



## TYLER AREA ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL PROFESSIONALS OCTOBER, 2020 NEWSLETTER

### *President's Message*

Leatha Kopech, PP, PLS

Who else have been LOVING this weather??? These cooler temperatures are amazing, and so early in the year...I certainly am not complaining. Thank goodness we live in the country; it has allowed us to sleep with the windows open.

Did you know that The State Bar of Texas was the first bar association in the United States to create a separate division for paralegals. The Paralegal Division of the State Bar of Texas (the Division) was created on October 23, 1981, and has been in existence for 38 years. In honor of the many contributions made by the paralegal community and the Paralegal Division, the Senate of the State of Texas adopted [Proclamation No. 1144](#), recognizing October 23 as Texas Paralegal Day.

TAALP will celebrate Texas Paralegal Day at our regular monthly meeting on **Thursday EVENING, October 8, 2019, at 5:30 p.m.** (or as soon as you can get there after work) at Jalapeno Tree Restaurant, 420 W SW Loop 323, Tyler, TX. We have the honor of having Reeve Jackson speak to us this month. Although the topic is still to be determined, we will receive one free hour of NALA and TBLS approved CLE credit. As part of our Texas Paralegal Day celebration that evening, TAALP is buying one free happy hour adult beverage and providing a special sweet treat too! In addition to the awesome door prizes provided to us by our meeting sponsor, which is **Lexitas**, TAALP will be giving out some additional door prizes...so there will be lots of treats and goodies. Come and mix and mingle with others in our profession who we so often never have the opportunity to get to know. Thank you **Lexitas** for sponsoring our meeting this month, and also thank you **Collins Investigations** for helping sponsor this Texas Paralegal Day celebration.

We are going to hold our Christmas meeting event this year at Potpourri House. The ornament exchange the past couple of years was a big hit, so we will do that again this year, so be on the lookout for a cute ornament to exchange while you are out shopping (they are already everywhere)...price limit is \$10. Mark your calendar for **December 10<sup>th</sup> at noon** for this fun and festive event.

Your generosity and willingness to share your abundance never ceases to amaze me! Last year we were able to provide lots of toys to children and items to nursing home residents during the Christmas holidays because of your giving spirit. Candice Dillon, our Community Service Chairperson, is currently looking into both a Thanksgiving and a Christmas project, she will get details to you soon about our Thanksgiving project. You can email Candy at [candice.dillon@lgbs.com](mailto:candice.dillon@lgbs.com) to learn more about how you can help. Your generosity and charitable spirit are very much appreciated.

As you know, our community service recipient in August and September was Achieving Dreams. We were able to donate a total of \$165 in cash & gift cards for craft supplies to be used for making items for their annual Circle of Caring fundraiser. IT is a virtual event this year and is scheduled for October 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.; however, the store is already open and the silent auction begins October 5<sup>th</sup>, so I encourage you all to check it out at [www.achievingdreams.org](http://www.achievingdreams.org).

Candice Dillon is also our Sunshine Committee chair person this year. She will keep up with the tradition of sending birthday cards and get well cards when needed. So, if you know of a member who is sick, facing surgery, death of a family member, or any other crisis, please let us know. We care!

THANK YOU members, vendors and sponsors who make our professional organization what it is. You are AWESOME!

See you Thursday!

Leatha Kopech

**TAALP can help get your name out to our members!**

**For more information, email:**  
**[brandit@brownbaumansmith.com](mailto:brandit@brownbaumansmith.com)**

**Transcript Ad Rates (Per Month):**

**Business Card - \$10.00**

**Quarter Page - \$20.00**

**Half Page - \$30.00**

**Full Page - \$50.00**

### **NOTICES:**

The price of lunch is \$15.00, which covers an hour of CLE and a full course meal (salad, entrée, drink and dessert). Feel free to bring your own lunch with you should you chose not to eat the catered meal.

When responding to your evite, please note whether you will attend and whether or not you will eat so an accurate count can be provided to the caterer. If an RSVP is made with a notation that a meal will be paid for and you do not attend the meeting, you will still be responsible for the cost of that meal. Those with extenuating circumstances will be taken under advisement.

Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you at the next meeting!

