



MICHELE T. PFEIFFER, ACP

Candidate for the office of: Treasurer

Paralegal, since: 1991

NALA Member, since: 1996

QUALIFICATIONS

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND: AA & Legal Secretary Vocational Degree (Santa Ana College, Santa Ana, CA) ABA Paralegal Certificate, Coastline Community College, Fountain Valley, CA; First Year of Western State Law

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION/AWARDS: CLA in 1996; ACP in 2016; NALA Affiliate Award Winner for OCPA for 2009; CAPA's named award recipient of the Michele T. Pfeiffer, CLA - Lifetime Achievement Award 2015 (for 16 yrs. of service); LEAP graduate (2013)

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES: NALA Executive Board, Area 3 Director (2016-2020); NALA Making a Difference Award Committee & NALA Bylaws Committee (2016); NALA Policies and Procedures Committee (2017); attended several affiliate conferences as NALA Area 3 representative; Committee for Hospitality for NALA Conf. in San Diego 2009; Hospitality/Host Committee at NALA Conf. in San Diego, CA; Strategic Planning for Advocacy '19; Student of the Year Awards committee '20

MEMBERSHIP IN OTHER ASSOCIATIONS: CICAP, CAPA, SPA, OCPA; several local Bar Associations including, Newport Harbor Bar Association (BOD 19 yrs.); Lex Romana Bar Assoc. (& Sec. 2 yrs.), West Bar OC Bar Assoc.(Sec. '18); Celtic Bar Assoc.; Italian American Lawyers of OC; OC Criminal Def. Bar educating attorneys on CA B&P Code §6450 et seq.; secure available speakers/vendors for paralegals; joint meetings w/bar assoc.'s, legal community outreach, fundraisers, pro bono, Conservatorship clinics at Long Beach Sup. Court w/Bet Tzedek; mentoring & networking w/in CA; secure speaker for NALA Conferences; webinars, etc.

OTHER QUALIFICATIONS OR COMMENTS: CPreviously served on OCPA Paralegal Assoc. for 20 yrs. holding many of the positions on the executive board & committee chairs during that tenure; I previously served on the CA Alliance of Paralegal Assoc. for 16 yrs, as both the Prim./2ndry Local representative; Annual St. Conf. Chair Secretary, VP & Pres. ('11-'12); completed NALA LEAP Prog. '13, serve(d) on various Bar Assco.'s Boards Bar Liaison; assisted w/Annual Fundraisers w/in the Legal Communities; Dispute Resolution Program Act Certificate for Mediations; JAMS Certification Program; Guest Lecturer @ University of CA, Irvine Paralegal Prog.; OCPA Career Day at Fullerton Community College, Miamar Community College; Riverside Community College; Coastline Community College; South Coast College; San Diego at Paralegal Assoc.'s Bridging the Gap events; various CAPA Conf.'s and/or its Bi-Annual Leadership Conf.'s; Speaker for Lorman Education Services Seminar in Litigation Skills for Legal Staff in CA: CAPA MCLE Chair (6 yrs; wrote articles for various paralegal newsletters); AFS Foreign Exchange Student ('78-'79); CASA 2018-current

QUESTION RESPONSES

WHY DO YOU WANT TO SERVE ON THE NALA BOARD OF DIRECTORS?

As a NALA board of director for four years, I want to continue serving our members, affiliates, vendors, and stakeholders. I've enjoyed being on the ground level speaking with members through my local and state associations, NALA conferences, and affiliates' events. Speaking directly with the members helps our board find out what they need from NALA. In response to that information and their inquiries, we have made significant changes these past several years. While it was a lot of work, diligence, and commitment, I am proud of the changes or updates the board and staff have accomplished to date. As your Treasurer, this allows me to be even more involved and make sure that our budgets are met to meet the demands of our members for higher education through CLE's and conferences, affiliate visits, exams, and quality websites, social media, and benefits. I also want to continue to see all the hard work, strategic planning, and brainstorming come together by continuing to serve you. Also, by being on the NALA board, when I am with students, mentoring paralegals or attending local bar associations, I am able to promote all the benefits NALA has to offer all paralegals.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR PRIOR BOARD OR SIMILAR LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES?

