

IN BRIEF

CENTER FOR ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES

The Paralegal People®

Accredited by the Council On Occupational Education • Approved by the American Bar Association

Spring, 2006

CENTER'S PROGRAM is of a Higher Echelon

We have reported in the past that the paralegal profession is a strong career choice, one that is showing a steady growth and attracting a higher quality candidate.

This expansion of the paralegal field has led to an increase in paralegal education options. Be aware, not all colleges that offer paralegal programs are accredited and ABA approved. Since that is the case, not all colleges and paralegal programs are equal or held to the same standard of excellence. So how do you decide what program is the best fit for you? Do your research. You'll discover the following.

During our 19 years as paralegal educators we have continually made improvements to our programs in order to distinguish them from others and make them as relevant as possible.

The Center's paralegal programs are approved by the American Bar Association. ABA approval lets prospective employers know that our students have the necessary education to be immediate contributors.

Our faculty are highly rated and experienced. More than 75% of our law faculty have Doctor of Jurisprudence (JD) degrees. The remainder are paralegals, teaching spe-



Doyle Happe, Co-Founder and Director

cialized paralegal classes. All of the general education faculty members have a Master's degree or above, matching the required credentials of professors at University of Texas, University of Houston, Texas A&M, etc.

continued

Attorneys Testify

Our firm recently hired two students from the Center. They are professional, dedicated and hardworking. We couldn't be happier with these two candidates. — Employer

Excellent effort was made in every task by the extern (from the Center). She shows great potential in the field. — Extern Sponsor

There is no question that my employee has benefited from her education at the Center. I look forward to watching her expand the education you have given her as she forges ahead in her legal career. — Employer

2006 SPRING SEMESTER

Day Classes:	March 13 May 1
Evening Classes:	April 3 May 30
Spring Break:	
Day	April 24-27
Evening	March 27-30

Register

Call **800-446-6931** to register, TODAY!



Facts on File

Notary Public Seminar

Saturday, April 1, 9:00 AM, Tom Swanson/Presenter
Center For Advanced Legal Studies

Graduation

Saturday, June 24, 10:00 AM, Westin Galleria Hotel

Call for reservations

Register 713-529-2778

*Minds are like
parachutes...*

*they only function
when they are open.*

Thomas Dewar



MEET

Susan Meek, J.D., M.D.

Rellevant numbers for Dr. Susan Meek are two, four and several thousand. While she just recently joined the faculty at the Center, her list of credentials and accomplishments has certainly preceded her. She has two doctorates and careers, one as an Ophthalmologist and the second as a lawyer. Outside of teaching, she has both a private medical practice AND a legal practice. Her first teaching assignment last semester was a class in Anatomy and Physiology, for which she is eminently qualified. Her legal credentials, however, are equally as impressive as her medical resume. Licensed in both her home state of Illinois and Texas, Susan specializes in litigation, mediation and arbitration. If her schedule sounds taxing, it is further complicated by spending a large amount of time (and thousands of air miles) commuting to Washington D.C. as a Special Master in a large federal case being heard in the U.S. Federal Court there. Susan is also licensed to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court, is a licensed federal mediator, is arbitration-certified by NASD, the nation's largest private securities trading regulator and, while not currently practicing,

she also holds an Illinois realtor's license.

Her dual career began by trailing behind her father, a lawyer, into courtrooms in Chicago. While growing up she also had a penchant for science which led to dual pre-law and pre-med majors at the University of Illinois. A law degree from U. of Illinois (Northern) followed as did her M.D. from Chicago Medical School.

She has long had an interest in sharing knowledge through teaching and has previously taught courses at the University of Houston in mediation and alternative dispute resolution and has lectured extensively at legal forums. When a friend mentioned the Center's program to her, she was immediately on the phone to find a course to teach.

When not on the run in between offices and assignments, she and her husband Charles have raised, and are still raising, four children, ages 22, 20, 17 and 12. In their spare time, Susan and Charles still find plenty of time for taking in the museums, the symphony and enjoying outdoor activities and extensive travel with their family. We welcome Susan to the Center and value her contribution to a program firmly entrenched in paralegal education's upper echelon.