**TYLER AREA ASSOCIATION OF LEGAL PROFESSIONALS  
MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2020 BOARD MEETING**

By: Laura Brownlow, Recording Secretary

The executive Board met at Texas Music City Grill on Wednesday, September 30, 2020 for the October monthly board meeting. The following board members were present: Leatha Kopech, President; Jo Ruth Hancock, President-Elect; Tina Knighton, Second Vice President; Brandi Turchi, Corresponding Secretary; Laura Brownlow, Recording Secretary; Lisa Betts, Treasurer; Carrie King, Executive Advisor; and Helen Koch, Parliamentarian

Melissa Wallace, First Vice President – Absent

Leatha Kopech called the meeting to order at 12:10 pm.

**LEATHA KOPECH, President:**

**Old Business:**

- 2020-21 Renewal Membership total to date 79
- September meeting attendance 28

**New Business:**

- October 23 is Texas Paralegal Day. We will honor our Paralegals at the October membership meeting.
- October 8 is our membership meeting: \*Evening Meeting\* Location – Jalapeno Tree; Sponsors – Lexitas and Collins Investigations
- Door prizes for the October meeting – gift cards from Collins Investigations
- November Community Service – Food Bank
- Christmas Luncheon – Potpourri House tentatively reserved. We will do the ornament exchange like we’ve done the last couple of years (\$10 limit).

**JO RUTH HANCOCK, President-Elect:**

**MELISSA WALLACE, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: - Absent**

- Evite for October 8, 2020 membership meeting – send evite Friday with a couple of reminders; RSVP Tuesday, October 6 by noon. Location – Jalapeno Tree; Select menu

**TINA KNIGHTON, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**

October	<u>Reeve Jackson - TBD</u>
November	<u>Daniel Seguin (Communications Director / Lead Trainer – TBG Solutions) Topic: Cybersecurity</u>
December	<u>No Speaker – Ornament Exchange</u>
January	<u>Neal Smith - TBD</u>

**LAURA BROWNLOW, Recording Secretary:**

- Board Meeting Minutes

Laura Brownlow moved that the Minutes of the September, 2020, board meeting be approved, as reported in the Transcript. The motion was seconded, and it carried.

**BRANDI TURCHI, Corresponding Secretary:**

- Publish the newsletter by Wednesday, October 7th. **Deadline** to get your information to Brandi is **Friday, October 2, 2020, by 5:00 pm.**
- October spotlight member: Cayce Williams

**LISA BETTS, Treasurer:**

- September 2020 Treasurer's Report

Lisa Betts moved that the Treasurer's Report for September, 2020, be filed for audit. The motion was seconded, and it carried.

**CARRIE KING, Executive Advisor:**

- Cookies for October meeting

**HELEN KOCH, Parliamentarian:**

**Next Regular Meeting:**

**October 8, 2020 – Jalapeno Tree**

**Next Board Meeting:**

**November 4, 2020 – TBD**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.

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Laura Brownlow  
Recording Secretary

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Leatha Kopech, President

## EMPLOYMENT – OCTOBER 2020

*Contact: Lisa Betts  
TAALP Job Bank Coordinator  
903.534.0200 or [lisa@sscfirm.com](mailto:lisa@sscfirm.com)*

Position	Practice Areas/Job Description	Location
1. Paralegal	Legal assistant/paralegal needed for an attorney, specialized in oil and gas, with some litigation, real estate, and probate/estate planning. Proficiency in Microsoft Word and tables and Microsoft Excel needed. We are looking for a motivated full-time employee (8:30-5:00, M-F) with strong communication skills (both writing and oral), who is a fast learner, able to multi-task, and is very detail oriented. This medium-sized firm offers health insurance, vacation, holidays, sick leave, 401k, and cafeteria plan.	Tyler
2. Clerk	This position includes a variety of support tasks which may include but is not limited to: input data, verify data entry, accurately process and handle a variety of documents and records; answer telephone in a timely manner, scan documents, file and maintain data, and interact with the public to provide excellent customer service. Duties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Process all documents appropriately</li><li>• Be detail oriented</li><li>• Maintain a neat and orderly work area</li><li>• Provide friendly, helpful and knowledgeable assistance to all customers</li><li>• Willingness to assist other clerks in the team, as needed</li><li>• Perform general office tasks such as copying, filing, scanning, printing, answering phones, etc.</li><li>• Other duties as assigned **See my email of 1/24/2020 for more information</li></ul>	Tyler
3. Legal Assistant	Full-time legal assistant needed for solo Practitioner with guardianship and probate experience	Tyler
4. Paralegal	Full-time Litigation Paralegal needed for downtown Tyler law firm. TOP plaintiff personal injury firm in Tyler, Texas is looking to hire an experienced Litigation Paralegal <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• TOP of the market pay with benefits</li><li>• Opportunity to work a high dollar sophisticated docket and get out of working car/truck wreck cases</li><li>• Need to have 2+ years of experience in personal injury litigation</li><li>• Must be able to assist attorneys with cases from start to finish</li></ul>	Tyler
5. Legal Asst.	The job is for a legal assistant position. This position is the managing position for legal secretaries and receptionists for the firm. This firm handles commercial and residential real estate closings, formation of businesses, sales of businesses, commercial litigation, wills and probate, and general business law. We occasionally but rarely handle cases of	Tyler

