



Summons

WDALA

An Association for Paralegals/
Legal Assistants

May
2024

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President's Message

By Anna Heinen

Hello Members!

I hope this message finds you and your family well. As anticipated and eagerly awaited every year, the days are getting longer and the weather is getting warmer, and this makes me anxious for summer activities to begin! It's nice to see the trees beginning to bud and the grass turn green again.



DID YOU KNOW, WDALA has been around for 40 years?! To think that this organization has been around longer than some of us have been alive is crazy. Take a moment to think of all the things you have accomplished, overcome, prayed for, and enjoyed in the last ten years....now quadruple it! This is an extraordinary milestone for us! This organization started with a simple goal - to educate. We wouldn't be here if it wasn't for our members, sponsors, and presenters who continue to contribute their time and expertise to build this organization over the last 40 years. Please consider celebrating the 40th Anniversary with us on September 9th! It is an accomplishment for each of us and WDALA wouldn't be what it is without you.

We are fresh out of the Spring Seminar and deep into planning of the Fall Seminar & WDALA's 40th Anniversary celebration! Mark your calendars for September 9th and 10th and please keep an eye out for the upcoming Fall Seminar brochure and the 40th Anniversary invite!

As always, please let me know what WDALA can do better for you, its members, and its communities. Also, let me know how I can better assist you going forward - specific training sessions, one-on-one discussions, group gatherings, and/or volunteering options; as I am here to help in any way possible. Just reach out!

Thank you for continuing to participate and be involved with this organization! I look forward to WDALA's continued growth throughout 2024!



NALA's Milestone Membership Anniversary:

5 years: Holly Radke, ACP

WDALA FALL SEMINAR

September 9 & 10, 2024

ND Heritage Center
612 East Boulevard Ave
Bismarck, ND

Speakers:



DREW WRIGLEY

ND Attorney General



CHERYL NODARSE

NALA President Elect



BLAKE KLINKNER

Assistant Professor of Law



STACY SCHAFFER

Founder and Executive
Director of 31:8 Project



JAMES SHAW

Supervisory Special Agent
for the State of ND



ANALENA LUNDE

Specialist with ND BCI
Victim Services Unit



MIKE BOLME

Coordinator of the
Bismarck/Mandan
Drug Court



LISA FAIR MCEVERS

Justice of the ND
Supreme Court



DOUGLAS BAHR

Justice of the ND
Supreme Court



PETRA MANDIGO HULM

Clerk of the ND
Supreme Court

SEMINAR TOPICS & SPEAKERS

The seminar brochure will be emailed to WDALA members in July.

Keynote Address

Drew Wrigley, ND Attorney General

The NALA Show

Cheryl Nodarse, ACP, President-Elect of NALA

Introduction to Empathic Strain and Building Resiliency

Mike Bolme, Coordinator of the Bismarck/Mandan Drug Court

Cybersecurity & Legal Ethics

Professor Blake A. Klinkner, Assistant Professor of Law at UND School of Law

Leveraging Artificial Intelligence to Combat Trafficking and Exploitation:

A Collaborative Approach for Legal Professionals

Stacy Schaffer, Founder and Executive Director of 31:8 Project
James Shaw, Supervisory Special Agent (SS/A) for the State of ND
Analena M. Lunde, Specialist for the ND BCI Victim Services Unit

Updates at the Supreme Court, including the new public portal

Petra H. Mandigo Hulm, Clerk of the North Dakota Supreme Court

Appellate Practice for Legal Assistants/Paralegals

Justice Lisa Fair McEvers, ND Supreme Court
Justice Douglas A. Bahr, ND Supreme Court

In 2019, the Bravery Backpacks program came about when 31:8 Project was approached by law enforcement to put together comfort backpacks for children who experience trauma when they are forcibly removed from their parents or guardians due to an unsafe environment, violence in the household, or drug and alcohol issues. Studies show that children caught up in such unstable living environments are more susceptible to becoming victims of human trafficking. The program was originally intended for 2 to 12-year-olds but has since expanded to include 13 to 17-year-olds. These comfort backpacks have been distributed by service providers, law enforcement, medical professionals, schools, and foster care parents across North Dakota. Items in the comfort backpacks include hygiene items, a hairbrush, hair ties, pajamas, underwear, socks, a blanket, a stuffed animal, coloring books, journals, stickers, crayons or markers, and internet safety information.

Without the Bravery Backpacks program, police report that young people enter foster care or emergency shelters with, at best, a trash bag of clothing grabbed just before they are escorted from the home. Oftentimes, children enter placement with no possessions at all. Ultimately, the Bravery Backpacks program has had a positive effect on North Dakota communities, but most importantly it continues to impact youth by addressing their immediate physical and emotional needs. Bravery Backpacks have been distributed by service providers, law enforcement, medical professionals, schools, and foster care parents across North Dakota.

<https://www.318project.org/bravery.html>

Per Stacy Schaffer's article in the February 2024 issue of the Summons, over 300 backpacks were distributed in 2022 and almost 700 backpacks in 2023.

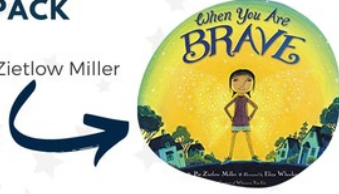
If anyone is interested in donating a backpack and/or any of the items needed for the backpacks, we will be collecting items at the Fall Seminar on September 9th and 10th. The lists of items needed for the backpacks are on the next page.

31:8 BRAVERY BACKPACKS PROJECT

31:8 Project is assisting law enforcement officers and emergency service providers to collect donations to help children in vulnerable situations who are in need of additional resources.

ITEMS NEEDED PER BACKPACK

- Backpack
- "When You Are Brave" book by Pat Zietlow Miller
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Pajamas (boys & girls) Ages 2-12
- Underwear (boys & girls) Ages 2-12
- Children's book
- Coloring book
- Crayons / Markers
- Blanket
- Stuffed Animal
- Slippers (boys & girls) Ages 2-12
- Socks (boys & girls) Ages 2-12
- Comb / Brush
- Stickers



DETAILS

Feel free to donate individual items, or a backpack containing all of the items listed above. For drop-off instructions or any questions, contact 31:8 Project.



