community College &
Technical Institute
kyleshipps@gmail.com

Publicity

Laurie Hayden (Chair)

Elizabeth Vance
Evans Family Law
evance878@gmail.com

Social Events

Heather Bailey (Chair)
Teddy, Meekins & Talbert, P.L.L.C.
hbmisenheimer@gmail.com

Social Media

Grayson Brown (Co-Chair)

Shayla Hewett (Co-Chair)
Law Office of Regina M. Taylor P.C.
Shayla_Hewett@yahoo.com

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