	<p>other types, such as divorces and automobile collisions, typically for existing clients.</p> <p>The firm does not provide health insurance. There are year-end bonuses and performance bonuses paid during the year.</p> <p>I need someone experienced to handle these job duties, or at least a large part of them. This is not an entry level position and salary is negotiable.</p> <p>I would expect a 90 day probationary period.</p> <p>This is a two man law firm, with this position and one other presently (receptionist) filled. We are busy and there are plans to expand by adding another attorney and possibly another legal assistant in the near future.</p>	
6. Paralegal	<p>This job is for two of the Shareholders and splits up as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Litigation – one of the Shareholders is primarily involved with Litigation so the candidate should have a minimum of three to five years of experience in litigation. This would involve inputting legal documents as drafted by the attorney, e-filings, court prep, etc.</li> <li>2. Mediation – the other Shareholder is 100% Mediation. The primary duties here are administrative – sending notices, scheduling, and billing. There are 2-3 full-day mediations per week so the work load for this is NOT excessive. In fact, many of the mediations are done outside the office or via ZOOM sessions and the Mediator handles the ZOOM setup.</li> </ol> <p>The Firm pays 100% of the Employee's Health Insurance. Spouse and Dependents is optional at the employee's cost – There are two plans – a PPO and a HSA. Dental and Vision is also available for a charge.</p> <p>401(k) Regular and Roth are available with an annual Employer contribution (not a match).</p>	Tyler

NOTE: Job postings are for TAALP members. If you share with a friend/co-worker, please advise them that they have to be a member in order for the job bank to be shared or their resume forwarded.

**The Executive Board of TAALP would like to thank all of the following for your membership:**








Avery, Jacqueline  
Berrum, Melissa  
Betts, Lisa  
Blair, Erin  
Boynton, Gaye  
Brooks, Bonnie  
Brotherton-Pyatt, Margaret  
Brownlow, Laura  
Buchanan, Ann  
Carter, Kimberly  
Clarkston, Paul  
Collins Investigations  
Connor, Sarah  
Coplan, Patricia  
Crawford, Melani  
Crim, Nancy  
Deck, Mary  
Deposition Resources  
Dillon, Candice  
Discovery Records

Earls, Kristen  
East Texas Crisis Center  
Evans, Karen S.  
Freeman, Tabitha  
Godwin, Carol  
Goley, Carol  
Hall, Carrie  
Hancock, Jo Ruth  
Hankins, Melanie  
Hayati, Connie  
Hemphill, Carla  
Henry, Sally  
Hesse, Wendy  
Jackson, Laura  
Jones, Christine  
Jones, Gabby






King, Carrie  
Kirby, Cindy  
Knighton, Tina  
Koch, Helen  
Kopech, Leatha  
Kramer, Jackie  
Langston, Denise  
Lexitas  
Liska, Rhonda  
Luker, Kayla  
Mapes, Sarah  
Marshall, Tracy  
Martin, Melissa  
Martinez, Marieliza  
May, Tamara  
Mayfield, Tammye  
McLeod, Jacob  
McMillan, Jocelyn  
Mendell, Melissa  
Miller, Susan  
Pilcher, Laney

