



DON'T MISS DALLAS
OCTOBER 15-18, 2008

The Sidebar

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

In addition to full and rigorous program content, AAFPE attendees at the Annual Conference in Dallas will have ample opportunity to enjoy the city. The Hyatt Regency Dallas at Reunion is centrally located with easy access to public transportation. The Hyatt Regency is a large, fully renovated hotel with an outdoor pool and an indoor fitness center. There are three restaurants, two lounges and a coffee and snack shop in the hotel.

The free McKinney Avenue Trolley goes to the arts district (also packed with restaurants). The Dallas Museum of Art will be hosting the "Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs" during AAFPE's stay.

Within short walking distance of the hotel is Dealey Plaza, the John F. Kennedy Sixth Floor Museum, and the Old Red Court House (home to the Dallas Museum). Two miles east of downtown, Fair Park is home to nine museums and six performance facilities and has the largest collection of 1930's Art Deco exposition-style architecture in the country.

And for AAFPE's evening event, we have arranged for a continuous transportation loop to and from the Texas State Fair.

So mark your calendars and plan to join your colleagues for education, networking and fun October 15 -18 in Dallas.

Honorary Membership in AAFPE

Each year, up to two persons who have provided outstanding service to AAFPE, but are no longer involved in paralegal education, are conferred with honorary lifetime membership. A list of previous honorees can be found on pages 129-130 of your 2007 AAFPE Directory. This past year's honoree was Marilyn Tayler.

A nominee must have two (2) letters of recommendation from two (2) different AAFPE member institutions.

If you are interested in nominating someone for this achievement, please send your letters of recommendation, on institution letterhead, to: Marisa Campbell, Meredith College, 3800 Hillsborough Street, Raleigh, NC 22607 with a copy to AAFPE Headquarters, Attn: Meridyth Senes, 19 Mantua Road, Mt. Royal, NJ 08061.

REMINDERS

**CENGAGE
LEARNING
EXCELLENCE
IN TEACHING
COMPETITION**
accepting entries.
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**CONFERENCE
ABSTRACT
SUBMISSIONS**
still being accepted.
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Excellence in Teaching Award Could Be Yours

Cengage Learning is again sponsoring the Excellence in Teaching Award at our conference in Dallas. Enter! The winner receives \$500 and the applause of our colleagues. **Applicants must submit a proposal of no more than 300 words to Mary Kubichek (mkubichek@caspercollege.edu) by August 15, 2008.**

Applicants will be notified no later than the second week in September if they have been selected to compete. Your presentation should be one that your

audience can copy and use in their classrooms. Former winners are the judges; the entire audience provides feedback.

Contestants are responsible for their own handouts and other presentation aids. The judging rubric is being updated and will be available in the next *Sidebar*. If you have questions or need your arm "twisted" to enter, contact Mary Kubichek. Please enter. We promise to clap loudly.

Professional Pursuits

Bruce Davis received the award for Excellence in Teaching at the University of Cincinnati Clermont College for the 2007-2008 academic year.

Marilyn Tayler, 2007 AAFPE Honorary Member and Professor of Political Science and Law at Montclair State University in New Jersey, was accepted as a fellow in the 2008 Schusterman Summer Institute for Israel Studies. During the first two weeks, Institute Fellows from universities in North America and around the world are in residence at Brandeis University and participate in seminars taught by distinguished Israel Studies scholars. The seminars focus on Israel's society, history, politics, economics, culture, foreign affairs, and diplomacy. During the third week of the Institute, in Israel, Institute Fellows meet with scholars, government officials, writers, artists, public intellectuals, and Jewish and Arab community leaders. Fellows also visit select historical and cultural sites. As

part of the Institute, Marilyn will develop a course on Comparative Israeli and American Legal Traditions.

David Weiden is the new program director at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

Susan Harrell, Associate Professor in the Legal Studies Program at the University of West Florida, was recognized for her teaching excellence with two awards (2007 Teaching Incentive Program Award and 2007-2008 Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching and Advising Award) and was granted a 9-month sabbatical (August 2008 – April 2009) to further pursue her research and teaching interests.

Tracy Spencer, Lamar Institute of Technology, is under contract to write a new textbook for Business and Professional Presentation. The contract will be with Kendall-Hunt. Many of the chapters will be specialized at a later date to create a text on business presentation and professional behaviors for paralegals.

