



# Paralegal Pride

The Alumni Newsletter of the Hofstra University  
Paralegal Studies Certificate Program

## Inaugural Alumni Get-Together a Huge Success

The evening of June 17, 2009 will be remembered as the moment when the unique camaraderie that our paralegal students enjoyed during their respective program studies was forged into lasting solidarity. The inaugural dinner of the Hofstra University Paralegal Studies Alumni Association brought together close to 100 recent and not-so-recent graduates for an evening of making re-acquaintances, as well as new acquaintances. The David S. Mack Hall at the Hofstra University Club was the setting for the get-together of Hofstra Paralegal graduates, a few graduates of its forerunner, the Adelphi Lawyer's Assistant Program, faculty and advisory committee members, and



At the Paralegal Alumni Association Inaugural Get-Together are (from left) **George Casale, Esq.**, Hofstra Paralegal Advisory Board Member, Attorney, Rivkin Radler LLP, **Hon. Edward Mangano**, Keynote speaker, Attorney, Rivkin Radler LLP, **Chris Wittstruck, Esq.**, Hofstra Paralegal Program Coordinator, joined by Rivkin Radler LLP paralegals.

honored guests from the ranks of paralegals serving Rivkin Radler LLP and Certilman Balin Adler & Hyman LLP.

United by a common interest in the paralegal career and a special attachment to Hofstra, it was fitting that the keynote speaker of our foundational event is a skilled attorney, experienced continuing education dean, a highly regarded public servant and a double graduate of Hofstra University. The Honorable Edward Mangano, a Rivkin Radler attorney and Nassau County Legislator, spoke in a positive tone about the ever-present need for the skilled assistance of properly trained paralegals, even in the midst of a spiraled-down economy. His inspirational talk clearly resonated with those present. More than simply instilling hope, Legislator Mangano portrayed the need of our graduates in the legal community on Long Island and beyond as both steady and growing.

While eventful, this initial dinner foray was not intended to be an end unto itself. A survey taken of attendees—and those with intense interest but who were unable to attend—exhibits the strong desire for an association that will be proactive in such vital areas as continuing education, career development, networking, student mentoring and tutoring and community outreach. To these ends, a formal organizational meeting has been scheduled for the evening of **Tuesday, September 15th at 7:30 p.m.** in Room 148 of University College Hall. Please circle the date and make every effort to attend this important event. For more information and to RSVP please call (516) 463-7800.

**Keep up to date on issues of interest to Paralegals. Visit the Hofstra Paralegal blog at [ce.hofstra.edu/paralegal](http://ce.hofstra.edu/paralegal).**

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## Paralegal Alumni Association Inaugural Get-Together



*Richard V. Guardino, Jr., Esq., Hofstra University Vice President for Business Development, addresses guests.*



*Alumni listen intently to program presenters.*



*Alumni have an opportunity to network.*

## SAVE THE DATE ...

Please join us for an Organizational Meeting of the Hofstra Paralegal Alumni Association.

**DATE:** Tuesday, September 15, 2009

**TIME:** 7:30 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Room 148, University College Hall

The purpose of this important meeting is to discuss plans for the upcoming year.

R.S.V.P. to [Seth.Liebstein@hofstra.edu](mailto:Seth.Liebstein@hofstra.edu) or call (516) 463-7800. Please make every effort to attend!

## Faculty Spotlight: Joanne Stevens-Bair, Esq.

by Sanela "Sunny" Memedoska, Paralegal Studies Student Aide

**Joanne Stevens-Bair, Esq.** is one of the Hofstra Paralegal Studies Certificate Program's original faculty members. Joanne began her teaching career at Adelphi as an instructor for the Lawyer's Assistant Program in 1989. Once the program moved to Hofstra University in 1996, so did Joanne. As her two decades worth of graduates would readily attest, Joanne has been a tremendous asset to our Program!

Ms. Stevens-Bair graduated from Fordham University, Summa Cum Laude, at the top 5% of her class and as a member of Phi Beta Kappa. Joanne went on to graduate from Fordham Law School at the top 15% of her class. Soon after graduating, Joanne worked with New York Life Insurance Co. performing securities and compliance work, and subsequently joined a Wall Street firm specializing in Admiralty Law. It was here that Joanne honed a specialty in Wills, Trusts and Estates. Shortly thereafter, Joanne opened up her own practice, Joanne Ellen Stevens, P.C. and became an instructor.