Rex, Renda  
Scirto, Hannah  
Sepmoree, Tina  
Sherrill, Sharon  
Shirley, Racheal  
Skeen, Barbara  
Slayter, Linda  
Sparks, Rhonda  
Starkey, Emily  
Taylor, Vickie  
Tekell, Amanda  
Thedford, Kimberly  
Thomas, Deborah  
Toon, Kristine  
Torres, Magali  
Turchi, Brandi  
Vallery, Jo  
Vickers, Hailey  
Wallace, Melissa  
Watson, Christy  
Wharen, Marcia  
White, April  
Wich, Jodi  
Wilgus, Melissa  
Williams, Brandi  
Williams, Cayce Della  
Wootton, Magen

**Our purpose of TAALP is:**

-  To establish good fellowship among association members, national and state legal associations, and members of the legal community.
-  To encourage a high order of ethical and professional attainment.
-  To advance high standards of integrity and professionalism for legal professionals to the end that the public and the legal profession may be better served.
-  To further education among members of the legal profession.
-  To cooperate with state and local bar associations.
-  To further the interests of legal support staff and professionals through this Association.
-  To support and carry out the programs, purposes, aims and goals of the National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.

**The benefits you will have with TAALP are:**

-  CLE approved programs and seminars
-  Discounts to TAALP seminars
-  Access to job bank
-  Subscription to monthly newsletter - The Transcript
-  Great network to other legal professionals

# COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT



## History

Since October 1988, the East Texas Food Bank, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, has provided food to over 200 partner agencies and food programs, in an effort to feed children, the working poor and seniors throughout 26 counties in East Texas. A member of Feeding America, The East Texas Food Bank is one of four food banks that serves the Gulf Coast Region who are pre-staged with food products from Feeding America, to respond to disasters.

Our food sources include a variety of national, regional and local food manufacturers, brokers, wholesalers, and retailers donate food to the East Texas Food Bank. Donated food includes overproduced or discontinued items, frozen foods, dairy products, mislabeled goods, dented cans, day-old breads and pastries, and odd-sized produce. Local farmers and gardeners provide fresh produce. Individuals, businesses and community organizations support the East Texas Food Bank through various canned food drives throughout the year.

## Facts

Our Mission of the East Texas Food Bank is to fight hunger and feed hope in East Texas.

Our vision is a hunger-free East Texas.

## By The Numbers

- 24,650,000 – Meals provided to hungry East Texans in FY2020.
- 7th – Texas ranks fifth in child food insecurity rate, according to the Feeding America Map The Meal Gap study
- 1st – Texas ranks first in the number of children who are food insecure, according to the Feeding America Map The Meal Gap study
- 26 – Number of counties in East Texas we serve.
- 200 – Number of partners and feeding programs we provide food for.
- 214,200 – East Texans who are “food insecure”, according to the Feeding America Map The Meal Gap.
- 1 in 4 East Texans, including 1 in 3 children, are hungry today.
- 91,500 – Approximate households that are served by the East Texas Food Bank.
- 76,840 – Hungry children in our 26 county service area, according to the Feeding America Map The Meal Gap.

The East Texas Food Bank was founded in 1988 and is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with a mission to “fight hunger and feed hope in East Texas.” To meet the needs of the over 80,000 households served, the East Texas Food Bank partners with agencies throughout its 26 county service area to distribute food. The East Texas Food Bank also has eight programs: Backpack Program, Kids Cafe/Afterschool Snack, Summer Food Program, Senior Box Program, Mobile Pantry, Fresh Produce Program, Nutrition Education and Benefits Outreach designed to meet the targets of children, adults and seniors. The East Texas Food Bank distributed over 21.3 million meals in FY2019.

The East Texas Food Bank receives food from a variety of sources: area food drives, growers, packers, manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, restaurants, grocery store chains and USDA. Despite getting a large amount of products donated, approximately 20 percent of our inventory must be purchased to maintain a variety of items for our partner agencies and the specific needs of our programs.



The primary method of distributing food is through our network of over 200 partner agencies and feeding programs that work in cooperation with the East Texas Food Bank. Food is either picked up at our distribution center by the partner agency, or it is delivered by 18 wheelers to agencies on our delivery routes. From there, agencies distribute the food to clients. Food is also directly distributed through our hunger programs targeted towards children, adults or seniors.

The East Texas Food Bank does not sell any donated food or grocery products to our member agencies and programs. Partner agencies agree to share in the recovery cost as a shared maintenance fee.

