

**NFPA 2020 Joint Conference
Regulation Conference Agenda
Sunday, April 26, 2020**

	Topic	Presenter(s)
8:30 am	Welcome and Opening Remarks	Lori Boris, RP®, MnCP NFPA Vice President & Director of Positions and Issues Minnesota Paralegal Association
8:35 am	Expanding Legal Access and Regulation: The Bottom Line for Paralegals	Sara D. Carlson, JD, CEO and Chief Lawyer Liberator at Sarah D Carlson LLC, Atlanta, GA
9:35 am	Leveraging Paralegals to Improve Equal Access to Justice	The Honorable Judge Thomas N. Palermo, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Hillsborough County Florida
10:35 am	Break	
	Ethics Presentation	
10:50 am	Unauthorized Practice of Law - "UPL" an Attorney's Perspective	Katherine S. Gardner, Esq. UPL Counsel, State Bar of Michigan Lansing, MI
11:50 am	Lunch	
12:50 pm	* NFPA Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Identity, Power & Privilege: Now You Are at the Table	Cynthia Bynum, MBA NFPA Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Committee Georgia Association of Paralegals
1:50 pm	California Paralegal Regulation & Licensing: A Plan of Action	Barbara L. Liss, LDA, Yosemite Legal Document Service, Oakhurst, CA
2:50 pm	Break	
3:00 pm	Panel: Discussion: The State of the Paralegal Profession: *Equal Access to Justice*	Maren Schroeder, RP®, MnCP <i>Minnesota Paralegal Association</i> Tom Stephenson, ILAP <i>Illinois Paralegal Association</i> Cynthia Bynum, MBA <i>Georgia Association of Paralegals</i> Linda Odermont, RP®, OCP <i>Oregon Paralegal Association</i> Lori Boris, RP®, MnCP, Moderator <i>Minnesota Paralegal Association</i>
4:00 pm	Florida Registered Paralegal Program: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow	Lisa Vessels, RP®, CP, FRP <i>South Florida Paralegal Association</i>
5:00 pm	Closing Remarks	Lori Boris, RP®, MnCP

Speaker Biographies

Regulation Day, Moderator



Lisa Boris, RP®, MnCP

Lori J. Boris, RP®, a litigation paralegal since 1998, is currently employed as a Product Liability Litigation Paralegal at Nilan Johnson Lewis, PA. Over her nearly 22 years as a paralegal, she has assisted attorneys in representing multiple and varied clients in many areas, including toxic torts, product liability, employment law, wrongful death, personal injury and contract claims.

Lori is a graduate of the Minnesota Paralegal Institute, an ABA-approved post-baccalaureate program, became a PACE® Registered Paralegal in 2009, and was credentialed as one of MPA's inaugural MnCPs in 2014. Lori currently serves as NFPA Vice President and Director of Positions and Issues for 2018-2020. She also served as Certification Coordinator – Ambassadors for three years (2013-2015). She has had several articles published in the National Paralegal Reporter. In addition, Lori has been very involved with the Minnesota Paralegal Association (“MPA”) holding various positions, including MPA's Internet Coordinator, Publications Editor, Vice President, President, Primary, Secondary, Certification Co-Ambassador, Regulation Committee Chair, and Litigation Sectional Co-Chair. At her firm, Nilan Johnson Lewis PA, Lori chairs the Paralegal Professional Development Working Group and mentors incoming paralegals.



Sarah Carlson, JD

CEO and Chief Lawyer Liberator at Sarah D Carlson LLC | Director of Professional Development at Candler School of Theology

Sarah is a Harvard Law graduate and professional powerhouse who walked away from her high-rise attorney job in New York City to live in a tent and volunteer in Haiti. She is now the CEO of her own company where she liberates lawyers and other professionals from unhappy careers by giving them the tools and confidence to advocate for themselves and to make

powerful professional pivots. Sarah also serves as the Director of Professional Development at Candler School of Theology where she works with spiritually minded professionals on their career trajectories and teaches coursework on professional self-advocacy. Finally, Sarah speaks around the country and, through it all, works to inspire and equip people to claim their power and realize their unique potential in a world that doesn't make that easy.

- ✚ In this presentation, Sarah Carlson will lead attendees through an honest conversation about proposals to expand access to legal services by licensing non-lawyer professionals. In this session, attendees will talk about the “bottom line”, including what this really means for paralegals, what this means for people who need legal services, and how to talk about ourselves as engaged professionals and how to effectively advocate for these exciting shifts in the profession.



The Honorable Judge Thomas N. Palermo

JUDICIAL BIOGRAPHY

Appointed to the Circuit Court in 2019.

Took the bench on May 13, 2019.

Assigned to Dependency Division C (June 2019 – January 2020).

Currently assigned to Delinquency Division F (January 2020 – present).

