

The Success of the LAPA Spring Career Conference

By Bobby T. Rimas, LAPA Spring Conference Co-Chair and Vice President of Marketing & Planning

The LAPA Spring Career Conference held on Saturday, March 24th at the Downtown Los Angeles Marriott Hotel was truly a success. With more than 100 individuals at the event at any given time, many Spring Career Conference (“SCC”) attendees agreed that it was a “great” event and very “beneficial” in several ways. The SCC offered networking opportunities that included discussions with professional recruiters, paralegals with various levels of experience, and a resume tune-up shop in which recruiter specialists reviewed attendees’ resumes and suggested revisions to make their resumes more substantive and appealing.

The SCC had recruiter and paralegal panelists that discussed various aspects of the paralegal profession. The recruiter panelists informed SCC attendees in detail about sought-after paralegal “hot” specialties. Additionally, recruiters spoke about the skills and qualifications employers are currently seeking. Paralegal panelists indicated how they prepared and acquired their jobs, what usually caught the employer’s attention, and how to advance a paralegal career through education, experience, and networking. They also discussed the importance of education, CLA certification, and maintaining mandatory continuing legal education requirements that are required of all California paralegals as mandated by Business and Professions Code Section 6450(d). Discussions with both professional recruiters and paralegal panelists gave SCC attendees opportunities to ask questions concerning current paralegal job trends, legal specialties, and varied employment opportunities.

Several SCC attendees indicated that events such as the LAPA SCC are important tools for all paralegals since the paralegal profession is continually growing across the nation. That said, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Employment for paralegals and legal assistants is projected to grow much faster than average for all occupations through 2014. Employers are trying to reduce costs and increase the availability and efficiency of legal services by hiring paralegals to perform tasks formerly carried out by lawyers. Besides new jobs created by employment growth, additional job openings will arise as people leave the occupation. Despite projections of rapid employment growth, competition for jobs should continue as many people seek to go into this profession; however, experienced, formally trained paralegals should have the best employment opportunities.”

A special “**thank you**” from LAPA goes to the following Spring Career Conference sponsors: ***Abraham Lincoln University, Adams & Martin Group, Concord Document Service, Davidson Legal Staffing, Deadlines on Demand, First American Corporation, Henjum Goucher, HIRE Counsel, Kelly Law Registry, Kernow Partners LLC, Large Screen Displays, Legal Option Group, Legal Staff, Matura Farrington, Parasec, Providius, Robert Half Legal, Safe Data, and Special Counsel.*** LAPA is very grateful for their support and we look forward to working with them at future LAPA events!

The 2007 LAPA Spring Career Conference was an event that gave SCC attendees much knowledge and an anticipated competitive advantage to succeed in a paralegal career. LAPA will continually have events to assist paralegals with their networking opportunities, career advancement, and educational fulfillment.

Bobby T. Rimas is a paralegal who specializes in immigration and employment matters. He graduated from UCLA in June 1994 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in History and earned a Paralegal Certificate in Litigation/Corporations from the UCLA Extension Attorney Assistant Training Program in March 1996. Bobby has been a member of the Los Angeles Paralegal Association ("LAPA" or "Association") since 1996 and a LAPA Board Member since January 2006. From June 2006 to present, he served as the LAPA Website Committee Chairman. In this capacity, Bobby oversaw the development of the LAPA website by implementing many improvements and updates, such as the LAPA Login/Registration feature, the LAPA Membership Application, the Pro Bono Activities webpage, promotional LAPA events information, and obtained website corporate sponsors. The work completed on the website assisted in enabling LAPA to increase membership, attendance at LAPA events, revenue, networking value, and exposure within the legal community. In December 2006, the LAPA Board of Directors appointed Bobby to his current officer position of Vice President of Marketing and Planning. In this position, he further promotes LAPA to various audiences and assists the LAPA President in the areas of strategic planning and marketing of the Association on behalf of the membership. In addition to Bobby's current officer position, he was appointed in April 2007 by the LAPA Board of Directors to serve as LAPA's National Association of Legal Assistants ("NALA") Liaison and will represent LAPA at NALA's 32nd Annual Convention scheduled for July 2007 in New Orleans. He is also a member of the Orange County Paralegal Association (OCPA), Lambda Legal, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), and the UCLA Alumni Association. Bobby can be reached by cell phone at (213) 952-9914 or via e-mail at Bobby.Rimas@UCLAlumni.net.