

Indiana's paralegals see their profession grow

For many years, the Indiana Paralegal Association (IPA) and the Paralegal Committee of the Indianapolis Bar Association (IndyBar) have held a joint luncheon meeting once a year. For the last two years, the paralegal (affiliate) members of the Indiana State Bar Association have also participated. The joint luncheon meeting is a chance for the members of each association to have an opportunity to network; it also provides a forum to give updates and share information about the benefits of membership and what each association is doing. These meetings are occasions for the leaders to symbolically “exchange gifts” to recognize that each is not in competition with the other, but instead to confirm their mutual respect and support. From time to time, the associations have participated in joint projects such as donating teddy bears to local law enforcement agencies’ “Bears on Patrol” programs.

This is a particularly important and exciting time in our profession. Each time the organizations can work together to educate both attorneys and the public about paralegals, the better it is for our profession as a whole. Each association has its own purpose, and there are definitely benefits to being a member of each. The bar associations provide opportunities to network with both local and statewide members of the bar and judiciary. IPA membership offers networking and professional development for the paralegal profession as a whole.

The joint luncheon meeting is a good time to remind ourselves about the mission of the various associations:

IPA shares its purpose as follows:

“The purpose of IPA is to establish good fellowship among association members and members of the legal community; to encourage a higher order of ethical and professional attainment; to further education and training among members of the profession; and to cooperate and foster working relationships with bar associations and other professional

organizations.” Indiana Paralegal Association, indianaparalegals.org/AboutIPA (last visited Aug. 20, 2013).

The Paralegal Committee of the IndyBar lists its mission as follows:

“The purpose of the Paralegal Committee is to promote the objectives of the Association within the paralegal field. The Committee studies and reports upon proposed, necessary and desirable federal and state legislation; encourages members of the Association interested in the issues of the paralegal profession throughout Indiana to meet and confer upon their various issues through this committee; provides a communications network, promotes the legal education of members through the sponsoring of meetings, institutes and conferences and by preparing and publishing legal writings in the paralegal field.” Indianapolis Bar Association, indybar.org/interest-groups/paralegal (last visited Aug. 20, 2013).

The Affiliate Membership Committee of the ISBA shares its mission as follows:

“The Affiliate Membership Committee shall serve to integrate paralegal, law office administrator, law librarian and court administrator members into the Association by informing the various types of affiliate members of the programs and committees that will best serve their various interests. It shall work in conjunction with the Membership & Membership Benefits Committee to increase the number of affiliate members in the Association. It shall monitor the progress of the committee and report to the Membership & Membership Benefits Committee and Board of Governors as necessary.” Indiana State Bar Association, tinyurl.com/ISBA-affiliate-membership (last visited Aug. 20, 2013).

The joint luncheon meeting is a tradition that definitely has its place in the state’s history of the paralegal profession. As we celebrated another opportunity to come together this August, we had the chance to see how our profession has grown and to thank these associations for their hard work and efforts on behalf of paralegals in Indiana. 🙏

FAIR COMMENT



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