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant United States Attorney, U.S. Attorney's Office (Tampa) (May 12, 2007 – May 12, 2019)

- Federal prosecutor in Tampa, Florida. Served in the Transnational Organized Crime Section, the Economic Crimes Section, the Organized Crime Section, and the Violent Crimes and Narcotics Section.
- District Opioid Coordinator, Middle District of Florida (2017-2019). Responsible for coordinating anti-opioid efforts of the second most populous District in the United States. Prosecuted opioid-related cases, prepared a revised 2018 MDFL anti-opioid strategy, created a new intelligence and evidence collection process with Florida medical examiners, shared best practices amongst opioid-responsible colleagues, and collected and analyzed the best available data on the opioid threat to the District.
- Reviewer. Responsible for reviewing prior to presentation to the Court and as part of the Section chain of command certain investigatory techniques (e.g., wiretap applications, search warrants, tracking warrants, pen registers) and certain pleadings prior to their presentation to the court.
- Senior Litigation Counsel for the Criminal Division (Tampa). Trained other AUSAs, including implementing a training program focused on new hires. In a one-year period, put on fourteen training programs, many in collaboration with partners, including a districtwide wiretap training program attended by more than 140 law enforcement officers and AUSAs. Also worked to develop and sustain partnerships with client agencies.
- Prosecuted a number of significant, complex cases, including a completed murder-for-hire, an intended murder-for-hire of a federal witness, a significant health care fraud prosecution, a narcotics distribution with death case, a complex science-related fraud case, a maritime drug smuggling case, a Stolen Identity Refund Fraud (SIRF) case involving numerous vulnerable victims, and many others.
- Previously served as the Human Trafficking Task Force Coordinator, formed the original MDFL Mortgage Fraud Task Force with another AUSA, and served as the District's Mortgage Fraud Coordinator. Was assigned TS/SCI clearance.

EDUCATION

- Master of Laws (LL.M.), University of London King's College (KCL) (2002)
Specialization: Banking & Finance
- Juris Doctorate (J.D.), The Florida State University College of Law (2001)
- Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), The American University (1998)
Student body president (1996-1997)
Major: Communications, Legal Institutions, Economics, Government (CLEG)
Minor: International Studies
High School, Jesuit High School (Tampa) (1994)

PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

Judge Thomas N. Palermo is a native of Tampa, Florida. He was born at Women’s Hospital, grew up in the greater Carrollwood area, and has extensive roots in his hometown. His mother, whose first language is Spanish, is from Ybor City. She served a full career as a professor and, before that, as an English teacher at Leto High School. His father is from Seminole Heights. He owns a marine-related business in Drew Park. His brother and sister-in-law are attorneys here in Tampa and his sister is a real estate agent here in Tampa. Growing up, Judge Palermo was a member of “Saint Timothy’s Catholic Parish, Saint Mary’s, and Saint Paul’s. Judge Palermo attended Saint John’s Episcopal and then Jesuit High School.

- ✚ Judge Palermo will share judicial perspectives on leveraging paralegals in the court system to reduce the burdens on the court and describe his thoughts on changing the rules of the court, so that paralegals are part of the equal access to justice solution.



Katherine S. Gardner, JD, LLM

Katherine Gardner is the UPL Counsel for the State Bar of Michigan. Prior to joining the SBM staff, she served for approximately 8 years on the State Bar of Michigan Unauthorized Practice of Law Standing Committee.

Katherine graduated from Western Michigan University – Cooley Law School in 2001 and received an LLM in Taxation in 2005. Before joining the State Bar of Michigan, she practiced in the area of labor and employment law, with experience in both litigation and union matters. She is admitted to practice in the Michigan courts, the US District Courts for the Eastern and Western districts of Michigan, and the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

- ✚ As prospective client’s civil legal needs increase across the country, paralegals must avoid the pitfalls of violating the unauthorized practice of law despite the shift of traditional legal models being challenged to meet the equal access to justice need. Katherine will give us a host of things to consider as we support attorneys, while pushing the status quo to work with more autonomy.



Cynthia Bynum, MBA

Cynthia Bynum works as an Independent Legal and Business Consultant. She is the principal owner of CJB Management, LLC and serves as its Executive Director. As such she provides paralegal support services to attorneys and business service solutions to improve the success of business organizations, law firms and the clients they serve. Cynthia holds a master’s degree in Business Management from Fordham University’s Executive MBA Program, graduated cum laude from DeVry University having earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and Business Information Systems. She is also a graduate of Emory’s Paralegal Studies Program.

Cynthia is currently a graduate student at Candler School of Theology, Emory University and Master of Divinity| Candidate in 2022. She is the recent founder of Greater Faith Intl Ministry, a faith-based

religious organization poised through biblical teachings to advocate for social justice and projects that result in positive change for our communities and the world around us.

