

2026-2027 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION

THE ROLE OF AREA 1, 2, 3 DIRECTORS

Area directors are required to either reside or be employed within areas 1, 2, or 3. Their role involves fulfilling the duties assigned to them by the Board officers. These directors will serve a two-year term.

DISCLAIMER:

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

CANDIDATE FOR AREA 1 DIRECTOR: CLAIRE E. SMITH, ACP



Paralegal Since: 01/03/2006

NALA Member Since: 06/24/1994

Educational Background: Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, Virginia Wesleyan College, Norfolk, VA (1984) | Certificate in Legal Assistance - Litigation, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA (1985) | Certificate in Legal Assistance - Real Estate, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA (1986) | Administrative Assistant Certificate, Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA (1996)

Professional Certification/Awards: Completion of NALA's Leadership Basics course (June 2020) | Advanced Certified Paralegal - E-discovery (ACP) (June 2019-present) | Recipient of NALA Affiliates Award - Nominated by VAPPA (July 2018) | Advanced Certified Paralegal - Premises Liability (ACP) (June 2017-present) | Advanced Certified Paralegal - Intentional Torts (ACP) (Oct. 2013-present) | Advanced Certified Paralegal - Individual Medical Liability (ACP) (Nov. 2012-present) | Advanced Certified Paralegal - Entity Medical Liability (ACP) (August 2012-present) | Advanced Certified Paralegal - Automobile Accidents (ACP) (April 2012-present) | Advanced Certified Paralegal - Criminal Litigation (ACP) (Oct. 2011-present) | Advanced Certified Paralegal - Trial Practice (ACP) (July 2011-present) | Advanced Certified Paralegal - Discovery (ACP) (May 2011-present) | Certified Legal Assistant (CLA) (Sept. 1990-May 2011) | Recipient of NALA Affiliates Award - Nominated by VAPPA (July 2012) | Recipient of Founders' Award by TALA (May 1995)

Volunteer Activities: NALA: Area 1 Director (July 2024 to present) | Facilitator, Roundtable Discussion, "Criminal Law," at 2023 NALA Conference & Expo | Recordkeeper, Roundtable Discussion, "Office Management/Supervising Staff/Legal Tech," at 2023 NALA Conference & Expo | Member, Committee to Approve the 2022 NALA Affiliated Associations Annual Meeting Minutes (2022-2023) | Member, Committee to Approve the Minutes of the 2016 Annual Meeting of the Membership (2016-2017) | Affiliated Associations Secretary (2012-2014) | Three-time Presenter, NALA Campus LIVE! (Fall 2007-Fall 2008) | Credentials/Nominations & Elections Chair (2006-2007) | Member, Affiliates Task Force (2000-2001) | Annual Conference Attendee since 1993 | Virginia Peninsula Paralegal Association (VAPPA): NALA Liaison (2005-2007, 2008-2009, 2010 to present) | President (2003-2005) | Recording Secretary (2001-2003, 2007-2008, 2009 to present) | Chair, Program Committee (2013 to present) | Co-Chair, Program Committee (2010-2013) | Co-Chair, Paralegals' Week Committee (2005) | Member, Newsletter Committee (2006-2010) | Member, Nominations and Elections Committee for several years | Member since September 2000 | Tidewater Paralegal Association (TPA) (Formerly Tidewater Association of Legal Assistants - TALA): Held positions of NALA Liaison, Secretary, and Parliamentarian | Past Member, Newsletter Committee (served 10 years) | Past Instructor, CLA Study Group (served several years) | Member since October 1985

Membership in Other Associations: Virginia Peninsula Paralegal Association (VAPPA) | Tidewater Paralegal Association (TPA)

Other Qualifications or Comments: Background in several areas of litigation, including commercial, condemnation, insurance defense, and collections as well as traffic and criminal defense | Owner of Claire-i-Cal, a business that provides typing, editing, and proofreading services to authors since August 1997 | Notary Public

Serving on the board of directors of a national association requires a unique skill set that includes passion for the profession, an understanding of the association's mission and vision, and the ability to commit time and energy to advancing the strategic goals of the association. Tell us why serving on the NALA Board of Directors is important to you. Share your achievements related to board service and how your experience makes you suitable for the position.

Serving on the NALA Board of Directors is very important to me. I am quite dedicated to the Virginia Peninsula Paralegal Association (VAPPA). I joined as an active member in September 2000 and have served as an officer ever since May 2001. I have also served on various committees over the past years. For the Tidewater Association of Legal Assistants (TALA), I held three offices and was a member on two committees for several years. My service to NALA includes being Credentials/Nominations & Elections Chair for one year, Affiliated Associations Secretary for two years, and member on three committees. I am the current 2024-2026 Area 1 Director. I have attended all required board meetings in person, served on various awards committees, participated in the fall 2025 Strategic Planning, and most recently, assisted with the review process of proposed updates to the NALA Bylaws and NALA Policy and Procedures Manual. I would be so honored to continue in a second term and feel that my overall volunteerism has taught me the necessary skills for the position. I would offer that same dedication to the national board and the members, aspiring to complete all that is asked of me.

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