

Paralegal Student Association

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The Semester is Half-Over!

In case you missed it...

In September:

- ✓ **The PSA was relaunched!**
At the 1st PSA meeting, members elected officers and established PSA goals for the future.
- ✓ **Impeachment Inquiry Against Trump Announced**
The U.S. House of Representatives launched an official impeachment inquiry against President Trump, alleging he pressured the Ukrainian government to give him dirt on his potential 2020 presidential opponent, Joe Biden, or else he would withhold aid (*a quid pro quo*).

In October:

- ✓ **NOVA hired a new President**
Dr. Anne M. Kress officially assumes her role in January 2020.
- ✓ **The 2nd PSA Meeting**
A first-semester paralegal studies student won a \$20 Amazon gift card playing Constitutional Kahoot! We also hosted an educational and interactive Q&A with four professional paralegals from government and private sectors.
- ✓ **The Washington Nationals won the World Series**
After a compelling 7-game stretch, the Washington Nationals beat the Houston Astros to win their first World Series ever!

(So Far) In November:

- ✓ **Virginia went blue**
For the first time in 26 years, state elections transformed Virginia from deep red (Republican) to solid blue (Democratic).
- ✓ **PSA Field Trip to the National Archives**
Professor Meyer took PSA members to the National Archives to see the U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Declaration of Independence, as well as a special exhibit on Women's Rights.

Mark Your Calendars!

Upcoming PSA Meetings

Friday, November 22

6:00-9:00pm | Room AA-158

We're changing it up for the 3rd PSA meeting! Join us in a comfy lecture hall for a Mix & Mingle Movie night! Don't forget to bring your favorite movie snacks to share for show time at 7pm.

Tuesday, December 10

5:30-6:30pm | Room AA-475

For the last PSA meeting of the semester, everyone is invited to partake in a white elephant gift exchange. You'll get another shot to win Kahootz Trivia for an even bigger prize! And we'll toast all of our December grads!

Important NVCC Dates

Monday, November 11

Open registration for the Spring 2020 semester begins

Wednesday, November 27- Sunday, December 1

No Classes – Thanksgiving Break

Monday, December 16

Examinations End

Need something to talk about over Thanksgiving dinner, besides family drama and the Impeachment Inquiry? Impress your friends and family by knowing Virginia's newest laws!



▷ Vices

The legal age to buy tobacco and nicotine vapor products increased from 18 to 21; establishments can now advertise happy hour drinks and prices; and lottery winners of \$10 million or more can remain anonymous.

▷ Schools

Public schools can now start two weeks before Labor Day, so long as they allow for a 4-day weekend for kids to go to Kings Dominion (no joke); private schools can hire "school resource officers" to carry firearms; students and teachers in public schools will receive training at least once a year on what to do in the event of an active shooter situation; school nurses can no longer be prosecuted for administering THC oil to students with doctors' notes; and school nurses (as well as other public workers) are now authorized to carry and administer the opioid reversal drug, Naloxone.



▷ Driving

Virginia's first law on hands-free driving only applies to construction zones; children have to be in rear-facing car seats until they are 2 or reach the weight requirement; and you will now get a misdemeanor for "reckless driving" if you do not move over when someone is trying to pass you in the left lane.

▷ Fourth Amendment Alert

Police can use drones to look at the home of someone they have an arrest warrant for.

▷ Capital Murder Expanded

After Virginia State Trooper, Michael Walter, was fatally shot during a routine traffic stop and his killer only got 36 years in prison, Walter's widow heavily advocated for legislation that now includes murder of a police officer or public safety official in the line of duty in the definition of "capital murder," which carries a mandatory minimum sentence of life in prison (and the option of utilizing the death penalty).

▷ Tommie's Law

When a man tied his pit bull, Tommie, to a fence, doused Tommie in lighter fluid, and set him on fire, prosecutors could not bring charges against the owner until or unless Tommie actually died (under Virginia's prior anti-cruelty statute). While Tommie, sadly, did not survive his injuries, his memory lives on now that Virginia has made cruelty to animals a felony, regardless of whether the animal lives or dies, and perpetrators can be sentenced 1-5 years in jail,



▷ Heaven's Law

Doctors were concerned when 11-year-old Heaven Watkins came into the E.R. with a severe, suspicious burn on her hand, but Child Protective Services (CPS) released Heaven back into the care of her mother after a Virginia background check came up clear. Unbeknownst to CPS, Heaven's mother had pending child abuse charges in Minnesota, and a few months later, Heaven was tragically beaten to death by her mother and mother's boyfriend. CPS and similar agencies are now authorized and required to run background checks with other states before returning children to homes with potential abuse and neglect.



Over 100 new and revised laws in Virginia took effect this past July 1, 2019.

Learn more at: www.dailypress.com/virginia/dp-nws-new-virginia-laws-20190628-story.html

TAKE 5 with Professor Fiorentino



Say hello to NVCC's resident California girl, Professor Fiorentino!