I have served on my local paralegal association for over 20 years on various student programs, audits and budgets committees, fundraisers, conferences, joint bar and paralegal MCLE programs, and various committee chairs along with serving on the executive board. While on my local board, I became involved on our state board, the California Alliance of Paralegal Associations ("CAPA") for 16 years and served as the representative for many years before moving onto the executive board and eventually as President in '11-'12. I also served as the MCLE chair, State Bar Liaison, budget and audit committees, our Annual Educational Conference Chair, and Board Advisor until I became involved on the NALA board. As a part of these executive boards, I was intimately involved with the accounting practices, budgets, audits, and reporting to our members. And now, I am proud to serve on the national board to be able to serve a wider area of paralegals, learn the issues affiliates and members are facing from the small rural towns to big city high profile law firms and demands.

WHAT SPECIFIC SKILLS AND STRENGTHS WOULD YOU BRING TO THE BOARD TO HELP NALA MOVE FORWARD?

I've had some good mentors who worked and guided me through various board positions. It goes without saying, I held positions that ended up in my lap with no help and used my paralegal resources and experiences to get the job done. I attended many of CAPA's Bi-Annual Leadership Conferences, geared towards strengthening my skills handling budgets and audits, building memberships, coordinating fundraising, membership, vendor, and speaker retention, and governance, while serving on the board. I am a NALA 2013 LEAP program graduate. NALA also offers its board members articles to discuss, books to read, and other board leadership speakers and programs, such as strategic planning. Yet, while on these boards, the number one concern was working with the board to stay within the budget, meeting the needs of our members, and providing the programs that supported our budget. I have the ability to deal with and review audit reports, expense reports, and accounting spreadsheets to make sure there are no discrepancies. I believe that accounting practices have greatly improved over the years reducing discrepancies, yet, it doesn't mean we don't have to be mindful to keep everything transparent for our members and stakeholders.

WHAT MAKES NALA'S MISSION MEANINGFUL TO YOU?

NALA's Mission became a driving force for my passion for my profession even before becoming involved with NALA board. Once I became involved in my local association my job made so much more sense and had purpose and meaning. I found that being involved meant I could do so much more from mentoring, speaking, or obtaining higher education through attendance at CLE's. Our local association was providing educational programs in various areas of law well before California required CLE's for paralegals. In fact, we spent 10 years passing legislation that would define paralegals/legal assistants to protect the clients and the public from UPL and meet minimum requirements. We were one of the first states to accomplish this. My passion for advancing paralegals through certification was solidified when California had their own state exam for years and recently revamped it. We started our Bi-annual Leadership Conference for professional development both for their board positions and personal growth. Because CA was so advanced in these areas it's what continues to make NALA's mission meaningful to me and to hold my passion for the paralegal profession.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS ANY POSSIBLE DISRUPTIVE FORCES IMPACTING NALA?

I believe the paralegal profession is one of the fastest growing occupations; making others take notice and jump on board. In California, we discussed having our own repository for CLE's earned for employers to confirm their paralegals are in compliance with B&P Code § 6450, et seq. Otherwise, the state bar could make paralegals become members, charge a membership due, and take it over. The LLLT is still on the horizon and discussed regularly on to how to provide more access to justice to those who need it by loosening some of the bootstraps and allowing paralegals to be more helpful, providing judicial council forms, making appearances in court, etc. Another issue we are following, are states who are trying to control certifications in profession's such as nurses, CPA's, and paralegals to name a few. The other hot topic we monitored is the ABA's new definition to be only paralegal and not synonymous with legal assistant. Yet, in California it is defined as such in the codes. While I am more familiar in my own state, being on NALA has allowed us to be more involved on the national level and be a voice for our members.

Each candidate was also asked to create a video with their own personal message to voters.
Those videos can be found on the NALA Youtube channel.



NALA - The Paralegal Association