GRADUATE PROFILE

Kim Speet

Kim, a 2005 graduate of the Center, received her Associate of Applied Science degree

and immediately hit the ground running. Her first interview landed her a paralegal position at the law firm of Gregg & Valby, LLP, a seven-partner practice specializing in real estate law which she joined in April 2005.

In her position as the firm's Compliance Supervisor, Kim currently oversees three paralegals and two compliance officers. Her department has the critical task of continually monitoring state legislative changes across the U.S., so that the real estate documents generated by her firm are in full compliance with ever-changing state regulations.

Kim sets goals for herself. When joining the firm, she gave herself one year to move into a supervisory position. She beat her timeline and, within six months, had been elevated to her present capacity. She listens also. While at the Center, Kim astutely paid attention to professor Tom Swanson who, among other things, continually encouraged students to volunteer for any project within a law firm that nobody else wanted. To her, that advice was critical and gave her an opportunity to be involved, learn quickly and get noticed for her diligence.

Kim is a graduate of New Caney High School and attended the University of Houston for 1-1/2 years. Prior to attending the Center, she had worked as a real estate mortgage broker for more than 12 years. She had originally wanted to become a lawyer, but saw the Center's program as one that would let her work in the field while allowing her to spend more time with her family – husband Kirt and two boys ages 13 and 5.

While at the Center, the placement office helped Kim secure an externship in a bankruptcy trustee's practice which supplemented her in-class learning experience. She credits Placement Director Tami Riggs for the externship placement and for assisting her in finding the perfect job fit on her initial interview. She also compliments the Center for its code of conduct and for providing an environment that reflects professionalism. She considers that a strongpoint in helping students present themselves with confidence at job interviews.

Kim notes that the Center helped give her realistic insights as to what to expect as a paralegal in a law firm. In that regard, she encourages every student at the Center to take seriously the advice given by the professors. It certainly paid off for her.

CENTER'S PROGRAM is of a Higher Echelon continued from page 1

Our instructors have years of practical experience that we continually see translated to student success.

The Center has a strong placement service. We not only help find graduates full-time employment, we also assist students in obtaining externships that provide hands-on experience prior to graduation. We have strong relationships with the legal community that assist in pairing graduates and employers. Our

placement service is available, without charge, for Center graduates throughout their working careers. Lastly, we have a growing network of alumni in the community that strongly support our placement efforts.

Our success has bred success. With strong programs, excellent faculty, dedicated alumni and legal community support, the Center is recognized as a premier institution for paralegal education.



Lambda Epsilon Chi (LEX) Inductees

Graduate Gratitude

The Center is excellent. I was really looking for a fast paced program, and they provided it. The classes were great, and the instructors were awesome. I would suggest this school to anyone.

Crystal Forrester

I had been a stay-at-home mom for six years and was terrified of going back to school at the Center. Everything, from the admissions process to placement assistance was done in an extremely professional, yet student-friendly, manner. The instructors were amazing, and I have come away having learned an astounding amount of useful material. I feel that the Center has prepared me for paralegal work.

Dele Azeez

This was a wonderful program! All of the staff were so helpful and friendly. The professors were very knowledgeable and made this experience very interesting and enjoyable. I am excited about starting my journey as a paralegal in the field of law.

Lisa England

I came to the Center after my job with a Fortune 500 company was eliminated after 20 years of service. I hadn't been in school in 34 years. Needless to say, I was anxious. From the start, the instructors built up my confidence and put me on firm footing by helping me develop sound study habits. All of the instructors had a sincere desire for the material to be interesting and challenging, while preparing the students to be immediately productive in the field. I came to the Center doubting my worth in the marketplace and am graduating educated, trained and armed with marketable skills. I'm counting on a continuing relationship with the Center.

George Anderson-Wood

The following students have qualified for induction into Lambda Epsilon Chi (LEX), the national honor society in paralegal studies for the third and fourth quarters of 2005. The society is sponsored by the American Association for Paralegal Education (AAfPE).

