



# Gateway (St. Louis)

A Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators

## Gateway Connection

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Association of Legal Administrators – Gateway Chapter



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**From the President, Donna Sobkoviak**

I cannot believe that Fall is already here!! 2011 seems to be going by so fast but at least it has not been boring... especially for our Gateway (St. Louis) Chapter members!

Our 2011 Legal Forum/Expo in August was a huge success and the response from both our members and business partners was overwhelmingly positive. It would appear that the majority of respondents prefer the new full-day, combined educational and expo format. Big thanks goes out to those that worked so hard on this event, our Professional Development and Business Partner Relations Committee members; Sherry Hurst, Julie Hill,



Cheri Meier, Patty Barbachem, Lisa Waligorski and several other members who volunteered their time at the actual event.

The Chapter's other August event, The 2011 St. Louis Diversity Job Fair, had yet another successful year thanks to the hard work of Angela Schaefer and her volunteers. The Fair provides interviewing and networking opportunities for law students, as well as law firm recruiters. Our Chapter is very proud to be a sponsor of this event along with the Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis.

The Region 3 & 4 Conference that was held in Kansas City offered excellent education and informative networking with Business Partners, as well as some fun on the Plaza with members from our own chapter and other chapters' members. The accommodations, food and entertainment were all excellent and we give credit to the Kansas City chapter for their hard work in preparing and planning the conference for all of us.

In mid-September our Board Members, Chairs and Mentors hosted a New Member Orientation Luncheon at Husch Blackwell. Our long time member, Bill Turkington, spoke about ALA and fielded questions from new members. The luncheon was a huge success thanks to Bill and our Membership Chair, Sherry Smith. A fully paid scholarship drawing for a new member to attend the 2012 annual conference was held, and the big winner was **Jillian C. Piechocinski** from Riezman Berger, who is thrilled to be able to attend the conference next April.

October is such a busy month for our chapter. We have, once again, received a signed proclamation from Missouri's Governor, Jeremiah (Jay) W. Nixon, acknowledging the week of October 3-7, 2011 to be the Association of Legal Administrators Professional Legal Management Week (PLMW). Our chapter's PLMW celebration at Joe Bucks on Tuesday, October 4th, along with several other legal associations and our business partner sponsors, was a huge success thanks to the hard work of our Vice President, Patty Barbachem.

Upcoming events for October that you will not want to miss include our Law Firm Leadership event on October 19th, where Egil "Bud" Krogh will speak, as well as the Ronald McDonald House Charity service project taking place on October 22nd, where our chapter members and business partners will serve dinner at three local Ronald McDonald houses.

Have a Happy Fall and hope to see you all soon!

Donna Sobkoviak  
2010-2011 ALA Gateway President

### *Catching Up With...Jillian Piechocinski*

Jillian has 2 children (Sarah 21 and Trey 18) and husband, John. She was brought up in London, England and graduated from college in London, with a degree in pre-school education.



- 1) I decided to join the ALA because... ***Getting to know other administrators and networking. Whether you are a large, midsize or small legal office you always have someone within the organization who has experience what you are seeking advice in.***
- 2) The things I liked best about being a legal administrator are... ***Being involved in the dynamics of our firm. You never know what each day will bring you. It is not monotonous.***
- 3) The things I like least about being a legal administrator are... ***Keeping everyone happy. No matter how hard you try, there is always someone who does not agree. This, on the other hand, provides you with alternative views.***
- 4) The hardest situation I had to deal with were... ***laying an employee off, who was the sole provider for their family.***
- 5) As a legal administrator, I never thought I'd have to... ***Go to Hawaii, for an ALA convention. I am very excited to have this opportunity to enhance my knowledge, to meet and network within the legal community across the country.***
- 6) The best advice I've received from a fellow legal administrator... ***Monday morning meetings with the non attorneys. The meetings are short and to the point. The objective is to inform everyone as to what is going on in the firm. What deadlines are approaching, and who needs extra help with projects. It is a productive 10-15 minutes.***

# Community Challenge

To keep the Ronald McDonald Houses and Family Rooms running as "home away from home" facilities, the organization relies on Wish List item donations.

Please join ALA in donating items to all three houses in the Metro St. Louis area.

Each law firm is asked to set up a collection spot in their offices. Sherry Smith and Joe Taylor will periodically be picking up the donated items to store for the collective contribution in October.

Below are the items in greatest need...

♥ House Wish List ♥

Dishwasher detergent	60-watt light bulbs
Liquid hand soap in a pump container	Hand sanitizer in pump container
Small & large trash can liners	Disinfectant spray
Dish soap	Disinfectant wipes
Ziploc baggies (all sizes)	Soft Scrub
Fabric softener sheets	Febreze
Laundry detergent	
Queen & twin sheet sets (white only)	
Towels, hand towels, wash cloths (white only)	
Batteries (all sizes)	

♥ Family Room Wish List ♥

- Gift cards (Target & Schnucks)
- Travel-size razors, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and deodorant
- Dishwasher detergent
- Laundry detergent (high efficiency)
- Disinfectant spray
- Disinfectant wipes
- Adult sizes (men and women) scrubs
- Individual boxes of crayons & coloring books
- Adult board games (Cranium, Trivial Pursuit, etc)

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A Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators

Please contact Sherry Smith (sls@carmodymacdonald.com) at 314.854.8636 or 618.920.0691 or Joe Taylor (jtaylor@uselaws.com) with pick-up requests. The items will be donated during the dinner on October 22nd.