Items needed for ages 2-12



PO Box 174 • Bismarck, ND 58502-0174 • 318project.org • info@318project.org •

31:8 BRAVERY BACKPACKS PROJECT 13-17 YEARS OLD

31:8 Project is assisting law enforcement officers and emergency service providers to collect donations to help children in vulnerable situations who are in need of additional resources.

ITEMS NEEDED PER BACKPACK

- Backpack
- Toothbrush / Toothpaste
- Underwear / Boxers (boys & girls) Ages 13-17
- Socks (boys & girls) Ages 13-17
- Blanket
- Comb / Brush
- Hair Ties
- Reusable water bottle
- Deodorant (no aerosol)
- Tampons / Menstrual Kits (girls)
- Body Wipes
- Washcloth / Hand Towel
- Snacks
- Shampoo, Conditioner, Body Wash, Lotion (travel size)
- Journal / Sketchbook w/ Pens / Colored Pencils / Markers
- Gift Card(s) for fast food places

13-17 YEARS OLD

DETAILS

Feel free to donate individual items, or a backpack containing all of the items listed above. For drop-off instructions or any questions, contact 31:8 Project.



Items needed for ages 13-17



Save the Date

**for WDALA's 40th
Anniversary Celebration**

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2024

5:00 PM

Northern Lights Atrium
ND Heritage Center
612 East Boulevard Ave, Bismarck

Member Spotlight

Tiffany Knopik

How long have you been a member of WDALA?

I have been a WDALA member for 3 years.

What do you like most about being a member of WDALA?

I really enjoy getting together at our luncheons and visit about everyone's job. We are all paralegals but all hold such different positions.

What company do you work for?

I work for Smith Porsborg Schweigert Armstrong Moldenhauer & Smith.

Why did you choose to pursue a career in the legal field?

I have always had an interest in law. Dateline and Unsolved Mysteries were my favorite shows to watch when I was growing up. It would scare the life out of me but always continued to watch them and enjoy them.

When did you first know that you wanted to pursue a career in the legal field?

I went to college to become a massage therapist, which is a really high burn out career. I always questioned if I would be able to pursue that career the rest of my life. The further I got into that career I realized I loved massaging but didn't feel like I could/wanted to make it into a career, so I looked at going back to college for paralegal studies. Once I started college for paralegal studies it didn't take long before I knew that is what I wanted to do in life. Once I knew, I applied at the law firm I am currently at as a legal secretary.



What do you love most about your job?

I really enjoy the work I do. It also makes it easy when I really enjoy the people I work with and have an amazing boss.

What has been your most meaningful accomplishment so far?

My family and my career.

What's a fact about you that's not on the internet?

I broke my arm(s) 5 times all before 2nd grade. I also fractured my arm(s) twice after that.

What's the best vacation you've ever been on and why?

Costa Rica. I have always loved monkeys and I was able to feed them bananas. It was such a wild and amazing experience. They would just take them right out of your hand and peel them.



If you could visit any place in the world, where would it be?

Anywhere with a beach. My top choices currently would be Turks and Caicos, Bora Bora and Tulum.

What's the weirdest food you've ever eaten?

Crocodile. "tastes like chicken"

What type of books/movies do you enjoy?

I love crime/mystery/thriller books and movies. I enjoy listening and watching high profile trials.

What is the last TV show you binged watched?

I am currently binging Suits.

What is the best concert you ever attended?

Katy Perry

Dianne M. Taix, CLAS

On April 10, 2024, Dianne Taix was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for her 50 years of service to the legal profession. Congrats, Dianne!



Dianne Taix and Jack McDonald



Laurie Guenther, Anna Heinen, Candy Schafer, Dianne Taix, Melissa Klimpel, Melissa Hamilton, and Tiffany Knopik

The Top Seven Things I Learned as a Drug Court Judge

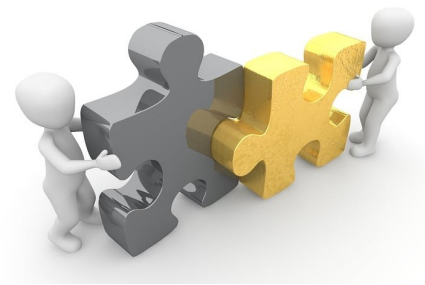
By Judge John Grinsteiner, (Retired)

When it was suggested that I should write an article about my time in the North Dakota drug courts, I jumped at the chance. Nothing in my legal career has stirred my emotions more. It was 2007 when my drug court involvement began. For the last 14 years, including 3 years when I was involved in both the juvenile and adult drug courts, I was a member of a drug court team in the South Central Judicial District. I am a member and past president of the North Dakota Association of Drug Court Professionals. I served on the Supreme Court's Juvenile Drug Court Advisory Committee and represented North Dakota to the Congress of State Drug Court Associations. As you can see, I was all in! Throughout my time on the bench, it was the gas in my tank during many weeks. I fully believe in the mission of drug courts and have witnessed nothing in the criminal justice system more effective at changing lives. The following are the top seven things I learned as a drug court judge. I hope you find something that can help you.

1. **We are in the People Business!** I'm assuming that is not the first time you have heard that, but in this instance, it really is true. Drug court taught me that at a base level, everyone we come into contact with in this line of work is a human. They deserve to be treated with respect, listened to, and heard. They also deserve to be held accountable. Often it was respect and accountability that were missing from their lives. Drug court taught me that the two concepts go hand in hand. In fact, one improves the other, and we as humans need both to be better people.
2. **Effective Communication!** I have read a lot of articles and books, watched webinars and attended presentations on the subject, but nothing taught me more about effective communication than drug court. "It's all in how you talk to them," I was told early in my career. There is definitely some truth to that advice, but I would now add, "it's also in how you listen to them." Showing kindness and respect go a long way with folks who have been shown little of either. Engaging people on a human level, especially from a place of authority, can drive home a point just as well as a nine-pound hammer. Working in the drug courts taught me that being authentic, showing humility, listening intently, offering encouragement, and always being thankful for something, even on the dark days are some ways to effectively inspire others.



