

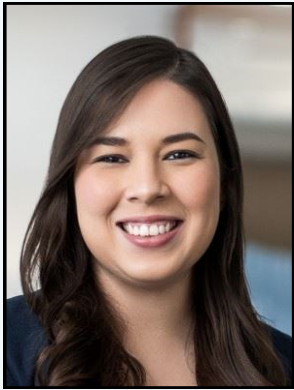


# THE BRIEF

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CAPITAL AREA  
PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

AUGUST 2023

## PRESIDENT MESSAGE



Helloooo August! The summer days are coming to an end and the heat keeps hanging around. It's been a cruel summer for sure. However, I'm one month into my term and we've had so much fun. Our Incoming/Outgoing Board meeting was held on July 8 where we began discussing all the fun events we will have this year. We had a couple of members join the meeting and they provided excellent suggestions the Board can use when making decisions. Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, August 10, and will be via Zoom. Feel free to join us!

We had our Meet the Board Happy Hour and Vendor Expo on August 1. It was great to meet some of you and network with our amazing Sustaining Members! We mingled and did a fun Q&A with the new Board members and raffled several door prizes. BIG thank you to The Legal Connection, Inc., Esquire Deposition Solutions, LLC, OpenText, Magna Legal Services, ImageNet Consulting, Easy Serve, Veritext Legal Solutions, GoSignify, Pro-lit Solutions, Texas Board of Legal Specialization, and RPC Consultants, L.P. for attending and handing out awesome swag and door prizes. Please be sure to check out their services! We have a Sustaining Member [directory](#) for your benefit!

We also had a volunteer sign-up sheet and are excited to get members into some fun committees. We're always in need of volunteers, so if you're interested in joining a committee, check out the list of committees [here](#), and email us at [board@capatx.org](mailto:board@capatx.org). CAPA will be hosting the Texas Alliance of Paralegal Associations (TAPA) event this year. It will be a big event that we will hold in conjunction with our Spring CLE so we are looking forward to planning and creating a fun time for everyone. The more hands, the merrier!

Big news: [Nominations are now open](#) for Paralegal of the Year. This award is open to all voting, associate, student, and emeritus members. Oh, and did I mention the award is \$500? So nominate a fellow paralegal friend or colleague for all the hard work they do!

Last but not least, we had a great July CLE presentation by John Boone regarding same-sex divorces and family cases. Our next CLE will be on August 30 at Chez Zee. Jon Heining with the Texas Legislative Council will be presenting on 88<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session Updates. I will be there and hope to see you there too!

In the meantime, I hope everyone stays cool and has a Happy August!

Kellie Balli  
CAPA President, 2023-2024

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# BOARD SPOTLIGHT

## SECRETARY, SHAMA HUSSAIN

I'm Shama Hussain and I am the paralegal for Riggs and Ray Law firm. We are a 2 lawyer civil administrative litigation law firm in Austin. We handle various civil cases including many appeals in District Courts, Courts of Appeals, Texas Supreme Court, and US courts. I earned my Paralegal Certificate at UT Law School where I joined CAPA as a student, and have continued getting more involved as a member. Last term I was Job Bank co-chair and now am your new secretary. I continue to help with Job Bank. I found the Job Bank to be a fun flexible way to volunteer with CAPA, and such a benefit both to CAPA members and those who are hiring. I found that many folks looking to hire paralegals come to CAPA first with job ads.



As Secretary one of the main functions is to attend events and meet everyone. Fun! If anyone has a question, feel free to ask. As you are reading this CAPA just had the Meet the Board event, and upcoming will have the Paralegal Day happy hour in October. These happy hours are free and a great way to meet folks and possibly win some cool prizes. Look forward to meeting you!

# COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT

## JOB BANK, HADEEL SAWEEDI

PARALEGALS:  
ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A CAREER MOVE?



### CHECK OUT CAPA'S JOB BANK

The CAPA Job Bank is an exclusive benefit for CAPA members to help them identify paralegal and legal assistant employment opportunities. There is no charge to the employer or to the CAPA member for this job listing service.

**Member Access.** The Job Bank listings page is in the "Members Only" area of our website. Access to and usage of this page and its contents are restricted to CAPA members only.

