



President's Message

By Cenaida E. Guzman

Welcome all members, I hope your year has been a productive one. We are getting close to the end of the year and REAP has been busy and involved in several activities throughout the legal community. It's been another great year for the Redwood Empire Association of Paralegals.

- I want to thank this year's board members and committee members who have given their time to represent REAP at legal community events, assist in the planning of the seminars, attend board meetings and provide members with pertinent on-going information:
 - Nancy Clark, Vice-President
 - Miranda Mendoza, Secretary
 - Debra Winters, Treasurer
 - Shafiq Spanos, CAPA Primary
 - Tina Chancellor, CAPA Secondary
 - Deborah Cain, SCBA Liaison
- Ballots for next year's board members have been sent out to all members. Please get your votes in and join us at the general meeting scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on November 19, 2015 at Round Table Pizza on Guerneville Road. If you are interested in a position on the board, now is the time to inform the board so that you can be added to the ballot.
- REAP's Ethics Family Feud/Jeopardy seminar on September 28th was a huge success, and tons of

fun. I would like to thank our presenter for that seminar, Bill Adams, for again spending his time devoted to the teaching of the seminar. A special thank you goes out to REAP's Educational Committee, Grace De La Torre, Deborah Cain and Trudy McQuiddy, for their continued commitment and long hours spent planning and organizing this seminar. THANK YOU LADIES!

- Please visit our newly designed [website](#). REAP redesigned the site to add more resources and information for the paralegal community. Take a peek and let the board know of any suggestions you may have for the site.
- REAP's shining star "Paralegal of the Year" is Ana Rivas. Read all about [Ms. Rivas](#) and her many accomplishments and commitments in the legal community at the link above.
- REAP will be rewarding its Susan Perry Scholarships in November to students who have committed themselves to contributing and volunteering in our community. The entry deadline is November 2, 2015.

We are close to the end of the year and we have so much more to accomplish. We look forward to seeing you all at the general meeting to celebrate another great year and to share ideas for the new year.

Please reach out to our members for any of your paralegal needs. May your holidays be joyful and very productive. The best to you all.



Editor's Corner

Craigslist Paralegal Ads: It's a Jungle Out There

By Jeff DiCello, REAP Record Editor

One of my hobbies involves trolling the paralegal ads in the [legal services section](#) on Craigslist (yes, I am a nerd). And as the headline above suggests, what I have found isn't pretty.

Whether you're a current or former paralegal student at Empire College, SRJC, or like me, the former Sonoma State program, one thing these programs have in common is that they are sticklers for ensuring their students understand what paralegals can and cannot do.

But not everyone seems to have gotten the same education, or they simply choose to ignore what they were taught.

The most common red flag I see are ads from people who seem to be offering paralegal services directly to the public, which would seem to run counter to [Bus. & Prof. Code, § 6450\(b\)\(6\)](#), which states a paralegal shall not "[C]ontract with, or be employed by, a natural person other than an attorney to perform paralegal services."

One such ad I see every week is from a Bay Area paralegal who provides paralegal services to attorneys *and* non-attorneys alike. The ad contains this curious language:

"If you are not a California lawyer, you will be entering into a contract with my supervising attorney and my supervising attorney will set the rates that you are charged for my paralegal time....However, even though you are contracting with my supervising attorney, my supervising attorney has agreed not to charge you for his time spent supervising any paralegal work that I may do for you.

This wording seems like an attempt to comply section 6450, but it seeks to do so in a rather curious way – by having the paralegal act essentially as an agent, soliciting business for this unnamed attorney, who will purportedly supervise the paralegal's work (for free?). Can you imagine an ad by a nurse advertising medical services to the public which said that some unknown doctor would supervise the nurse's work? It's preposterous!

And for sheer zaniness and entertainment value, I am a particular fan of one ad that runs regularly and is headlined "Competent Ex-Con/Ex Paralegal Student/ Jailhouse Lawyer for hire." Talk about a multi-tasker!