3. **Making a connection!** If there was one thing that was consistent across the success stories in the drug court, it was that there was a connection between the participant and someone on the team. This was easy to identify but a mystery as to when, why, and how it happened. Connections seem to be a hindsight type of thing. You can usually see what your connection with someone is once its established, but it is a guessing game as to what will make that connection happen in the first place. To further confound, what connects us to one person, won't necessarily connect us to the next and in fact, seldom does. It's more magic than formula, but make no mistake, drug court has taught me that connections are what can truly change things for people.



4. **Something can be rewarding and frustrating at the same time!** My highest and lowest moments as a judicial officer were found in drug court. From a person, no one thought would make it a week graduating from the program, to a person, despite all our tools and efforts, leaving in handcuffs headed to jail. For various reasons, some made it through and some didn't. Some bought in to the program goals set for them and some didn't. Some made a connection and some didn't. Drug court taught me that accountability, although incredibly painful at times, makes us all better people. A very wise treatment provider told me that our work with people is never wasted. That even if not successful now, we still plant the seeds for success to grow later on. "When they are ready, they will remember we tried." This advice has sustained me many a time.

5. **The struggle is real!** While this is often used in a funny context, making me laugh plenty of times (think YouTube), there is nothing funny about people's true struggles. Drug court opened my eyes. It opened my mind and it opened my heart. It made me a better Judge and it definitely made me a better person. Seeing first-hand the things people can struggle with that others can do easily was an education. It made me realize that I should never take for granted what I have or what I can do. Drug court taught me that helping others with their struggles is what makes all of us better.

6. **Family is everything!** Having a good one is the foundation for all things positive in life. If you were not born into a good one, the good news is that you can still make one. Drug court taught me that family does not have to mean by blood. In fact, getting away from blood family can sometimes improve your chances. A drug court participant once told me that "family" means anyone who loves you and that you love back. It can be a teacher, a co-worker, a pastor, a friend, and yes even a drug court team. Create a family that loves you!

7. **It's who is on your team!** As a drug court judge, I was only as good as the team around me. Drug court taught me to surrounded myself with people who were passionate about improving lives. People who were patient and willing to work tirelessly, carrying more of the load when necessary. People who wanted to be part of something and understood how important relationships could be. It was the strength of the team that allowed us to show people that they were worth more than their situation. It created the buy-in needed for improvement and recovery.



I want to thank Judge Romanick and Judge Hagerty for allowing me a chance to find my passion for drug court. They allowed me on to their teams and encouraged me along the way. I also want to thank Judge Nesvig who took over the South Central Juvenile Drug Court and embodies all of the lessons above. In my new role as North Dakota's first Judicial Outreach Liaison, my drug court work will continue, just in a different way. I will be working with all of the trial court judges, looking to improve process and outcomes with regard to impaired driving cases. Much like Kevin Bacon's seven degrees of separation, you would be surprised what can be connected to impaired driving and making the roads safer for all of us. If you have an idea, don't hesitate to reach out. Peace on your hearts!

*****This article was originally published in the Winter 2002 issue of the Gavel Magazine, the official publication of the State Bar Association of North Dakota. Reprinted here with permission.**

Judge John Grinsteiner is a retired district court judge from North Dakota. After 18 years of wearing the judicial robes, 14 of which were spent in the drug courts, John retired to become North Dakota's first Judicial Outreach Liaison. As the State's Judicial Outreach Liaison (JOL), John brings access to current and evidence-based practices that assists judges in their work and helps promote more effective outcomes in impaired driving and other traffic related cases. With the help of the ABA's Judicial Division and its partnerships with various organizations (All Rise, National Judicial College, National Center for State Courts,), John works to provide education, training, and technical assistance to judges and court staff throughout ND.



Get to Know . . . Mike Bolme, Bismarck/ Mandan Drug Court Coordinator

What are your job duties?

- Coordinate and attend pre-court staffing and court hearings
- Facilitate placement of potential applicants
- Maintain drug court forms
- Track participant data
- Purchase/manage incentives
- Maintain DC budget
- Complete monthly report to supervisor
- Community engagement and program promotion
- Assist PO with case management responsibilities when needed
- Coordinate yearly Advisory Board meetings
- Facilitate Thinking for a Change
- Maintain drug testing supplies
- Coordinate quarterly best practice standard meetings with teams and NDSU
- Promote adherence to best practice standards
- Attend drug court trainings and conferences



What did you want to be when you grew up and are you currently doing it?

Growing up wanted to be a US Navy fighter pilot. Would eventually join the US Army (infantry). I am currently doing exactly what I am supposed to be doing.

What led you to this career and how did you get into your current field or position?

As a Detective/Sergeant with the Bismarck Police Department I was on the DC board for seven years and loved it. When the new coordinator position opened up, I knew it was a great opportunity that I couldn't pass up. I retired from law enforcement a little early to take the position.

What advice can you offer to attorneys to make your job easier?

We need them to understand the intake process for drug court, and exactly what drug court can do for their clients. Attorneys in the arena understand how much recidivist criminal activity costs society. Drug Court is designed specifically for those types of clients. Defense attorneys are the gateway to the intake process. Prosecutors can be the eyes and ears of the court, they know who the recidivist actors are and can help identify who are good candidates for drug court.

What motivates you?

Job satisfaction and fulfillment motivate me. Watching our drug court participants struggle and fight for their lives is inspirational and I learn much more from them than they could ever learn from me.



What is a typical day like at your job?

Right now, the typical day is hard to predict. I'm still learning, so everything is new to me.

What's something that surprised you about your current career path?

I never saw myself retiring from law enforcement early to chase another job. I moved towards job satisfaction and fulfillment with the new job.

Hobbies?

Anything outdoors (running, biking, hunting, hiking, etc....). Reading and puttering around with projects are also relaxing to me.

If you could meet any historical figure, who would it be?

Crazy Horse. He was the embodiment of what an altruistic leader should be. I feel like that sort of leadership is lacking in society today.