Gazmend Ademi	Cecelia Lawrence
George Anderson-Wood	Ana Martinez
Dele Azeez	Mary McCoy
Angelica Barnes	Cathryn Niane
Courtney Doutel	LaTasha Patton
Lisa England	Miosha Robinson
Tamara Green	Melissa Sperry
William Green	Heather Theiss
Jaision James	Patti Thompson
Hea Jin	Rose Villaloboz
William Johnson	Karen Weiland
Christina Ladyman	Chad Zerr

These students have demonstrated "superior academic performance," a standard which is determined by each institution at which a chapter of LEX is established. The Center's standard is 95% attendance, 3.85 grade point average and completion of at least two-thirds of the program.

Every one of my experiences at the Center will be cherished. I had the privilege of having great teachers. I learned an important something from each one of them as a person who would help my career. I met great people who are behind the scenes, but who help the Center make good things happen for students (Brooke, Randi and Spencer). I really enjoyed being a student at the Center.

Angelica Barnes



WELCOME Susan McGuire

The Center is pleased to welcome Susan McGuire as Library Assistant. In this position, Susan will be available to assist full-time day students at the Center's library. Susan joins us after recently retiring with 13 years experience as a Criminal Justice Professor at Sam Houston State University. She also

holds a Master's degree in Theology from Houston Graduate School of Theology. Susan is the mother of two children and has four grandchildren. She considers herself a movie buff and spends much of her spare time with her grandchildren and stays on track with her former students. We are fortunate to have Susan join our staff at the Center.



Winter GRADUATION CEREMONIES

The Center held its graduation on Saturday, January 14, 2006 in the Monarch Room of the Westin Galleria Hotel. The ceremonies honored 31 Paralegal certificate recipients and 32 Associate of Applied Science program graduates. The overflow crowd of more than 450 graduates, family members and friends joined in to recognize the accomplishments of the graduates, including members of the Lambda Epsilon Chi (LEX) national honor society. Diplomas were awarded by the Center's Director Doyle Happe, following a welcome by Gail Armatys, the Center's co-founder and Compliance Liaison and the introduction by Placement Director Tami Riggs.



Director Doyle Happe handed out diplomas.



Center co-founder and Compliance Liaison Gail Armatys welcomed the guests.

Mr. Reddell has more than nine years experience in a broad practice which spans criminal defense, products liability, breach of contract, debt collections and business litigation. A graduate from South Texas College of

Law, Mr. Reddell has handled thousands of cases and reveals an impressive background. His firm has been an active supporter of the Center's Externship and Placement Programs, and has hired several of the Center's students.



Tami Riggs and keynote speaker David Reddell.

Photos by Romero

The keynote speaker at the event was David Reddell, partner at the law firm of McLemore, Reddell, Ardoin & Story, P.L.L.C.



Placement News

The following are graduates who have obtained employment since our last newsletter through the Center's placement office and/or through networking efforts of their own.

Dele Azeez	Christina Ladyman	Tecee Parker
Timothy Cannon	Kaisha Lane	Maurin Phillips
Sonessa Contreras	Cecilia Lawrence	Nicole Richardson
Fritz Dickmann	Yohan Lee	Miosha Robinson
Courtney Doutel	Ana Martinez	Heather Theiss
Lauren Ford	Mary McCoy	Christian Tottenhoff
Jessica Garza	Andres Mejia	Angela Verzal
Londa Holiman	Monica Meza	Rose Villaloboz
Hea Jin	Cathryn Niane	Elisa Villarreal
William Johnson	David Ondrejko	Jakleena Ware

CENTER FOR ADVANCED LEGAL STUDIES

Program Director
Doyle Happe

Compliance Liaison / *Gail Armatys*

Academic Dean / *Tom Swanson*

Placement Director / *Tami Riggs*

Admission Team
Debra Garcia/Director
Marsba Elam

Financial Aid Director / *Lori Baggett*

Financial Aid Assistant / *Pete Becerra*

Registrar / *Brooke Weeks*

Secretary / *Randi Jerding*

Librarian / *Dianne Dallman*

Library Assistant / *Susan McGuire*

Technology / *Eric Happe/Director*

Teaching Assistant / *Spencer Stauffer*

Our mission is to provide students with the skills, practical knowledge and abilities which will enable them to excel as paralegals and meet the needs of the legal profession and community.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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LEGAL STUDIES

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