**When You Get the Job.** If you are hired for a job that was posted on CAPA's Job Bank, please let us know!

# UPCOMING EVENTS & BIRTHDAYS

Aug. 10 [August Board Meeting](#)

Aug. 30 [August CLE - 88th](#)

[Legislative Session Updates](#)

Sept. 7 [September Board Meeting](#)

Oct. 14 [October Board Meeting](#)

Oct. 23 Paralegal Day



## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Theresa Ann Alba  
Delonda Dean  
Gloria Elder  
Nikita Glass  
Laura Grove  
Amber Haney  
Monica Holdridge

Carmen Kyle  
Tammie Marrs  
Jennifer Rogers  
Anissa Torres  
Jessie Vargas  
Josh Wagner  
Benjamin Williams

Did we miss your birthday?  
[Log in and update your member profile](#), or let us know.

# CAPA MEET THE BOARD HAPPY HOUR & VENDOR EXPO





## 88TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATES

Join us to find out how legislation passed during the latest session affect your area of law !



TBLS ALL  
AREAS!  
NALA  
APPROVED!

Presented by: Jon Heining  
General Counsel - Texas Legislative Council

**Wednesday, August 30**

**CAPA Monthly Meeting and CLE Chez Zee  
Bistro 12-1 pm**

**\$40 members/\$45 guests**

**recording/water table options available**

Register today at  
[www.capatx.org](http://www.capatx.org)

# TEXAS JUDICIARY LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

88TH LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The Texas Judicial Council also recently released its Texas Judiciary Legislative Update which provides an overview of the laws passed that will bring significant change to the Texas Judiciary.

YOU CAN ACCESS THE UPDATE BY CLICKING HERE

# ANNOUNCEMENTS



## Thank you, John Boone

John Boone is an attorney at Maples Jones, PLLC and was our July CLE Presenter. John's presentation was about same sex divorces and custody cases. We enjoyed it! We hope to see you at our next CLE!

## Laura Grove

Laura Grove was presented with the President's Gavel at our most recent CLE in appreciation for her outstanding role as President for the 2022-2023 term.

Laura now serves as the Immediate Past President and advises the Board. Thank you for all your hard work and keeping CAPA cool, Laura!





# PARALEGAL OF THE YEAR

**Nominations are open!**  
**Go to [www.capatx.org](http://www.capatx.org) to nominate  
an exceptional paralegal.**

**[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION](#)**

CAPA has a longstanding tradition of celebrating our members! What better way to do that than by acknowledging a fellow paralegal for the great work that they do?

That is what the Paralegal of the Year (POY) award is all about. Take some time to nominate a friend or colleague for all of their hard work. The deadline to apply is **Friday, September 22.**

# Congratulations



**MORGAN  
RAINS-WALKER**

**PRESIDENT'S AWARD 2022-2023**

## **ANNOUNCING CAPA'S 2023-2024 FLOWER POT BENEFICIARY**

Throughout the year, CAPA collects donations for a designated "Flower Fund" beneficiary.

At CAPA's monthly luncheons, and other events, flower pots are on the dining tables to collect your change, bills, or checks for donation to the charity.

This year, the chosen beneficiary is the **Texas Advocacy Project**.

At the end of the term, CAPA will match the total amount collected (up to \$250) and 100% of the funds will go to the beneficiary. To learn more about the Texas Advocacy Project, please visit their website at

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



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*Congratulations!*

**VERNIS  
MCGILL**



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OR NEW PARALEGAL'S  
CAREER.....

Email [mentor@capatx.org](mailto:mentor@capatx.org) for more info  
or an application!

## Paralegals Worry:

### Will We Lose Our Jobs to Artificial Intelligence?

by Sharon D. Nelson, Esq., John W. Simek, and Michael C. Maschke

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#### Straight from the Horse's Mouth

ChatGPT, by far the artificial intelligence (AI) most used by lawyers and paralegals at this juncture, does not like to talk about AI taking peoples' jobs. It's like pulling teeth just to get it to talk about the possibility. If you bear down hard enough, you'll get mealy mouth language like "The impact of AI on the legal profession is a topic of ongoing discussion." Push harder and it will admit that AI has the potential to automate some tasks traditionally performed by the 350,000 paralegals and legal assistants in the U.S.

Paralegals conduct legal research, draft documents, do contract analysis and perform administrative tasks. AI can handle such tasks., faster and (in general) more accurately.

ChatGPT loves the word "nuanced" – we've seen many references to the "nuanced" tasks of lawyers and paralegals when we ask if they can be replaced by AI. We have concluded that part of ChatGPT's training includes soft-pedaling any discussion of taking away jobs.

All the same, it is true that paralegals do perform complex, nuanced jobs that call for judgment, critical thinking and people skills. They interview witnesses, work with clients and help with trial preparation.