What is your favorite quote and why?

(it's Latin) Esse quam videri – To be, rather than to seem.

What could you give a 30-minute presentation about with no advance preparation?

I present on Empathic Strain/Burnout all over the state. It's something I'm passionate about and committed to educating others about.

Mike Bolme is a retired Detective Sergeant from the Bismarck Police Department. During his law enforcement career he had multiple assignments including patrol, traffic, narcotics investigator, SWAT, and supervisor in the investigation section. His time in law enforcement led him to realize the affects of empathic strain and burnout on himself and those that he worked with and supervised. This training helped him mitigate those affects and build resiliency and coping skills. He now works for the North Dakota Department of Corrections as the coordinator of the Bismarck/Mandan Drug Court.

Why Choose Mediation?

By Attorney Jack Marcil

Mediation is a form of alternative dispute resolution (ADR). It is a way of resolving disputes between two or more parties. A neutral third party, the mediator, assists the parties to negotiate their own settlement. Mediation can be a good option for many types of civil matters, including personal injury and death cases, negligence cases, breach of contract disputes, real estate disputes, employment matters, estate disputes, and divorce cases.

Several reasons exist for choosing mediation over other forms of dispute resolution, such as going to court and having a judge or jury decide the outcome. Parties to a dispute may choose mediation because it is a less expensive method for resolution. The mediation process generally takes less time than proceeding through the standard legal channels. A typical case in the hands of a lawyer and filed with the courts may take months, or even years, to resolve. With mediation a case can usually be resolved in a matter of hours.

Mediation is a confidential process. Court hearings of cases are public. Mediation and all that takes place during the mediation is confidential. The only people aware of what takes place in the mediation process are the parties and the mediator. Most of the time, all parties agree that the mediation proceedings are confidential. The only exceptions to such confidentiality rules involve disclosures of child abuse or actual or threatened criminal acts.

Mediation offers multiple and flexible possibilities for resolving a dispute. In a case filed with the courts, the parties will obtain a resolution, but that resolution is decided by a judge or jury. In mediation the parties have control over the resolution, and it can be unique to the dispute. The parties have something to say about the resolution. Mediation is more likely to produce a result that is mutually agreeable, even though all parties recognize it is a compromise.



The mediation process consists of a common purpose. The parties that seek mediation are usually there because they are ready to work towards a resolution of their dispute. The simple fact that parties are willing to mediate, in most circumstances, means they are ready to reconsider their position. Although in some jurisdictions, the court orders mandatory mediation. In that situation, the parties will not always agree to settle the case because they are not willing to compromise. They have no intention of resolving the dispute and desire a trial.



Mediation takes place with the aid of a mediator, who is a neutral third party. A good mediator is trained in conflict resolution. The mediator is able to work through the emotional aspects of the case and towards a resolution that makes sense to all parties. They may not like it, but it is a solution that resolves the dispute. During this process, the mediator may or may not suggest alternative solutions to the dispute. Whether the mediator offers advice or not, the mediator helps the parties think of possible solutions to the dispute, thus enabling all parties to find an avenue to resolve the dispute that is in the best interest of all parties.

If the parties reach an agreement during mediation, they will sign a settlement agreement, which is legally enforceable in court.

Unlike judges and arbitrators, mediators have no authority to enforce a decision. The mediation process is only successful if both parties can agree to a resolution. It is a process that has worked 90-95% of the time during my career.



Jack Marcil is a graduate of the University of North Dakota School of Law. He joined the Serkland Law Firm as a trial attorney after serving one year as an assistant attorney general for the State of North Dakota. Jack is an experienced attorney who now works as a full-time mediator and arbitrator. Throughout his legal career, he has participated in hundreds of trials, mediations, and arbitrations. He is a past president of the Cass County Bar Association and the State Bar Association of North Dakota. He is certified as a Civil Trial Specialist by the Minnesota State Bar Association and

has been certified as a Trial Advocate by the National Board of Trial Advocacy since 1980. He is qualified as a neutral arbitrator and mediator in North Dakota and Minnesota. He is also a member of the American College of Civil Trial Mediators and The National Academy of Distinguished Neutrals.

Failing to See the Forest for the Trees: What is a Judicial Outreach Liaison?

*By Judge John Grinsteiner, (retired)
State Judicial Outreach Liaison for North Dakota*

The American Bar Association’s (ABA) Judicial Division is home to the Judicial Outreach Liaisons and Judicial Fellows Program. The program began in 1998 as part of the Judicial Division’s outreach efforts to provide trial judges with access to current and evidence-based practices that would assist them in their work on the bench. ([Judicial Outreach Liaison and Fellows Program \(americanbar.org\)](https://www.americanbar.org/judicial-outreach-liaison-and-fellows-program)) While it would be accurate to say the ABA program is funded by Highway Safety grant monies from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), to say the judicial officers involved in the program nationally and through each state, are NHTSA people is failing to see the forest for the trees.

A new chapter of my personal story started in September of 2021. After 18 years of wearing judicial robes, 14 of which were spent in the treatment courts of North Dakota, I retired and became North Dakota’s first State Judicial Outreach Liaison (SJOL). I am employed through the North Dakota State University (NDSU) Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute (UGPTI). UGPTI is the research arm of NDSU, and they serve a multi-state area in the upper Midwest. ([Rural Transportation Safety and Security Center \(RTSSC\) - Home \(ugpti.org\)](https://www.ugpti.org/)) The North Dakota SJOL is managed directly by UGPTI and supervised by the North Dakota Department of Transportation Highway Safety Division (HSD). The position is funded by the state using federal funds through the ND HSD. Each state HSO/HSD identifies the federal funds (402, 405(d), 164 Transfer), or other state funds for the position.