As a wife and mother of three small children, having her own practice provides Joanne with the flexibility to spend time with her family. "Free time... ha-ha-ha," Joanne laughs when asked about how she spends her free time. While quite limited, all of her downtime is spent with her family.

Joanne became an instructor because she enjoys the student interaction which she believes "brings intellectual discourse" and which "constantly challenges the instructor to know and learn more." She is dedicated to her students and the program and is very happy to be a part of the program and these students' lives. "This is when our paths in life cross and I am happy to be a small part of their educational journeys." Most importantly, she enjoys sharing her love for the law with her students. Any of Joanne's countless paralegal students can attest to her outwardly expressed passion for the law; "Law intrigues me; I am motivated by the relevant and compelling questions of justice and ethics. I love the law and enjoy sharing that love with my students. I also enjoy helping students see that law is both interesting and ever-changing, and what a great profession it can be."



We pride ourselves on being a mentoring program not just an instructional certificate program and Ms. Stevens-Bair has been a great demonstration of this. She goes beyond the basic curriculum of a course, giving students an in-depth look into the law. She believes students need to know the full breadth and dimensions of an area of law including all the small nuances and relevant terminology, and she provides practical (need to know) tips emanating from real experience in the field. Joanne believes that the program is not only about the substance of the law but about "the practice." Further, Joanne has a unique method of delivery; a blend between serious substance and comic relief, which helps students comprehend and commit to memory the vast material given to them. "I like to give my students interesting, funny and relevant examples."

Given that the motto of the Hofstra Paralegal Program is "Behind every successful lawyer is an outstanding paralegal," I asked Joanne how important the paralegal's role is to the legal community. Joanne believes paralegals are "an integral part of the legal team." She does not view it as a hierarchy relationship, but rather as a partnership.

Joanne Stevens-Bair is one of the most revered instructors in our program because of her "priceless personality," dedication to the students and interesting and animated teaching technique. She does not distance herself from her students. "I don't present myself as an officious, cavalier attorney. I am down to earth and approachable. I use humor and keep it moving and interesting for the students. I make sure the student comprehend the material." Moreover, Joanne describes her classroom as "a comfortable, welcoming environment where the teacher and the students embark on an intellectual journey together." Presently, Joanne instructs in Introduction to Law, Bankruptcy and Contracts.

**"Behind every successful lawyer is an outstanding paralegal."**

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## Paralegal Studies Program Goal Statement

The goal of the Hofstra Paralegal Studies Certificate Program is to train highly motivated individuals who meet requisite qualifications to work in the public and private sector legal communities as effective paralegals, while at all times placing emphasis on the ethical mandates of the paralegal profession. It is the intention of the Program administrators and faculty to mentor each certificate candidate in accordance with their individual needs, goals and aspirations. This mentoring includes assistance and support through voluntary internship opportunities, guidance regarding career and educational prospects and special instruction in unique and emerging areas of the law. It is the further goal of the Program to expose each candidate to the specific substantive and procedural aspects of New York law, so as to adequately prepare the successful graduate for service to and advancement of the profession in the immediate metropolitan area.



At the Hofstra Paralegal Alumni Association Get-Together are (from left) **June Mullan, B.B.A**, Assistant Director, Hofstra Professional Development **Chris E. Wittstruck, Esq.**, Coordinator of Hofstra Paralegal Programs, **Hon. Edward Mangano**, Keynote Speaker, Rivkin Radler L.L.P., **Colleen A. Slattery, B.A., M.S.**, Associate Executive Director, Hofstra Continuing Education.

## Who Do You Know?

**Are there colleagues or classmates that should be receiving this newsletter?**

If so, please call (516) 463-7800 or fax the form below to (516) 463-4833 and let us know how to get in touch with them. The strength of this or any Association depends upon the number of active members and the intensity of their interest. The Association is open to all graduates of either the Hofstra University Paralegal Studies Certificate Program or the Adelphi University Legal Assistant's Program.

**Please help us to develop the ranks of our membership!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Year Received Hofstra Paralegal Certificate: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank You!

## Learning Opportunities Beyond the Classroom

In addition to individual internship opportunities and research opportunities conducted in Hofstra's Law School library and online through *LEXIS-NEXIS® Legal*, the Hofstra paralegal student enjoys group opportunities for pragmatic learning beyond the confines of the classroom.

On April 18, the Hon. Francis Ricigliano, Judge of the Nassau County District Court and the evening program's Criminal Law instructor, provided students with a behind-the-scenes view of criminal arraignments on a Saturday morning at the Courthouse. After orientation in his chambers, the judge facilitated the students to view the actual process of arraignment and bail application. The Class returned to Hofstra for a full discussion of what was witnessed and how the paralegal can be of assistance to attorneys both pre-and post-arraignment.