Hailing from Fresno, California, Professor Fiorentino graduated from Pepperdine University in gorgeous Malibu before going on to earn her law degree from San Joaquin College of Law in Fresno. She is licensed to practice law in the State of California, and has freelanced as both a paralegal and attorney, drafting briefs on a wide range of civil issues. With 21 years of teaching experience, Professor Fiorentino enjoys teaching a wide-range of college-level classes from Criminal Forensics, Crimes and Society, American Government, Business Law, Legal Research and Writing, Business English and Business Grammar. Professor Fiorentino also teaches at the University of the District of Columbia Community College (UDC-CC) and the UDC David A. Clarke School of Law. When she is not teaching, Professor Fiorentino enjoys writing fiction, going to the gym, reading, traveling, and spending time with her boyfriend and pets (three dogs and a cat) at home in Alexandria, Virginia.

1. You majored in Creative Writing in undergrad, but went on to study law and earn your J.D. What made you switch and want to pursue a career in law?

I considered law because of the lack of job opportunities in the Creative Writing field. Ironically, in my twenties, I did not want to teach and enrolled in a paralegal program because I knew it would involve a lot of reading and writing. I was halfway through my first semester when I discovered how much I loved the law and understanding the complexities of our legal system. It was because of that passion that I first began working with low-income clients, informing them of their rights and options. While I was awaiting my bar results (yes, I passed the first time), I was offered an adjunct position teaching American Government to community college students. I fell in love with teaching and continued to teach even after I began working as an attorney.

2. Having worked as both a paralegal and lawyer, what would you say lawyers expect most from paralegals? On the flip side, what can and should paralegals expect from their supervising attorneys?

Both answers are the same: excellent oral and communication skills, excellent time management and organization skills, flexibility, ability to work under highly stressful situations. Did I mention communication skills?

3. What is one piece of advice you would like to share with Paralegal Studies students graduating this December?

Persistence! Network. Be willing to start in a law firm in a non-legal capacity.

4. What is your favorite legal movie, television show, documentary, book, author, podcast, or case to watch, read, or listen to?

My favorite legal authors are Lisa Scottoline, John Grisham, and Jodi Picoult. I try and read fiction every night, though sometimes it's not more than a paragraph. My favorite legal show was "Good Wife." I do love to catch old episodes of "Law and Order: SVU." Favorite legal movie would have to be "The Firm" or "The Paper Chase."

5. Is there a secret Fiorentino family recipe you would be willing to share for Thanksgiving?

Never. Ha, ha. Not a Fiorentino recipe, but students always want to know my recipe for cookies...

(Check out Professor Fiorentino's secret recipe on the last page!)

November 2019 PSA Newsletter (cont.)



Paralegal Studies student, Amie Shafer, shares eight recommendations for what to watch if you're in the mood for real-life Whistleblowers this November.

The Whistleblower

Whistleblower: A U.N. Police Officer
Blew the Whistle On: A prominent U.S. government and military contractor, DynCorp International, facilitating the sex-trafficking of children in Bosnia
Starring: Rachel Weisz & Benedict Cumberbatch

On the Waterfront

Whistleblowers: A NJ Dockworker
Blew the Whistle On: A labor union's involvement with NYC's major crime families in carrying out and covering up numerous murders and other illegal activities happening on the Hudson
Starring: Marlon Brando

Spotlight

Whistleblower: The Boston Globe
Blew the Whistle On: The Catholic Church's cover-up of child abuse in the Boston area
Starring: Michael Keaton, Mark Ruffalo & Rachel McAdams

Silkwood

Whistleblower: Nuclear Power Plant Worker
Blew the Whistle On: A nuclear power plant's attempt to deceive and conceal workers from knowing they were being exposed to deadly radiation on the job
Starring: Meryl Streep, Kurt Russell & Cher

All the King's Men

Whistleblowers: Two *Washington Post* Reporters
Blew the Whistle On: President Nixon and the attempted burglary of the DNC at the Watergate Complex in Washington D.C.
Starring: Robert Redford & Dustin Hoffman

The Post

Whistleblowers: Two *Washington Post* Executives
Blew the Whistle On: The U.S. government's secret 20-year involvement in Vietnam
Starring: Meryl Streep & Tom Hanks

Kill the Messenger

Whistleblower: An Unemployed Journalist
Blew the Whistle On: The CIA importing huge amount of crack cocaine into the U.S. to fund the Nicaraguan Contras' rebel army
Starring: Jeremy Renner

The Insider

Whistleblower: A Scientist Hired by Big Tobacco
Blew the Whistle On: The major tobacco companies hiding the real health risks of cigarettes from consumers
Starring: Russell Crowe & Al Pacino

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Professor Fiorentino's Fabulous Island Chocolate Chip Cookies

- 1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) butter or margarine, softened*
*Do not melt in microwave. It will change consistency of dough!
- 3/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 large egg
- 1 3/4 cups milk chocolate chips
(I have also used white chocolate and chocolate/peanut butter)



PREHEAT Oven to 375° F.

COMBINE Flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt in small bowl. Beat butter, brown sugar, granulated sugar and vanilla extract in large mixer bowl until creamy. Beat in egg. Gradually beat in flour mixture. Stir in morsels. Place mixture in the fridge for 10-15 minutes to stop cookies from spreading while cooking. Drop by rounded tablespoon onto ungreased baking sheets. (I line them with parchment paper).

BAKE 8 to 11 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Cool on baking sheets for 2 minutes; remove to wire racks to cool completely.