IN MEMORIAM Deborah Posen Hill

Deborah Posen Hill, an instructor in the paralegal studies department at Santa Fe Community College died in a tragic accident at her home in January. AAFPE extends condolences to Deborah's husband, Ben, and son, Satchel.

AAfPE Calendar of Events 2008

March 28-29
North Central Regional Meeting
Cleveland, OH

April 3-5
Pacific Regional Meeting
Las Vegas, NV

April 4-5
South Central Regional Meeting
Baton Rouge, LA

April 11-12
Northeast Regional Meeting
Mt. Kisco, NY

April 11-12
Southeast Regional Meeting
Birmingham, AL

June 1
Educator articles due
to Editor for Fall issue

June 27-29
Board of Directors Meeting
TBD

October 15-18
27th Annual Conference
Dallas, TX

November 1
Educator articles due
to Editor for Winter issue

AAfPE's Teaching Competition: Teaching Critical Thinking Using Primary Sources

Linda T. Chin

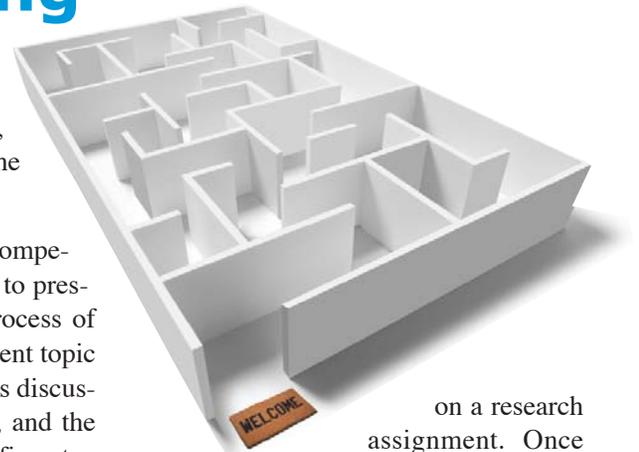
When I decided to enter the Teaching Competition at the AAfPE Annual Conference in Baltimore this past October, the hardest part was deciding the lesson I should present for the competition. Looking back at all the classes I taught, I narrowed the possibilities down to three. One lesson involved teaching the types of sexual harassment in the workplace. This topic generated much discussion and participation by students. In another class I used a flow chart to teach the five-step sequential process in evaluating entitlements for social security disability benefits. In the third class, I discovered that having students discuss world events in newspaper articles enhanced critical thinking and facilitated an entry into evaluating primary sources. While I had options as to which topic I might teach, participants in the competition must follow certain guidelines.

The guidelines of the competition are spelled out in the announcements contained in each of AAfPE's publications. Specifically, the topic of the presentation must be one that is taught to paralegal students. The emphasis is on teaching and not on audience participation. The competitors have approximately ten minutes to present their lessons. Each participant's presentation is evaluated based on a rubric of ten pedagogical areas. The ten-item rubric addresses the following: introduction of the topic, the topic's application to paralegal students, topic development, the presenter's organizational skills, effective use of handouts, level of preparation by the presenter, the assessment process, clarity of the lesson plan objectives, use of the topic to

encourage independent thinking, and the style of delivery by the presenter.

Based on the guidelines of the competition, the decision of the lesson to present was made for me by the process of elimination. The sexual harassment topic focused overwhelmingly on class discussion and audience participation, and the flow chart presentation of the five-step sequential process regarding social security disability benefits would exceed the ten-minute allotted time. I was left with the critical thinking topic. While some participation of the audience was required, the lesson could be taught within the ten-minute time period and the topic of the presentation was one that is taught to paralegal students. Moreover, critical thinking is one of the many essential tools required of paralegals and this lesson would facilitate the use of this important skill.

The lesson was taught in my International Law class. Because international law is clearly affected by world events, I encourage students to read the newspapers daily. One of the assignments is for students to orally present a current events article to the entire class. The article may come from a newspaper or from the Web. Copies of the article are distributed to the rest of the class. After the student summarizes the article, the class then joins in the discussion. Students discuss the background of the article, evaluate the content and analyze its factual accurateness. If the facts of the article are ambiguous or in conflict, and if the topic of the article is based on or relies on a primary source such as a federal or international statute, a court proceeding or case law, the students embark



on a research assignment. Once the primary source is located, students evaluate it further to clarify the content of the article. By doing this assignment, students are able to apply two important skills: to think critically and to research the relevant primary source.