Some of the ads border on poetry (or really bad haiku). Take, for example, the ad below, labeled "Need legal help assistance"?

"Need a lawsuit filed need appeal written, it's filed need to slam my former worthless attorney.

Starving law clerk. Retired attorney but not a used car salesman. Attorney at 350 an hour or a 50% off loser or any suck you dry...not going to pay your bar tab and kids schooling rate. reasonable thanks."

There are some LDA ads that comply with the letter of the B & P Code's requirements, which require a name, address, telephone number, county of registration and registration number/expiration date, among other things. So maybe there is some hope after all.



CLA/CP Exam

Empire College will be proctoring the CLA/CP exam in January 2016.

Exam dates and times will be posted on [NALA's website](#).



CAPA News

By Shafiq Spanos
REAP's Representative to CAPA

There is not much new to report on the CAPA front since the last REAP newsletter.

The next CAPA board meeting will be the first weekend in November in Riverside which will coincide with the biennial Leadership Conference. I will attend along with Tina Chancellor, our CAPA secondary rep.

New CAPA board officers will be elected under the old by-laws as we have not yet adopted the new bylaws.

According to Sara Lutz, VP of Admin for CAPA, there will be more discussion of the bylaws at the November board meeting. After the board accepts the revisions to the bylaws, they will be put to a vote by the general membership of CAPA, which includes all members of the 11 individual associations.

The board will prepare a ballot and it will be sent to all members. This is one of the few things upon which the individual members of the associations get to vote. More on this will be forthcoming as we move forward with the process.

There was a teleconference held in September but I was unable to attend, having a previous commitment made prior to the notice of the CAPA meeting. I have yet to see the minutes but in general the discussion was around next year's Education Conference, which will also be held in Riverside, and assigning duties and reviewing this year's conference for changes and improvements in the process. There was also a discussion of the bylaws on that call.



2015 Paralegal Salary Survey Results

By Renea Messer

Both paralegal compensation and the number of paralegal positions have continuously increased since 2011.

According to Paralegal Today's 23rd annual paralegal salary survey, salaries in the western and southern U.S. have increased by up to 10%.

The average salary for 2014 was \$66,013. Corporate, law firm and government paralegals all showed an increase in earnings compared to the previous year.

Job Growth

According to the survey results, 12.5% of government, and 22% of law firm and corporate respondents reported an increase in paralegal positions from 2014.

While 60-65% of respondents reported that the number positions stayed the same and 21% of the respondents reported a decrease in positions.

The western U.S. showed the greatest increase in job growth at 25.4%.

Salaries By Experience

Paralegals with 20 plus years' of experience had an average salary of \$70,762, the highest reported average earnings in the survey.

Paralegals with 16-20 years' of experience had an average salary of about \$57,000.

The reported earnings for paralegals with 13-15 years of experience, 10-12 years, 7-9 years, 4-6 years, and 1-3 years were, respectively, \$57,217; \$56,616; \$58,475; \$52,286; \$40,972.

See Salary Survey on next page

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Salary Survey

The reported average earnings for paralegals with less than 1 year of experience was \$38,688.

Largest Salaries

The average reported salary was \$59,773- a 2.5% increase from 2013. The highest reported salary in this survey was \$177,000.

Corporate paralegals earned the highest income, averaging between \$61,723 and \$77,882.

Paralegals in the environmental, intellectual property, real estate, commercial, civil rights practice areas reported the lowest average salary at \$22,776.

Raises and Bonuses

Corporate legal department paralegals reported an average raise of \$2,626.

Over 80% of the paralegal respondents at law firms reported that they had received a bonus from their employer (an average of \$4,273).

Corporate legal department paralegals reported an average bonus of \$5,140.

One survey respondent reported a bonus \$40,000!

Job Duties

Over 75% of respondents reported their positions focused on document management, while document drafting was a main duty of 73.5%.