Cynthia currently serves as the First Vice President, Director of Regulation and NFPA Secondary Delegate for the Georgia Association of Paralegals with the clear mission to advance the paralegal profession. Cynthia has held several leadership positions within the legal community and has contributed to the expansion of statewide continuing legal education programs, leadership forums and other professional networking events that empower individuals to strive in their professional careers and pursue their personal best. Cynthia was selected as NFPA's Regulation Review Coordinator for 2020 and an active member of the NFPA Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Committee.

She is actively involved in ministry and has two adult children, three grandchildren and lives with her husband James and their pet Yorkie Sam in Kennesaw, Georgia. Cynthia hobbies include traveling, gourmet cooking and reading.

- ✚ Cynthia will share unique scenarios that occur in professional environments and highlight opportunities for us all to demonstrate mutuality and self-awareness given our own uniqueness. We have more power than we realize, but do we know how best to manage it once we have "a place at the table"? Have you been invited to the table? How are we self-identifying and treating others, inclusive or not so much? This session supports an interactive discussion on the issues that face us as leaders representing the paralegal associations and affiliate organizations.



Barbara Liss

Barbara L. Liss now lives near Yosemite National Park in Oakhurst, California and is a California Registered and Bonded Legal Document Assistant, compliant with California Business and Professions Code Sec. 6400, et seq. Before establishing her LDA business (Yosemite Legal Document Service), she was an Estate Planning, Trust Administration and Probate Paralegal at the Law Office of Christopher C. Jones in Santa Barbara, California for eight years. She's been a paralegal a long, long time, first working in the field as a complex business litigation trial assistant and has worked many cases up to trial,

through trial and on appeal in both state and federal courts.

She also was an instructor at the UCSB Extension Paralegal Certificate Program for five years and served as the President of the Santa Barbara Paralegal Association. She has been a paralegal since the early 1970's and earned her Paralegal Certificate from UCSB Extension in 1984. She participated in the NFPA's white paper committee which wrote the first definition of the term, "paralegal." In the mid 1980's, she testified before the California State Bar's Public Protection Committee on the subject of paralegal regulation and before the California Senate's Sub-Committee on the Judiciary concerning Paralegal Licensure. More recently, in 2014, she testified before the California State Legislature to oppose a State Bar law proposed to narrow UPL in California and enable the State Bar to prosecute paralegals without the need for a complaint to be filed. With a coalition of interested participants, she was able to get Governor Brown to veto the proposed law. She and Fran Chernowsky also attended most meetings of the State Bar's Governance in the Public Interest Task Force in 2016.

She acquired a California private, post-secondary teaching credential in Paralegal Studies in 1990. Co-authored the Practising Law Institute's Workshop for Legal Assistant's Handbook, she has also published many articles on subjects of interest to paralegals in a variety of newsletters and magazines.

- ✚ California has become another hot button state as its bar is mulling over the idea to license nonlawyer professionals. We make the assumptions that the first glance is to paralegals. Barbara will bring us up to speed with the noise out of California. Discuss the common rebuttals but contrasting the huge level of support and why. The story in California is very fluid. We will have the latest events outline during this presentation.

Panel Roundtable Discussion

- ✚ Maren (Minnesota), Tom (Illinois), Linda (Oregon) and Cynthia (Georgia) will come together to share updates and next steps in their respective States regarding paralegal regulation initiatives. They will discuss process, policies, stakeholders, legislative actions and judicial rulings of support. Additionally, the presentation will show an outline of pros and cons gathered from both sides of the debate. Along with rebuttals and/or opposition regarding the support of the utilization and leveraging of paralegals to conduct more autonomy over civil matters to help those, who are marginalized and others, who simply cannot afford an attorney. Lori Boris, VPP will access us as the moderator for this session.



Maren Schroeder, RP, MnCP holds an M.B.A. in Legal Administration, and is a PACE Registered, Minnesota Certified Paralegal who performs freelance paralegal, government relations, and political consulting work for attorneys, organizations, and candidates for office. She is the current NFPA Primary and Director of Positions & Issues for the Minnesota Paralegal Association (MPA), represents MPA on the Minnesota Supreme Court's Paraprofessional Practice Pilot Project Implementation Committee, and serves as Leadership Training Coordinator and 2020 NFPA Convention Host Co-Coordinator for NFPA.

Previously, she served as MPA's Director of Greater Minnesota, Director of Professional Development, and Director of Marketing, and as NFPA's Regulation Review Coordinator and Association Management Coordinator.

Maren is an advocate for drug policy reform and harm reduction, currently serving as Policy Director for Sensible Change Minnesota, where she works on medical cannabis patient access and harm reduction initiatives at the Minnesota state legislature. A trained facilitator with 100+ hours of mediation training, she serves as a volunteer facilitative mediator for Mediation & Conflict Solutions, a low-cost community mediation program in Rochester, Minnesota. Finally, Maren is a volunteer crisis advocate for her county's sexual assault crisis line and has served on her city's Planning & Zoning Commission since 2013.



