

WESTERN DAKOTA ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL ASSISTANTS *An Association for Paralegals/Legal Assistants*

WDALA was organized in September 1984, in response to a need for educational programs and to encourage paralegals and legal assistants in Western North Dakota to commit themselves to professional development and continuing education through membership in WDALA.

WDALA affiliated with NALA - The Paralegal Association, in June 1985. NALA offers a Certified Paralegal (CP) program for paralegals and legal assistants. Those who successfully complete both sections of the CP Exam (Knowledge Exam and Skills Exam) receive the CP credential. NALA also offers an Advanced Certified Paralegal (ACP) program. The ACP program is designed to advance a paralegal's education by learning specific areas of law. An assessment component is part of the curriculum-based program, as well as interactive exercises. Upon successful completion of the ACP program, a CP can earn the ACP credential.

Objectives and Purposes:

- ◆ **To promote continuing legal education for members of the legal profession.** WDALA offers a minimum of ten hours of continuing legal education each year. An annual day and a half seminar is held each fall, and a day seminar is held each spring in conjunction with meetings of the membership. Some of the topics that have been presented include estate planning and administration, medical malpractice, bankruptcy, personal injury, mock trial, legal research, legal writing and interviewing, litigation and discovery, environmental law, accident reconstruction, family law, oil and gas, ethics, and mediations. WDALA also offers luncheon teleseminars throughout the year.
- ◆ **To promote ethical and professional conduct.** Paralegals and legal assistants are governed by the American Bar Association Model Code of Professional Responsibility and the American Bar Association Model Rules of Professional Conduct. WDALA stresses ethics and has adopted the NALA Code of Ethics.
- ◆ **To promote networking among association members, NALA, and members of the legal community.** WDALA strives to meet this purpose through regular meetings of its members held throughout the western portion of the state. WDALA sponsors officers' attendance at NALA meetings. Educational events are publicized to all members of the legal community and non-members are invited to participate.
- ◆ **To promote NALA.** NALA is the national voice for all affiliated associations. NALA cooperates with local, state, and national bar associations in setting standards for paralegals and legal assistants. Visit www.nala.org for additional information about NALA.

Benefits of Membership:

- ◆ Continuing legal education seminars, webinars, and teleseminars with registration fee discounts for members.
- ◆ *Summons*. Quarterly publication with substantive articles on topics of concerns to paralegals and legal assistants.
- ◆ Networking opportunities to share experiences, ideas, and concerns with fellow members.
- ◆ Information about employment opportunities in Western North Dakota.
- ◆ Scholarship opportunities which support the educational advancement of members.

Membership:

Membership is open to paralegals, legal assistants, students in a paralegal or legal assistant program, attorneys, or paralegal educators. WDALA offers the following membership types:

- ◆ Active Membership
- ◆ Associate Membership
- ◆ Sustaining Membership
- ◆ Student Membership

“Belonging to WDALA is a powerful way to secure your success as a paralegal. Membership benefits you and your employer. WDALA delivers first-rate and affordable continuing education right here in our state and provides many avenues to stay connected in our legal community.”

*Vicki J. Kunz, ACP, Founding Member,
WDALA and NALA Past President*

For additional information or to apply for membership, please visit our website: www.wdala.org.