Rounding out the list of typical duties, case management was reported by 62.3% of respondents, litigation support (58.9%) and administrative support (49.7%).

About the author: Renea Messer is a local freelance paralegal and a graduate of the paralegal program at Empire College.

Ethics Jeopardy

REAP hosted Ethics Jeopardy and Family Feud on September 28 at Finley Center. This was a novel twist on our annual ethics MCLE seminar modeled on the two classic game shows.

The host was attorney Bill Adams. The evening featured film clips containing legal themes as well as singing and dancing! The evening would not have been possible without the assistance of REAP members Cenaida Guzman, Deborah Cain, Trudy McQuiddy and Grace DeLaTorre.



Bill Adams, our host

Photos by Joseph Daniels



Good turnout!

MCLE Opportunities



Below are some upcoming (Sonoma County Bar Association) MCLE opportunities which may be of interest to our members:

- **Wednesday, November 4, 2015:** [Legislative Updates in Labor & Employment](#)
- **Friday, November 13, 2015:** [Comprehensive Family Law Practice Series, Part 1 of 3](#)
- **Friday, December 11, 2015:** [Staying Judgments on Appeal](#)
- **Wednesday, February 3, 2016:** [New Laws and Forms in the Civil Department for 2016](#)



Benchguides: A Valuable Tool for the Paralegal

If you're not familiar with Benchguides, you should be.

Benchguides are publications intended for judges are written for trial judges and provide an overview of the relevant law on the given topic.

But the thing is, the Benchguide does not whether it is being read by a judge, an attorney or a paralegal. And the knowledge they contain can be invaluable to paralegals and attorneys.

Below are links to selected Benchguides which may be of interest to our members.

Family Law

- [Benchguide 200 – Custody and Visitation](#)
- [Benchguide 201 – Child and Spousal Support](#)
- [Benchguide 202 - Property Characterization and Division](#)

Landlord-Tenant

- [Benchguide 31 – Landlord - Tenant Litigation: Unlawful Detainer](#)

Conservatorships

- [Benchguide 300 - Conservatorship: Appointment and Powers of Conservator](#)
- [Benchguide 301 – Conservatorship Proceedings](#)

Probate

- [Benchguide 302 – Probate Administration](#)

All of the above Benchguides are published by the Judicial Council of California.

Please note: Some of the guides linked above are not the most current versions because not all current versions are available online.

More current versions of the guides may be available at a law library.



New Laws for Fall

Just in time for fall, Gov. Brown signed recently signed several bills into law. Below is a brief summary of some of the more noteworthy ones:

Pay equity — [SB 358](#): Women must be paid the same as men for “substantially similar” work. Employers must justify pay discrepancies.



Guns on campus — [SB 707](#): Californians with concealed firearms permits will no longer be allowed to pack heat on public and private college campuses.



Marijuana rules — [AB 266](#), [AB 243](#) and [SB 643](#): This trio of bills puts bring some degree of uniformity to an industry beset by a hodgepodge of regulatory practices by implementing a medical marijuana licensing and regulation scheme addressing how medical marijuana is grown, transported and sold.



Motor voter — [AB 1461](#): Now you can automatically be registered to vote when you go to the DMV to obtain or renew your drivers' licenses.



Recording police — [SB411](#): Amends Penal Code to clarify existing law regarding an individuals' First Amendment right to record police officers by stating that a civilian, recording while an officer is in a public place, or the person recording is in a place he or she has the right to be, is not a violation of the law.



Additionally, recording does not constitute reasonable suspicion to detain a person, or probable cause to arrest.



Monthly Lunches

Each month, a few paralegals meet for lunch in the downtown Santa Rosa area. You do not have to be a REAP member to attend. These informal lunches are a great way to meet other members who work near you.