On June 9, the Hon. Stephen A. Bucaria, Justice of the Supreme Court, 10th Judicial District and the evening program's Contracts instructor met graduating Day students in his Mineola chambers for a discussion of the students' individual goals and desires.

Justice Bucaria then accompanied students to 240 Old Country Road for a prearranged meeting with the Hon. Maureen O'Connell, Nassau County Clerk. Ms. O'Connell provided unique insight into the important workings of her office and its fiscal role in supporting the county's judiciary. Students were then given a two-hour tour encompassing all functions and areas of the office including the Supreme Court file room, real estate recordation clerk, block and lot room, the map room, and associated areas.

These valuable opportunities were the suggestion of the programs' Standing Advisory Committee, a select group made up of private, public and nonprofit sector paralegals, community members, faculty and school administration. They were, of course, made possible through the caring concern and efforts of two of our top-flight faculty members. It is anticipated that similar off-campus opportunities for pragmatic training will increase with future classes.

If you have career news to share or would like to submit an article for an upcoming issue of *Paralegal Pride*, please call Chris Wittstruck at (516) 463-7800.

*Announcing Our First Paralegal  
Continuing Education Seminar ...*

## Comprehensive Trial Preparation for the New York Paralegal

A client's likelihood of success at trial is directly proportionate to the level of skill and dedication employed in the attorney's preparation for the trial. Many good cases are lost and solid defenses rendered ineffectual due to poor planning, lack of arrangement and slipshod organization. Getting ready for trial is arguably more important than the trial itself!

Highly trained paralegals have complete knowledge of rules of evidence and procedure, are familiar with the various legal tools and devices to secure evidence at trial, and possess sophistication in current technology. Taught by a veteran New York judge with thousands of hours of trial experience, this thirty (30) hour seminar—culminating in a certificate—will cover theory and practical aspects of important trial prep areas. This program is for experienced and new legal assistants, paralegal students and those with a penchant for the law.

### **Instructor: Honorable Joseph Spinola, Justice of the Supreme Court, Nassau County**

Judge Spinola has a B.A. from Hofstra University and a J.D. from Hofstra University Law School. He has twenty (20) years experience as a civil trial attorney, and is a member of the NYS Trial Lawyers' Association, National Institute for Trial Advocacy, National Institute for Trial Advocacy Advocates Association, Nassau-Suffolk Trial Lawyers Association, and the American, New York State, New York County and Suffolk County Bar Associations.

### **Class Schedule (all classes take place 7-10 p.m.)**

Monday	September 14
Wednesday	September 16
Monday	September 21
Monday	October 5
Wednesday	October 7
Wednesday	October 14
Monday	October 19
Wednesday	October 21
Monday	October 26
Wednesday	October 28

**TOTAL COST  
INCLUDING  
MATERIALS:  
\$399**

**To register, please call (516) 463-7800 or  
visit [ce.hofstra.edu/paralegal](http://ce.hofstra.edu/paralegal)**

# Paralegal Pride

*Paralegal Studies Certificate Program  
Hofstra University Continuing Education  
250 Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY 11549*

*Phone: (516) 463-7800*

*email: ce-paralegal@hofstra.edu Web site: www.ce.hofstra.edu/paralegal*

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## **Hofstra University Continuing Education**

**Richard V. Guardino, Jr., Esq.**

University Vice President for Business Development

**Colleen A. Slattery, B.A., M.S.**

Associate Executive Director, Continuing Education

**Kenneth Newman, D.M.D.**

Senior Director, Professional Development

**June M. Mullan, B.B.A**

Assistant Director, Professional Development

**Chris E. Wittstruck, Esq.**

Coordinator of Paralegal Programs

**Seth Liebstein**

Paralegal Student Aide

**Sanela Memedoska**

Paralegal Student Aide

## **Hofstra University Paralegal Studies Program Advisory Committee**

**George Casale, Esq.** (Attorney)

**Susan Hanrahan** (Paralegal, non-profit sector)

**Tina LeBlond-Graf** (Paralegal, private sector)

**Juan Trillo, Esq.** (Private practitioner, faculty)

**Ron Tucker** (General public, insurance broker)

**Colleen Sambuco** (Paralegal, public sector)

**Felicia Weisberg** (Paralegal, private sector)

**Sanela Memedoska** (Student aide, secretary)