

THE ROLE OF SECRETARY

The secretary ensures the integrity of Board documents, provides accurate minutes of Board meetings, oversees mail votes conducted for the Board, and sits on the Executive Committee. The secretary is elected by the membership and serves for a term of one year from election.

DISCLAIMER:

The candidate information provided has been published exactly as submitted by candidates and has not been edited or verified by NALA.

CANDIDATE FOR SECRETARY: DEBBY SAWYER, ACP



Paralegal Since: 1992

NALA Member Since: 2003

Educational Background: Bachelor of Science in Leadership & Management, Regent University, 2005 | Paralegal Certificate, Jackson State Community College, 1992

Professional Certification/Awards: ACP 2010 | CP, 2004 | NALA Affiliated Associations Award 2007 | Tidewater Paralegal Association Founders Award 2007

Volunteer Activities: NALA - Member since 2003 | NALA Officer – Treasurer 2022 - 2024 | Board Member 2009-2021 | At Large Director Region III Director | Affiliated Associations Director | Region II Director | Affiliated Associations Secretary | Affiliate Exchange Presenter Professional Development Committee 2021 - Present

Membership in other Associations: Tennessee Paralegal Association 2014 - Present: Currently serve as Past President Ex Officio | Past President | 1st Vice President | 2nd Vice President | Secretary, Federal Judicial Assistants Association 2015 - Present: Board Member since 2019 -Currently serve as Parliamentarian | Ways & Means Committee Annual Conference Committee | 6th Circuit Representative & Scholarship Chair, North Carolina Paralegal Association 2007 - 2014: Scholarship Chair, Tidewater Paralegal Association 1997 - 2007: 1st Vice President | 2nd Vice President | Secretary | Proctored CP/CLA Exam in Virginia Beach, VA 2006

Other Qualifications or Comments: Advisory Board Member – Paralegal Program at Nashville State Community College | Article contributor, Facts & Findings | Article contributor, Affiliates Brief | Article contributor, FJAA Newsletter | Audited first NALA LEAP Class 2007-2008 | Facilitated CP/CLA Study Groups | Volunteer at Virginia State Bar Conference | Guest Speaker for paralegal programs | Volunteer for NC Mock Trial Competition

Without strong leaders, often associations struggle to succeed. What are three values you believe you demonstrate as a leader? Take each trait and explain how that value would add benefit to your service on the NALA Board.

Leadership is critical in the success of any organization and is not a one-size-fits-all concept. However, all leaders must have values. My three most important values of an effective leader are Vision, Communication, and Integrity.

Vision: Visionaries keep the big picture at the forefront of the decision-making process. They must plan for obstacles, possess the determination to persist through setbacks and failures, keep an eye out for anything that may get in the way, and must be ready to update the vision.

Communication: Communication is the cornerstone of effective leadership. Leaders must be able to articulate their thoughts and ideas clearly and listen actively to others. A leader may have a clear vision, but without effective communication, others will not be able to share it. I totally agree with the statement “Communication is not just part of the game — it is the game.”

Integrity: Integrity means honoring commitments and doing what you say you will do, as well as approaching challenges in ways that are coherent with other values and beliefs. To be a true leader, one must be authentic and genuine in how they talk and act, and must always remain compassionate towards those they lead.

Watch Debby's candidate video [here](#).