At the Teaching Competition, I asked a member of the audience to summarize the article. The article was about a United Nations Resolution that had authorized sending UN troops to Lebanon in an effort to end the hostilities between Israeli and Hezbollah forces. The article focused on the interpretations of the UN Resolution by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and the Commander of the UN forces. Secretary Rice called the Resolution "a very robust" mandate while the Commander of the UN forces disagreed. Members of the audience at the competition became my students. Because of the difference of opinion between Secretary Rice and the Commander of the UN forces, students analyzed the actual UN Resolution to determine whose interpretation was more accurate. (In my actual class, students used the Internet to search the UN website for the appropriate resolution.) Students dissected each provision of the Resolution and determined whether the

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TEACHING *continued*

actions authorized by the UN were either robust or weak.

Students analyzed the words in each of the provisions of the Resolution. They noted that verbs such as “calls for,” “calls on,” “reiterates,” “requests,” “decides,” or “emphasizes,” were used extensively in the Resolution. After their analysis, students determined that the Resolution was indeed weak and was not as “robust” as characterized by Secretary

Rice. In my actual class, students followed up in redrafting the Resolution and using words that would make the Resolution “robust.”

I did not win the Teaching Competition, but I gained some invaluable insight from this experience. Using the ten-pedagogical points as a guide, I became more focused on the delivery of my presentations in the classroom. The comments I received from the audience members were also helpful; some indicated that I did not make the objective of

the lesson clear or that I failed to make eye contact with the audience while speaking. But equally important, I had fun participating in the Competition and I would encourage others to partake in this collegial activity.

Linda T. Chin is an Assistant Professor at St. John's University in New York City, where she teaches Legal Studies courses. Prior to teaching, Professor Chin served as Dean of Faculty and Staff Relations and Special Counsel to the President at Hunter College. She also served as Counsel for the New York State Judicial Commission on Minorities and as a Corporate Attorney at Consolidated Edison, Inc.

Summary of AAFPE Board of Directors Meeting February 2008

Mission: To provide greater access to legal services by promoting quality paralegal education.

The AAFPE Board of Directors held a Board meeting in Dallas, Texas, beginning on Friday, February 22 and concluding on Sunday, February 24, 2008. The meeting was held in the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport Hyatt Regency. While not the site for the 2008 AAFPE Annual Conference, the Board did visit this site, a Hyatt Regency located in downtown Dallas.

All Board members were present along with Executive Director, Meridyth Senes, of Talley Management Group, and participating on Friday, Shannon Welch, AAFPE Meeting Manager, also of Talley Management Group.

The Board heard reports from the President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Executive Director and Meeting Manager. The Board took action and agreed to raise the annual dues and the annual conference fees \$25 each.

The Board discussed the use of proxy votes for general elections. The Board agreed that the procedure for proxy votes needs to be communicated to the

membership in a timely manner prior to the annual conference.

The Board agreed to post the approved minutes of all Board meetings beginning with the February 2008 minutes, scheduled to be approved in June of 2008.

The Board discussed the 27th Annual Conference to be held in Dallas October 15-18, 2008. The Board toured the hotel and saw the meeting rooms and other amenities provided at the downtown Dallas Hyatt Regency.

The Board discussed future national conference dates and locations. AAFPE will meet in Portland, Oregon in 2009 (October 28-31). The NFPA annual conference for 2009 is also scheduled in Portland over the same dates. The Board considered options for 2010 and after reviewing cost and location comparisons, the Board agreed on Indianapolis, Indiana, as the location for the 2010 national conference.

The Board discussed the Listserv and considered a proposed Listserv policy.

Dora Dye, Listserv Manager, joined the Board by telephone for some of this discussion. The Board adopted the proposed Listserv policy with some changes and this will be made available to the Listserv members and new members who join.

The Board heard or reviewed reports and updates from committee and task force chairs for Technology, Publications, LEX, Membership and Access to Justice. The Board discussed the bylaws and policy regarding committee structure, Board liaison, committee reports and activity.

The Board reviewed the most recent draft of the Board Policy Manual and established guidelines for final review and ongoing process. A new committee was formed with respect to the Board Policy Manual and this committee will report every February Board meeting on updates to the Board Manual.