- **When:** Second Tuesday of each month
- **Time:** Noon to 1:00 PM. We are in and out in one hour so you can get back to work on time.
- **Where:** At a restaurant in the downtown Santa Rosa area. E-mail reminders with the location are sent to REAP members a few days before the event.
- **Cost:** There's no fixed cost; each member pays his/her own check and decides what to order and spend.

Membership Information

REAP has four categories of membership: voting, associate, student and sustaining.

1. Voting Member (dues: \$42.00 per year)

Voting members are defined as qualified paralegals by education or valid declaration.

2. Associate Member (dues: \$30.00 per year)

Associate members are defined as attorneys or paralegal educators.

3. Student Member (dues: \$20.00 per year)

Student members are defined as current paralegal students.

4. Sustaining (dues \$50.00 per year)

Sustaining members are defined as individuals, law firms and companies that endorse and promote the paralegal profession.

Membership Period

REAP's bylaws provide that the REAP membership period is from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31 of each year. First time (new) members joining between Sept. 1 and Dec. 31 retain their membership through Dec. 31 of the calendar year following sign-up.

Full Amt. Due

The full amount of dues must be paid when joining REAP, regardless of date of application. First time (new) members joining after Sept. 1 retain their membership until Dec. 31 of the year following sign up.

Due Date

Renewal memberships are due Jan. 1 and become delinquent on April 1, at which time membership is terminated. If past members reinstate after April 1, they are not treated as new members under this agreement.

Voting Eligibility

Only active members in good standing 45 days before the annual or special meeting shall have been called to order shall be qualified to vote at membership meetings or upon other matters coming to the members for action.

Who Cannot Vote

No active member who is delinquent in the payment of any dues or other assessments shall be qualified to vote. In no event shall student, sustaining or associate members vote.

To join REAP, go to [REAP membership](#) and download the application/renewal form.

About the REAP Record

The REAP Record is published each quarter, on January 15, April 15, July 15 and October 15.

If you are interested in writing for the REAP Record, contact editor, [Jeff DiCello](#).

Article topics may be assigned or you may come up with your own topic.

Persons who submit articles, information or materials to REAP, grant to REAP the right to publish, without compensation, the article, information or materials in REAP's newsletter, on its website and on its Facebook page.

Who's Who & What's What

REAP Board Members	
President	Cenaida E. Guzman
Vice President	Nancy Clark
Sonoma County Bar Liaison	Grace De La Torre, CP
Secretary	Miranda Mendoza
Treasurer	Debra Winters
CAPA Primary Representative	Shafiq Spanos
Special Projects Coordinator	Vacant
CAPA Secondary Representative	Tina Chancellor

REAP Mentors	
Probate Mentor	Janet Anderson
Family Law Mentor	Kim Davis, CP
Litigation/ Discovery Mentor	Rhetta Hinton
Computer Legal Research Mentor	Joni Boucher
Sonoma County Bar Liaison	Deborah Cain, CP
Criminal Law Mentor	Jeff DiCello

REAP Committee Members	
Education Chairs	Grace DeLaTorre, CP and Deborah Cain, CP
Marketing Chair	Monica Lehre, ACP
Empire Legal Students Association (ELSA) Liaison to REAP	Elea Sanders

Contact REAP	
By U.S. Mail: 	REAP 1007 West College Ave #138 Santa Rosa, CA 95401
By E-mail: 	info@redwoodparalegals.org (General inquiries)
 Facebook	Facebook
 Web	www.redwoodparalegals.org

Miscellaneous	
Newsletter Editor	Jeff DiCello
SRJC Paralegal Studies Program Education Adviser	Joni Boucher
Empire College Student and Education Adviser	Monica Lehre, ACP

[Join REAP](#)
 or
[Renew Your REAP Membership](#)

Membership Stats	
Voting Members	76
Student Members	11
Associate Members	1
Sustaining Members	0
Total	88

Treasurer's Report	
Debra Winters, Treasurer (as of October, 5, 2015)	
REAP Checking	\$5,172.89
REAP Savings	\$8,012.44
Total	\$13,185.33