Tom Stephenson, ILAP works as a paralegal at Keller Lenkner, LLC with over a decade of experience in the areas of complex commercial and business litigation, corporate governance and reorganization, class action, and labor and employment.

Mr. Stephenson is an accredited paralegal and received his paralegal degree from Minnesota State Community and Technical College. In 2015, he received his Master of Arts in Legal Studies from the University of Illinois at Springfield.

Tom serves as NFPA's Vice President and Director of Membership. Prior to being elected as Vice President and Director of Membership, Tom served in a variety of positions for the Illinois Paralegal Association, including on the Board of Directors, Secretary, NFPA Primary Representative, Information Technology Chair, Social Media Chair, and Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Chair. In 2016, he was awarded IPA's Outstanding Member of the Year award. Mr. Stephenson served as NFPA Regulation Review Coordinator and member of the Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Committee.



Linda Odermott, RP, OCP
NFPA Vice President and Director of Paralegal Certification

Linda began her paralegal career in 2007 and currently focuses on complex litigation, municipal law, and real property with an expertise in land use, construction defect, real property and cannabis-related matters. In 2012, she received her RP® credentials from NFPA and in 2017, received the OCP credentials from the Oregon Paralegal Association (OPA). She currently works with attorneys at the law firm of Dunn Carney in Portland, Oregon, in both of the firm's litigation and real estate practice groups. Linda is also an instructor and member of the adjunct faculty with the Portland Community College, where she is entering her sixth-year teaching real property to paralegal students.

In 2015 and 2016, Linda was awarded the Paralegal of the Year Award from OPA and then in 2015, she was also fortunate enough to receive the Certification Ambassador of the Year Award from NFPA. Linda was appointed by the Oregon State Bar Board of Governors (BOG) to two consecutive task forces to research licensing of paralegals in Oregon, similar to the Washington LLLT and in January of 2020, she was again appointed to an Implementation Committee to create the rules to license paraprofessionals by the BOG. In addition, Linda co-authored the Oregon Certified Paralegal program, which issues the OCP credentials during her tenure as the OPA Regulation Committee Co-Chair, which also implemented the program in 2016-17.



Lisa Vessels, RP, CP

Lisa Vessels, RP, CP lives in Miami, Florida, and is employed by Duane Morris LLP managing the docketing function and court rules-based docketing software for her firm's U.S. offices. Lisa has worked in the paralegal profession since 1992 with experience in commercial litigation, as well as corporate contract law specializing in commercial aviation equipment leasing and sales.

Lisa is a former two-term President of the South Florida Paralegal Association and the Florida Alliance of Paralegal Associations. As an active member in both organizations, she served in many roles since joining in 2005. She served as NFPA's President from 2014-2016, NFPA Board Advisor from 2016-2018, Vice President and Director of Positions and Issues from 2012-2014, Regulation Review Coordinator from 2009-2012, and was an active participant on the PCC Exam Development Committee from its inception in 2008 through its launch in 2011. She is currently serving on the NFPA Advisory Board.

Lisa served on Miami-Dade College's Paralegal Studies Program Advisory Board from 2006 to 2012, serving as chairperson from 2010. She has served four, three-year terms as a non-lawyer member of The Florida Bar's Unlicensed Practice of Law Committee for the 11th Circuit in Miami-Dade County. She was recently appointed to the 11th Circuit FRP Disciplinary Committee for the Florida Bar. She was an adjunct instructor at Florida International University's Paralegal Studies certificate program from 2006 to 2008. Lisa also volunteers for the Girl Scout Council of Tropical Florida as a trainer for adult volunteers.

Ms. Vessels earned her Bachelor's degree in Paralegal Studies from Nova Southeastern University in 2005, and Associate's degrees in Computer Information Systems and Computer Programming (Visual Basic) from Miami Dade College in 2002. She earned the Certified Paralegal® credential in 2005, maintained the Florida Registered Paralegal with The Florida Bar from 2008 to 2018, and earned the PACE® Registered Paralegal credential 2012.

- ✚ Titled FRP Program – Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow. Lisa will discuss how the idea of the FRP program was conceptualized by the paralegal associations in FL, the path to adoption by the Florida Bar, implementation of the regulation program, and ideas currently under discussion for the future of the program.

A Special Thank You to Judge Thomas Palermo, Sarah Carlson, JD, Katherine Gardner Esq., and Barbara Liss, LDA for your willingness to travel and sacrifice to come and speak at the NFPA 2020 Joint Conference.

Additional thanks to the NFPA Member Speakers for your support!