Respectfully submitted,
Joy Smucker
AAfPE Secretary

AAfPE Treasurer's Report to the Membership

Ed Husted

The Finance Committee met prior to the February 22-24 AAfPE Board meeting in Dallas and adopted the following recommendations for consideration by the full Board. Following discussion, the recommendations were adopted as follows:

1. DIVERSIFICATION OF ASSOCIATION ASSETS. After two years of declining revenues, brought about primarily by significant losses at the Tampa and New Orleans annual conferences, the Association's finances are returning to normalcy. With a checking account balance in excess of the \$200,000 F.D.I.C. insurance limit, the Board approved a policy to increase diversification of the Association's assets, a practice widely recognized by most not-for-profit associations.

a. AAfPE still retains a \$50,000 certificate of deposit which is scheduled to mature in May 2008. The Board previously instructed our management company to deposit the CD, when it matures, in the AAfPE checking account, which has recently been earning roughly 4% interest. However, the committee recommended, and the Board agreed, that the \$50,000 should instead be reinvested in another CD at rates now available which are equivalent to the checking account's income. In addition, CDs now available have very short maturity times and can be accessed by the Association at any time, without penalty.

b. In addition, after analyzing the Association's cash flow needs for the upcoming several months, an additional \$50,000 will be transferred immediately from the checking account to a new, separate certificate of deposit.

c. CONCLUSION: This will place \$100,000, or roughly 1/3 of the funds required to meet the Association's expenses for a year, in insured deposits separate from the checking account and at comparable interest rates. Also, the checking account itself will now be fully insured. The ultimate goal of the Finance Committee is to have 50% of the Association's annual budget requirements in interest-bearing accounts separate from the checking account. This can be accomplished in the future as the Association's fiscal situation continues to improve.

2. RESTORING THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE AS A DEPENDABLE REVENUE STREAM. While the Baltimore conference for the first time in three years made a profit, the committee's analysis established that the conference is still being subsidized, albeit to a lesser degree, by other Association revenue streams. The Baltimore margin of profit still remained below that of most earlier, pre-Tampa conferences, and to a large extent was the result of two factors: **a)** the income from exhibitors who pay a fee to demonstrate their products at our conference; and **b)** by the Board's decision at its June 2007 meeting to reduce the cost of the evening event at Baltimore from \$23,000 to \$10,000.

Many committee members, but not all, believe that it will be difficult to duplicate the financial success of Baltimore (at which over 50 more attendees registered than were expected) at the upcoming Dallas and Portland conferences, in October 2008 and 2009.

The pros and cons of the various considerations debated by the Board:

a. Increase Conference Fees. There was support in both the committee and on the full Board to confront this issue, which has been pending for the last several Board meetings, and raise the annual conference fee by \$50. Justification for this increase was based on the following considerations. First, other functions of the Association, such as LEX and the regional conferences, pay their own way; that is, are operated at a profit. Second, the fee for attending the annual conference has not been raised for at least five years, and probably longer. (Our management company only has ready access to records for the last five years.) No one can contest that during that same period of time the cost of everything connected with an annual conference has increased significantly. Third, by continuing to absorb ever-increasing costs without raising conference fees guarantees that AAfPE will at best slowly retreat backward from the Baltimore conference toward future ones which will inevitably again be operated in the "red."

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- b. Increase Membership Dues.** Because of the financial limitations faced by several Association members, others pointed out that many institutions will more freely pay membership dues to AAFPE than fund travel to conferences. Already, it is common knowledge that some members fund their own travel, room and board in order to participate in the annual conference. It is also possible that any significant increase in conferences fees will meet with a corresponding reduction in conference attendance. This reality led to consideration of a broad policy recognition by both the committee and the Board: the annual conferences simply need to continue being subsidized by other revenue streams. The annual conferences are probably the most valuable single benefit for most members. It is not unrealistic to accept that one of the "fringe benefits" of paying for membership in AAFPE is the opportunity to attend the annual conference at a rate less than the actual cost.
- c. Reduced Rate for Multiple Attendees from the Same School.** Another alternative was considered, first by the committee and then by the Board. A surprising number of member institutions send more than one person to the annual conference. The current fee structure reduces the conference fee by \$70 for each attendee after the first to register for the conference from the same school. Reducing or eliminating this special rate would produce an increase in conference income, although as in the previous discussion, it would also possibly reduce by an undetermined amount the number of multiple attendees from the same school. However, the committee decided, and the Board agreed, that the fee reduction for multiple attendees should be left in place in the present amount.
- d. CONCLUSION.** The committee fashioned a workable compromise, which was adopted by the full Board. There will be two small fee increases rather than a single, probably \$50, increase in the conference registration fee.
- 1) The registration fee for the annual conference will be increased by \$25, or from \$375 to \$400. This increase will take effect for the Dallas conference in October 2008. The higher registration fee will continue to be reduced by \$70 for multiple attendees from the same school.
 - 2) In addition, all categories of annual memberships for belonging to AAFPE, beginning with statements mailed in September 2008, will be increased by \$25. Thus, an annual institutional membership, which is now \$375.00, will increase to \$400.00.