The SJOL liaison position was considered in ND (and other states) to help provide education and information to judges on impaired driving issues and to bring added insight to committees considering impaired driving policy or programming. There were already several disciplines (treatment, research, prosecutors, defense, and law enforcement) at the table but no judicial input on any committee. The HSD researched the SJOL position and the value that the position could bring; they then also considered the structure and placement of the position so that the position could operate in a neutral environment. The HSD approached the NDSU UGPTI as UGPTI is involved in research and has an unbiased opinion of impaired driving in North Dakota. The SJOL has brought insight to many of the committee and taskforce meetings, and this has been helpful in how the HSD structures its programming and planning. This insight can’t always be gained because the judicial branch is often unavailable (due to schedules and large dockets) or are otherwise prohibited due to ethical rules and concerns.

SJOLs works closely with the district, municipal, and tribal judges of the state. Through the national ABA-JOL program, each SJOL has access to experts, presenters, and industry leaders that can be called upon for the best training, technical advice, and education, often serving as one themselves. Much like the seven degrees of Kevin Bacon, you can connect many things to the impaired driving world. From education and programming, to law enforcement, to prosecution/defense, to courts, to sentencing, and especially treatment, to address the behaviors behind impaired driving. There is a constantly changing landscape of impaired driving toxicology, especially involving cannabis and poly substance use. The SJOL works hard to bring the latest science, education, and technical advice to the judges of their states. Combining this with the latest evidence-based courtroom practices, the SJOLs can assist the bench in producing better sentences and better outcomes.

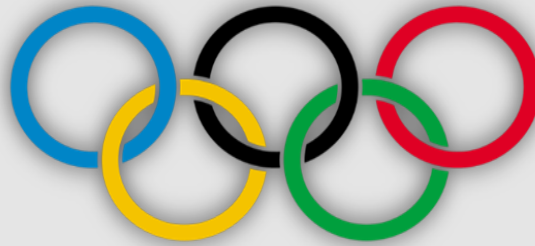
SJOLs work collaboratively with organizations like the ABA Judicial Division, the National Judicial College (NJC), the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), the Governor’s Highway Safety Association (GHSA), and All Rise (formerly the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP)). It is this last organization that I hold closest to my heart. Being able to serve as a faculty member, joining with the All Rise staff on the road as a facilitator or specialized presenter and subject matter expert is the highlight of my career. It is a true blessing to do work you love and to serve others while doing it. Treatment courts are still the very best sentencing tool that courts and judges have to battle use, abuse, and addiction. Proper screening and assessment with placement into the correct level of treatment programming, followed on by effective monitoring and enforcement, can make all the difference.

I believe it is the compassionate accountability of treatment courts that allows human connection, and it is that connection that can empower a person to make positive change. People in recovery means less impaired drivers. Less impaired drivers make for safer communities. Safer communities mean healthier families and that makes for a better forest (society) as a whole.



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W DALA gratefully acknowledges the following sponsors for their generous support throughout 2024.

Olympic Level

Revive Law Group • Mandan

Gold Level

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Mulloy Law PLLC • Bismarck

Silver Level

Crowley Fleck PLLP • Bismarck
McGee Hankla & Backes • Minot
Vinje Law Firm • Bismarck
Wheeler Wolf LLP • Bismarck

Olympic Level: \$500 Gold Level: \$250 Silver Level: \$100 Bronze Level: \$50



We asked . . . You answered

What's a pet peeve that you would make illegal if you could?

- When a boss or co-worker says “we” need to do something, when really they mean you. It’s confusing and passive aggressive.
- Interrupting someone when they haven’t finished their sentence/thought. Knowing I was going to be fined for this, might make me stop and think before I jump in, too!
- I wish it was illegal to sell food/candy that comes in a plastic wrapper at the movie theaters
- People saying “No offense but...” then saying something offensive.
- Someone talking with food in your mouth! So Gross!
- Chewing with your mouth open.
- Clicking Pens!
- Roundabouts



What does your “retirement dream” look like?

- Sitting on the beach sipping on a cool drink
- I’m saving very aggressively, I will retire young. I want to move to another country for a while, then move back and spend max amounts of time with family and friends. I love the ocean, so I want to make spending time there a priority.
- Spending time with our grandchildren and travel. I will also need to find some kind of volunteer or part-time work in the legal system. I will miss it too much.
- Traveling around the U.S. in an RV, taking up new hobbies, and spending extended time with family.
- Traveling with my husband to all the places we’ve always talked about going
- Living on a farm with lots of hobby animals and my family.
- A cabin in the mountains with a river to kayak on. Where it is very quiet.
- To be able to travel all winter and spend all summer relaxing at the lake.



Who's the most famous person you've ever met?

- I don't think I've ever met anyone famous, but I did work at a restaurant while John Hoeven was eating there
- Teddy Gentry, Randy Owen and Jeff Cook from the country music group Alabama - July 30, 1981. In the fall of that year they were named Vocal Group of the Year by the Country Music Academy!
- Cara Mund
- I haven't met anyone really famous... but growing up my dad would always get stopped and asked if he was Bill Clinton.
- Blake Lively... we graduated from Burbank High School together
- Florida Georgia Line
- I have met a lot of musicians as a roadie fresh out of college. But I would have to say Brett Michaels was the best.
- Dierks Bentley
- Hoda Kotb - 10 years ago, during the filming of the Today show, we were standing outside in the crowd. About 25 people from the crowd were selected to go inside the studio to listen to the band, Bastille. We were some of the lucky ones to get selected. While we were walking inside to the studio set, Hoda Kotb walked by and took a picture with us! During this trip, we also attended Katie Couric's show (with guests Jane Seymour and Jennifer Esposito) and Live with Kelly & Michael's show (with guest Idina Menzel).
- Tom Osborne - at the time he had returned to Nebraska after serving three terms as U.S. Congressman for Nebraska's Third District. My husband was doing a leadership class at work and was tasked with interviewing a leader he admired. He took a shot and emailed Mr. Osborne's office and was shocked when he received a response with an invitation to come to Lincoln for the interview and also allowed it to be recorded so I got to tag along to run the camera. (Remember the old camcorders before there were recording features on cell phones? And yes, I did remember to hit record and took the cover off the lens!) The interview was in his office at Memorial Stadium - he talked about coaching at Nebraska, his time in Congress, but was most proud of the TeamMates Mentoring Program - <https://teammates.org/>. Since I was only the cameraman, I unfortunately, did not get a picture with him, but will always remember that visit to Lincoln.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

May:

- 15 Kathy Johnson
- 22 Melissa Hamilton
- 22 James Hagen

June:

- 6 Tiffany Knopik
- 14 Carmen Dukeman
- 28 Stephanie Howe
- 29 Megan Ontis

July:

- 2 Becky Kocourek
- 18 Anna Oleksik
- 20 Vicki Kunz
- 24 Belinda Zabka
- 25 Molly Guy





1st Vice President's Report

By Melissa Hamilton, ACP

Happy Spring! It seems that winter is finally over and spring has finally arrived and everyone is busy getting out in their yards, preparing for graduations and the end of a school year. I cannot wait for the longer days of summer.