#### Outfoxing the AI

Know the enemy. Know what it cannot do and focus your energies there. Become the enemy's standard bearer. Be better at using AI than anyone around you. Make sure you are mindful of cybersecurity – use AI but with great care to keep your law firm and confidential client data protected. You'll be bullet proof.

Spend time figuring out what AI will work for your firm – prove its usefulness and be the go-to person who knows about "prompt engineering."

Some of you are reading that term and wondering what "prompt engineering" is. Trust us, it is another avenue to a secure future. Those questions that lawyers ask ChatGPT are 'prompts.' The AI will deliver more accurate and relevant responses the better the prompts are. You don't need to understand the "engineering" part of the equation. You just need to know the prompts – or questions – that will elicit the most useful and accurate responses – and more likely to avoid the AI randomly "making stuff up."

Think about it. Two lawyers have been sanctioned for submitting a brief which contained "made-up" cases. And they didn't validate those cases through authoritative sources. Paralegals who understand AI can cut back on AI hallucinations both through good prompts and exacting validations.

Yes, it's a whole new world – and a new way of thinking.

#### What Else Can You Do?

Remarkably, many lawyers have not kept up with AI developments. Many did not know that confidential information submitted to ChatGPT would be retained and potentially used to train AI.

# ARTICLE (CONT'D)

OpenAI, the creator of ChatGPT, introduced in April a way to opt out of having your history kept, but many lawyers didn't know about or make use of that development.

Once again, being the go-to person who keeps on top of AI developments can be very valuable.

Maybe you haven't been the person who normally sought out tasks that require human judgment, working empathetically with clients, interviewing witnesses, trial preparation etc. This is the time to focus on things AI cannot do – therein lies job security. Maybe you'll be required to learn new skills, but that's great if it leads you to a place AI cannot go.

## Advice from ChatGPT

We waited until we had composed the suggestions above before we directly asked ChatGPT what paralegals could do to prepare for the possibility of losing jobs to AI. You'll see below that we got most of the advice above right. Here's the advice from ChatGPT:

"Stay updated on AI and legal technology." This can help you identify opportunities for skill development.

"Focus on developing unique human skills." Focus on things technology can't do including critical thinking, problem solving, emotional intelligence and interpersonal communication.

"Upskill and embrace technology." Know the AI tools that lawyers use and become proficient in their use. This will make you an invaluable asset in a law firm.

"Specialize in complex tasks." This might mean working with litigation support, regulatory compliance, intellectual property or other areas where human expertise is invaluable.

"Cultivate client relationships and communication skills." Work on empathy and client guidance. You can be so much more to a client than AI – understand what the client needs, explain legal concepts as simply as possible and build trust with the firm's clients.

"Pursue continuous learning." This is key advice. The legal industry is evolving rapidly, and you must evolve too. Acquire new skills that will make you more adaptable to changes in the practice of law. Learn from professional conferences, workshops, webinars. Pursue certifications!

"Explore new opportunities." If you are working for a law firm today, consider working for legal-related companies where your skills, developed from the advice above, may make you valuable. Legal technology consulting? Legal project management? Legal risk analysis? There may be more opportunities than you ever imagined outside of a law firm.

Instead of worrying about what you cannot control, shift your energies to what you can control. Embrace the future you create for yourself.

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## **DID YOU KNOW?**

Did you know that CAPA has at least 12 different committees that you can join?

Do you have a desire to help others and do pro bono services? Join our Pro Bono Service committee!

Love to attend and/or plan events?  
Join our Networking & Social Events committee!

Are you interested in helping our Job Bank stay up to date with the latest job openings?

We also have various other committees like Web Team and Community Services that are always looking for volunteers to help run the show.

CAPA is run entirely by volunteers and we can always use more! If you have any questions, or don't know where to start, email us at [board@capatx.org](mailto:board@capatx.org).

**CLICK HERE TO VIEW A FULL LIST OF COMMITTEES  
YOU CAN VOLUNTEER ON!**

# MEMBER BENEFITS

EXCLUSIVELY FOR MEMBERS



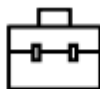
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CAPA offers several hours of CLE throughout the year at monthly luncheons, CLE Seminars, and Lunch & Learns. Many are complimentary or offered at a discounted rate.



## DISCUSSION FORUM

CAPA members have exclusive access to CAPA's online discussion forum. Ask questions, share information, and discuss all things paralegal.



## JOB BANK

Exclusively for Members, CAPA's Job Bank is updated several times per month with job postings in the Austin area.



## SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships can be used for paralegal certification exam fees, membership dues, CLE seminars, and other approved paralegal study materials.



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