**\$1 provides up to 8 meals. We cannot make 8 meals out of a dollar! However, the East Texas Food Bank takes each dollar that is donated and combines it with other financial gifts, donated food products and time that volunteers give to stretch that one dollar to the maximum.**

The East Texas Food Bank has the BBB Accredited Charity Seal. This means that the East Texas Food Bank has met the BBB's 20 Standards of Charity Accountability. The East Texas Food Bank also has a 4 star rating from Charity Navigator.

There are 21 food banks in Texas, each responsible for the counties in their designated service area. The 21 food banks are members of Feeding America and part of Feeding Texas, an organization that fosters and facilitates cooperation between the food banks through advocacy efforts and the coordination of member statewide resources such as produce and Texas Department of Agriculture commodity food.



Process Service

Surveillance

Witness Locate

Michael J. Collins  
Private Investigator

## **COLLINS** INVESTIGATIONS

110 N. College Ave  
Suite 1504  
Tyler, TX 75702  
Lic. No. A08864

903-526-1411  
FAX 903-526-6453  
[mikecollins@sprintmail.com](mailto:mikecollins@sprintmail.com)

Background Searches

Jury Research

Interviews

[mikecollins@sprintmail.com](mailto:mikecollins@sprintmail.com)

### **BLUBONNET PROCESS SERVER**

*Serving Tyler-Smith County & Longview-Gregg County  
& surrounding areas in East Texas*

Pamela "Blu" Daniels

903-372-2818

[blondefilly@wb4me.com](mailto:blondefilly@wb4me.com)

SCH4241

Member TPSA, NAPPS and TAALP



#### OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Jacqueline Avery	2
Carrie King	6
Melissa Berrum	11
Tina Sepmoree	15
Bonnie Brooks	20
Paul Clarkston	20
Amanda Tekell	22
Brandi Turchi	22
Candice Dillon	29
Marcia Wharen	30



# HAPPY HALLOWEEN



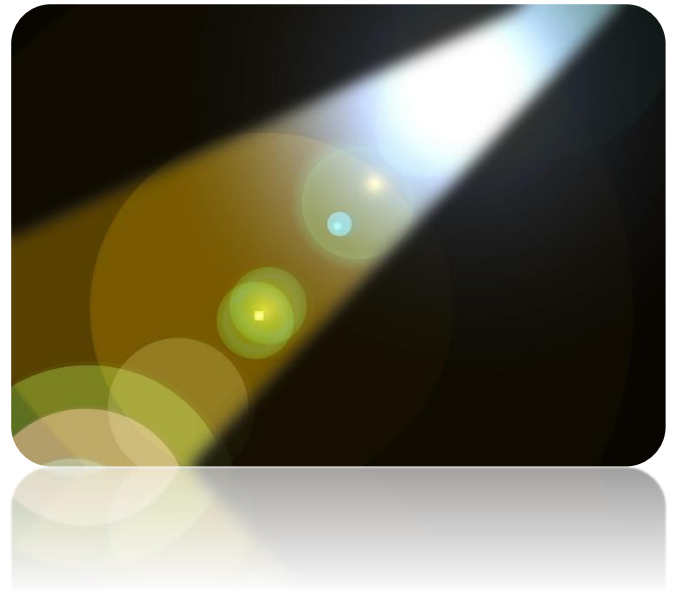
**TAALP**  
**would like to extend a**  
**BIG “THANK YOU”**  
**to DAIRY QUEEN OF TYLER,**  
**for donating the nice TREATS members**  
**are finding in their birthday cards!!**  
**Be Sure To Frequent Your Local DAIRY**  
**QUEEN!**

*Thank  
You*

# TAALP Spotlight



Hello fellow TAALP Members! My name is Cayce Williams. It is an honor to be selected as the



Spotlight Member for this month's TAALP newsletter. I have worked as a legal professional and have been a member of TAALP since 2007. When I am not working, I enjoy DIY projects, reading and spending time with family and friends. I have a passion for learning and I know the career I have chosen will allow me to use each day as a learning experience.

TAALP has a wonderful group of individuals who not only provide an invaluable service to the legal community but also to the Tyler/East Texas area as a whole. I truly believe as legal professionals, we have the ability to change lives. Some of us meet individuals who are hurt, suffering and scared. It is times like this, empathy and a listening ear can be just as important as the legal services we provide. I am thankful for each opportunity I have been given and my life has been enriched by the individuals I have met over the years. I look forward to many more years of being a legal professional and member of the TAALP organization.





## **TAALP EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020-2021**

### **President**

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