The WDALA Education Committee – Melissa M. Klimpel, ACP, Stephanie Howe, Megan Klym, Ashley Miller, CP, and I have been busy planning education opportunities not only for WDALA members, but legal professionals in the State of North Dakota.

On Wednesday, February 7, 2024, WDALA hosted a luncheon teleseminar via Zoom – “Excel in the New Year” presented by Mark Klimpel. The presentation offered all the best tips and tricks for Excel to help attendees excel in the year ahead. Registration was free to WDALA members and \$10 for non-members. There were 23 attendees, 21 WDALA members and 2 non-members. WDALA netted a profit of \$20.00 on the teleseminar.

On April 30, 2024, Ashley Miller, CP and I traveled to Minot to prepare for the WDALA Spring Seminar on May 1, 2024, at the Sleep Inn & Suites. We were a little worried when we checked in as the front desk did not have reservations for us, nor could they confirm that we had the theater room for the seminar the next morning. They finally got us checked in and were nice enough to give us adjoining rooms just down the hall from the Theater Room.

Ashley and I were up and ready to go early the next morning, well Ashley was ready, I was running a little behind. Ashley went to grab a cart to load the seminar supplies as I finished getting ready. I opened my adjoining room door to load the seminar materials from my room to the cart in Ashley’s room. As I placed the last box on the cart (the box that was holding the adjoining room door open) I turned around just in time to see my adjoining room door swing shut. I was locked out of my room - I had not yet left my room for the day and still had the deadbolt locked and lever/chain in place. I was also not quite ready, I had bare feet, missing my blazer (luckily, I wasn’t so far behind I was still in my jammies), nor did I have my backpack that contained the electronic devices necessary to run the virtual component of the seminar. I hurried down to the front desk and after a lot of back and forth they were able to get me into my room in less than 30 minutes. I was able to quickly finish packing, put my shoes on, don my blazer and go help Ashley finish the final preparations for the seminar. It was not the way I wanted to start the day out, thank goodness Ashley was prepared, or who knows how the seminar would have turned out. Apparently, my travel gremlins follow me everywhere.

The seminar started off with the North Central Drug Court Program. Wade Enget, Mountrail County State's Attorney, Roza Larson, Ward County State's Attorney, and Christene Reiersen started the presentation, talking about the start of the Drug Court, as well as statistics on DUI arrests and unintentional drug overdose deaths. A sobering statistic he shared was Mountrail, Sioux, and Benson Counties have the highest rates of overdose deaths in North Dakota since 2019, with over 2x the state overdose death rate. Mountrail County lead with 5.72 overdose deaths per 10,000, with Sioux County at 4.62, and Benson County at 3.69. Bob Hayes, Licensed Addiction Counsel, shared the treatment component of Drug Court, followed by Vanessa Waller, NDDOCR, Probation and Parole, talking about the coordination of the Drug Court. After the break, Heather Howe, the former Drug Court Coordinator spoke and talked about how her work with the Drug Court inspired her to further her education and continue her work with those addicted. She then introduced Jeannie Hochstrasser, a graduate of the Drug Court, who spoke about her path to addiction and her work to graduate from Drug Court. Her journey was long and not easy, but she has shown what Drug Court can do and how it has benefited her. Judge Stacy Louser closed out the presentation and talked about her work with Drug Court.

After the completion of the Drug Court presentation, WDALA President Anna Heinen presented a check from WDALA to the Drug Court. Accepting on behalf of the Drug Court was Vanessa Waller, NDDOCR, Parole and Probation, North Central Drug Court Coordinator.

After lunch and the Board Meeting, the seminar started again with a presentation by Attorney Andria Mueller, Equity Partner, Legacy Design Strategies on Estate Plans: Wills vs. Trusts, from Planning to Execution. She provided attendees with useful information on how to plan for what happens to your estate after you are gone and told attendees to plan for two things – disability and death. She also provided attendees with a useful flow chart for Trust Administration.

After a short break, Attorney Thomas A. Dickson, Dickson Law Office closed out the afternoon with his presentation "Before You Get to Heaven . . . A Primer for Lawyers." Mr. Dickson expressed his appreciation for paralegals and showed a clip of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rodgers and likened a quote from Ginger Rodgers to paralegals. When asked about dancing with Fred Astaire, Ginger replied "I did everything he did but backwards and in high heels." Mr. Dickson explained how law firms/lawyers need to plan for the future and how plan for closing out a law practice. But like all good trial attorneys, they never really know when to quit or say "no more!"

There were 27 registrations for the Spring Seminar, 8 in person attendees and 19 online/virtual attendees. After payment of seminar expenses and the Drug Court donation, WDALA netted a profit of \$656.17.

The WDALA Fall Seminar will be held September 9-10, 2024, in Bismarck at the Heritage Center. The lineup of speakers has been finalized. The seminar will start on September 9th with a Keynote Address by North Dakota Attorney General, Drew Wrigley, followed by a presentation from NALA President Elect, Cheryl Nodarse, ACP. The morning will end with a presentation on Cybersecurity and Ethics by Professor Blake Klinkner. In the afternoon there will be a presentation on Human Trafficking by Stacy Schaffer, James Shaw, and Analena Lunde. The 40th Anniversary Celebration will follow starting at 5:00 p.m.