These two fee increases will come at two separate times during members' fiscal year. Both will be in the minimum possible amount which could realistically be considered. The result will, with the smallest possible impact on members, allow the Association to recoup the increased costs associated with providing a quality annual conference and will restore the annual conference to its former status as a dependable revenue stream for AAFPE.

3. CONTINUED BOARD EFFORTS TO REDUCE COSTS. As part of the restoration of the annual conference to a dependable revenue stream, the finance committee and full Board will continue to find ways to reduce conference expenses. As noted above, it was the Board's \$13,000 reduction in the budget for the evening event at the Baltimore conference that was the single-most important reason why that conference operated in the "black." The Board has approved additional smaller budget adjustments which will help control the bottom line for the upcoming Dallas and Portland conferences.

Some accounting changes will also help the process. For example, expenses for the Board's October meeting, two days prior to the annual conference, have previously been posted as part of the conference's overall expenses. In the future, these expenses will more accurately be posted to the separate "Board T/F/L (Travel/Food/Lodging)" line item under "Operating Expenses," which is where the expense for the February and June Board meetings are posted. This will improve the net income for the annual conference.

The AAFPE Board of Directors will continue to work toward finding the most reasonable way to provide members with exceptional national and regional conferences while, at the same time, maintaining the financial integrity of the Association. The Finance Committee and Board of Directors meetings in Dallas made major progress toward this goal.

NFPA Announces Second Annual Tech Institute

The NFPA Tech Institute is the place for paralegals, attorneys and other legal professionals to gain knowledge, perspective and insight into the benefits, challenges, and pitfalls of legal technology. Find technological solutions to increase your productivity and efficiency as you face ever more complicated and growing caseloads.

July 25th and 26th, 2008, NFPA presents its second Tech Institute at the Doubletree Hotel Denver-Southeast in Aurora, CO. Participants are expected to attend and take advantage of educational seminars. Technology products and services will also be featured in an interactive trade show.

Mary Mack, corporate technology counsel for Fios, Inc., will deliver the Keynote at the 2008 NFPA Tech Institute. Whether in response to an inquiry, a second request or class action litigation, Mary Mack brings legal and technical professionals together in a focused manner to determine a successful, cost-effective course of compliance with electronic discovery requests. As Corporate Technology Counsel for Fios, she has more than 20 years experience delivering enterprise-wide electronic discovery, managed services and software projects with

legal and IT departments in publicly held companies. Mary is a hands-on strategic advisor to counsel for some of the largest products liability class actions, government investigations and intellectual property disputes.

Mary is one of the leading speakers and authors on electronic discovery issues, technology and the law. She is co-author of the popular book, *A Process of Illumination: The Practical Guide to Electronic Discovery*, and hosts the blog, Sound Evidence, featured on DiscoveryResources.org. She is also regularly featured as an expert in leading magazines and newspapers, such as *The New York Times*, *Inside Counsel Magazine*, *Law.com*, *Chicago Lawyer*, *Compliance Week* and *Metropolitan Corporate Counsel Magazine*.

NFPA is a non-profit professional organization representing more than 11,000 paralegals and is headquartered in Edmonds, Washington. NFPA's core purpose is the advancement of the paralegal profession. NFPA promotes a global presence for the paralegal profession, and leadership in the legal community. www.paralegals.org



NFPA to Present Awards and Scholarships to Leaders of the Paralegal Profession

The National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc. (NFPA) is currently accepting applications and nominations for its annual awards and scholarships. These awards and scholarships will be presented to outstanding paralegals and paralegal students at the 2008 NFPA Annual Convention in October in Rogers, Arkansas.

Awards and scholarships presented include The Hon. William R. Robie Leadership Award, National Paralegal of the Year Award, Outstanding Local Leader Award, PACE Ambassador Award, Association Pro Bono Award, Individual Pro Bono Award, two Thomson-West Scholarships and a PACE Scholarship Award, with sponsorship. For a more complete description of the awards visit the NFPA website at www.paralegals.org