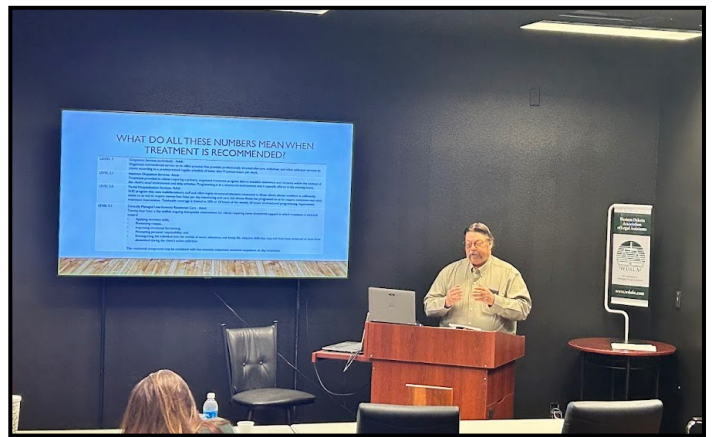
On September 10th, the seminar will start with a presentation on Empathic Strain/Burnout by Mike Bolme, followed by the WDALA Annual Meeting. The afternoon will kick off with a presentation by North Dakota Supreme Court Justices Doug Bahr and Lisa Fair McEvers. We will start by watching a recorded Supreme Court Oral Argument followed by a discussion on the case with the Justices. Petra Hulm, Clerk of the Supreme Court, will also talk about updates at the Supreme Court, including the new public portal.

You will not want to miss the seminar or the 40th Anniversary Celebration! Mark your calendars now and plan to attend.

Seminar Photos



Wade Enget, Roza Larson, and
Christene Reiersen



Bob Hayes

President Anna Heinen presenting a check to Drug Court from WDALA. Accepting on behalf of Drug Court was Vanessa Waller, NDDOCR, Parole and Probation, North Central Drug Court Coordinator





Vanessa Waller



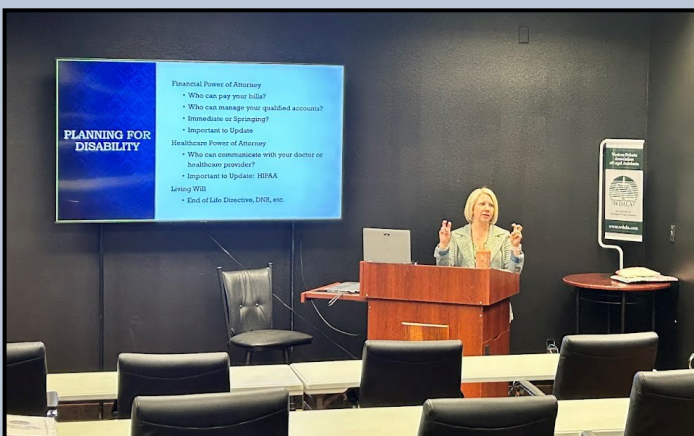
Jeannie Hochstrasser and Heather Howe



Heather Howe and Jeannie Hochstrasser



Judge Stacy Louser



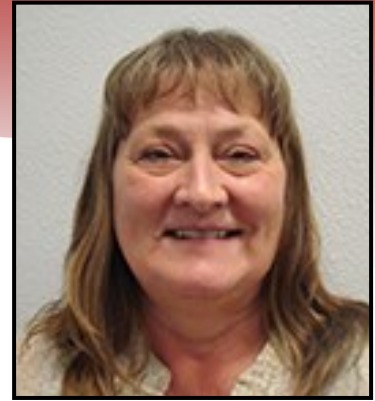
Andria Mueller



Tom Dickson

2nd Vice President's Report

By Kathy Johnson



As of this date, our membership stands at 40 members: 34 Active, 1 Student and 5 Emeritus.

If anyone needs to contact me or has any questions regarding membership, you can email me at kjohnson@ndcourts.gov.

FOLLOW NALA:

Facebook: NALA - The Paralegal Association

Website: www.nala.org

Treasurer's Report

By Cassy Clark, CP



I am pleased to report that as of April 10, 2024, our associations account balance stands at \$13,271.45. As we look ahead to the coming months, we have exciting plans in store for our members, including networking events, educational workshops, and community outreach programs. Your support allows us to continue offering these valuable opportunities to our members and to fulfill our mission of serving our community.



NALA Liaison's Report

By Ashley Miller, CP

WDALA board members have been working on nominations for awards that will be presented at the NALA Conference. The board members are also selecting our nominations for the director and secretary positions for the NALA Affiliated Associations.

Currently, NALA is preparing for the 2024 Conference & Expo which will be held July 11 – 13, 2024 in Louisville, Kentucky. Both in-person and virtual options are available. Information on the conference can be found at: <https://nala.org/nala-conference-expo/> Early Bird registration is \$169 for members and ends May 10th. Thereafter, the Standard Rate is \$199 for members. If you are a NALA member, your \$80 credit can be used for the conference.

I strongly encourage anyone who is considering sitting for the Certified Paralegal (CP) exam to register for the CP review courses available at the conference. I attended these courses virtually for the 2021 conference and gained so much knowledge from them. If anyone has questions about the NALA conference or the CP exam, please reach out to me.

SAVE THE DATE!

2024

Nala **N**

CONFERENCE & EXPO

JULY 11-13
LOUISVILLE, KY
OR VIRTUAL

KNOCK YOUR CAREER OUT OF THE PARK WITH **NALA**
THE PARALEGAL ASSOCIATION

Region III Report

By Trisha Kinnischtzke



Members of Region III kept busy over the winter volunteering for the Drug Court Christmas project and the 10th anniversary of the Santa Run. Now we're shifting gears to summer and planning has begun for the annual Drug Court picnic. This will be the 13th year WDALA has hosted a picnic for the Bismarck-Mandan Drug Court participants and their families!

Region III monthly meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month over the noon hour at A&B Pizza South. We will not be meeting for monthly luncheons in June, July, and August, but will resume in the fall.

SAVE THE DATE!

Region III's Drug Court Picnic
Thursday, June 27, 2024

6:00 pm

Sertoma Park - Shelter #6

Riverside Park Road & West Arbor Ave, Bismarck

Officers/Executive Committee and Board of Directors



President
Anna Heinen



1st Vice President
Melissa Hamilton, ACP



2nd Vice President
Kathy Johnson, CP



Secretary
ReBecka Wohl, ACP



Treasurer
Cassy Clark, CP



NALA Liaison
Ashley Miller, CP



Parliamentarian &
Region I Co-Director
Holly Radke, ACP



Region I Co-Director
Anna Oleksik, CP



Region II Director
Andrea Johnson



Region III Director
Trisha Kinnischtzke

WDALA's Committees

Education

Melissa Hamilton, ACP (Chair); Stephanie Howe; Anna Heinen; Ashley Miller, CP; Jen Defoe, ACP; Megan Klym; and Melissa Klimpel, ACP

Membership

Kathy Johnson, CP (Chair); ReBecka Wohl, ACP; and Andrea Johnson

Finance/Budget

Cassy Clark, CP (Chair)

CLA Chairman

Ashley Miller, CP

Nominations/Elections

Andrea Johnson and Melissa Klimpel, ACP

Legal Assistant Day

Megan Ontis and Ashley Miller, CP

Auditing

Holly Radke, ACP

Ethics/Professional Development

Melissa Hamilton, ACP

State Bar/NDTLA Liaison

Ashley Miller, CP

Historian

Laurie Guenther, ACP

Student Liaison

Ashley Miller, CP

Public Relations

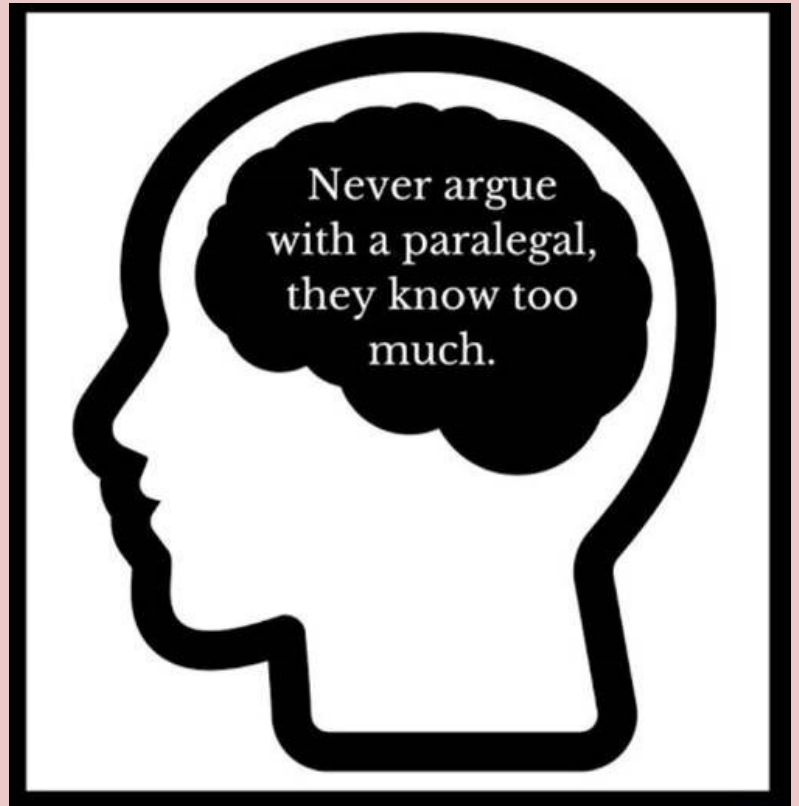
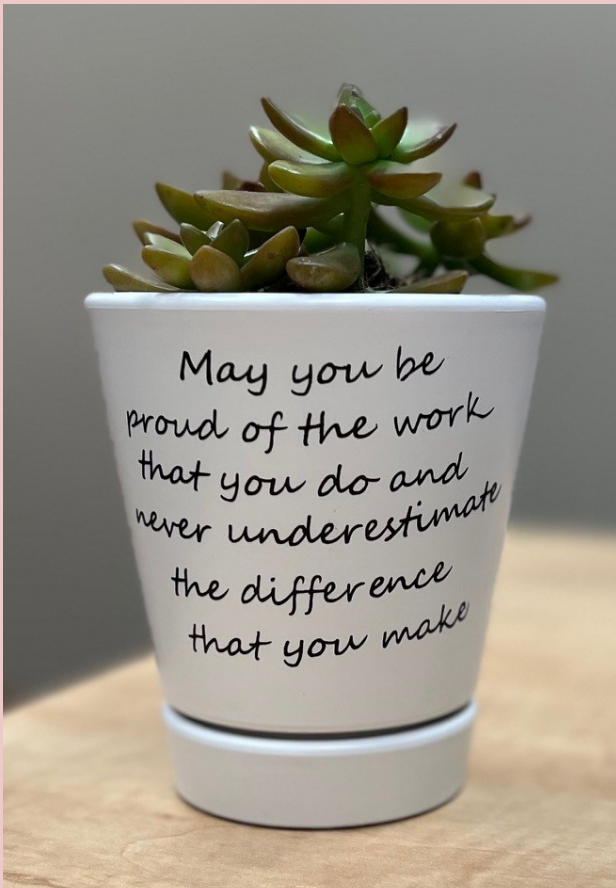
Melissa Klimpel, ACP (*Summons* Editor); Anna Heinen (Website/Facebook); Tami Hulm, ACP; Laurie Guenther, ACP; Candy Schafer, CLA; Andrea Johnson; and ReBecka Wohl, ACP

Sponsorship

Anna Heinen; Kimberly Perkuhn; and Dehan Schwan

40th Anniversary

Melissa Klimpel, ACP (Chair); Trisha Kin-nischtzke; Candy Schafer; ReBecka Wohl, ACP; and Laurie Guenther, ACP



paralegal
[par-uh-lee-guhl] noun

1. a person who babysits lawyers while writing a 10,000 word document and calls it a "brief".
2. someone who solves problems you didn't know you had in ways you do not understand.
See also superhero.



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Website: www.wdala.org