7) My impression of the Gateway Chapter is... *How welcoming the ALA members are. They are very involved in their chapter, and all enjoy being a part of it.*

8) If I was not a legal administrator, I would... *most likely own an infirmary center for children. Working parents struggle daily when their children are sick. Needing to take off work to tend to their children, or send them to school/daycare sick. The infirmary would give parents an alternative solution.*

9) In my spare time, I enjoy... *hiking and early morning jogs. I also enjoy time with my family. I love the fact that I can chat to my children away in college, family and friends over the world due to communication technology.*

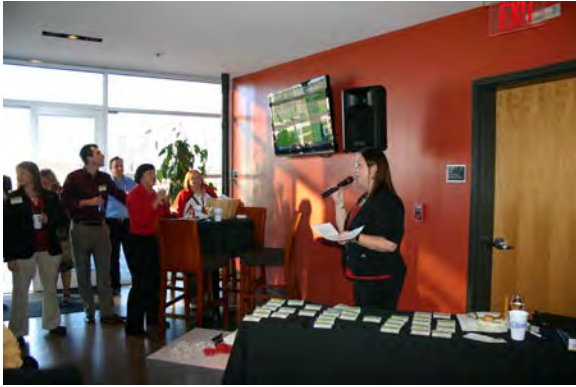
10) Three words that best describe me are... *Dedicated, Reliable, Direct*

11) The biggest changes I've seen in the legal industry is... *Technology. I have been in the legal field for many years. Technology without a doubt is the biggest change. Phone systems, typewriters, computers, software, copiers, printers, scanners, and the fax machine that is nearly obsolete due to e-mail. The traditional law library, gone!*

12) The most challenging part of being a legal administrator... *Our annual healthcare renewal. Trying to provide the best healthcare coverage for employees. The rising cost of premiums and deductibles, causing employees to waive their healthcare to be covered on their spouse's coverage. As a mid-size firm, we struggle yearly due to the aging population of the group.*

## ***2011 PLMW Appreciation Event***





View more photos at [www.ala-gateway.org/gallery.php](http://www.ala-gateway.org/gallery.php)  
Patty Barbachem, Vice-President

In support of the PLMW initiative, the Gateway Chapter hosted a networking and happy hour event at JoeBuck's Restaurant in St. Louis, Missouri on Tuesday, October 4, 2011 from 4:30-6:30 p.m. The Chapter extended invitations to its Diamond, Platinum, Gold and Silver level business partners, as well as members from the following legal organizations:

Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) International Legal Technology Association (ILTA) Legal Marketing Association (LMA) American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) Recruiting Association of St. Louis (RASL) St. Louis Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA) St. Louis Paralegal Association (SPA) Women in eDiscovery

To create awareness of the legal management profession, Gateway Chapter President, Donna Sobkoviak, spoke briefly about ALA, the Gateway Chapter, and her role as President. She also presented the Gateway Chapter with a Proclamation from the Governor of Missouri declaring October 3-7, 2011 as Association of Legal Administrators Professional Legal Management Week in the State of Missouri. Representatives from each of the other legal organizations spoke briefly as well.

To round out the event, the Gateway Chapter held a scavenger hunt to encourage members to interact with the business partners. This mixer was well received by all who attended.

To increase visibility, the Gateway Chapter created an ad promoting PLMW which the Bar Association of Metropolitan St. Louis placed in their weekly electronic newsletter. The ad acknowledged ALA and fellow associations who participated in the event.

## ***Legal Administrators – Professionals at Work***

By William Turkington, retired ALA member and speaker at new member orientation luncheon

A couple of months ago, some of my friends asked if I would write a short article on legal administration and its professional nature. Rather than just sharing my personal opinions (or making it up:), I asked fellow members of the Association of Legal Administrators (ALA) for their help in answering 8 different questions which were of interest to me, and hopefully you.



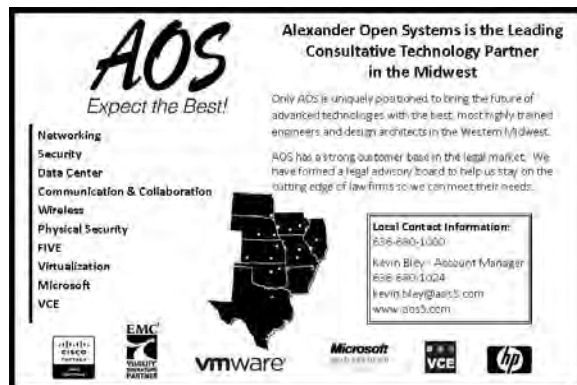
The questions when reviewed and combined into related groupings help us answer: Who are we? How did we get here? Are we challenged by our career? Where are we going? How do we manage? This discussion will answer those questions and provide some tips and commentary along the way. The questions were:

- How do you plan and organize your day, any specific tips or practices or do you just react to the issues?
- What is your education background and are there any courses/seminars that you would highly recommend for the legal administration career?
- How would you describe your feelings about your career, Firm/Company and the people you work with?
- How do you "balance life?"
- As you look in your crystal ball over the next 3-5 years, what are the top 2 challenges that you see impacting our lives or industry and how should we prepare for them?
- If you have worked previously in an industry different from legal, what is the biggest difference or challenge in our legal industry?
- What book has influenced you most in your career (and for extra credit - recommend a book for fun reading)?
- How long have you worked in the legal environment and what is your current position?

I received a total of 18 responses (thank you very much), 16 or about 89% were from our local ALA Chapter and two were from firm peers of mine from other locations. In the next sections, I will move back and forth between summarizing the answers received along with my experiences and conclusions.

**Who are we?** Legal administrators cover a wide range of responsibilities. I worked for a four-person management committee in my first administrator role. One of the partners told me to make sure that the light bulbs were changed, that nobody made popcorn in the microwave and

that the elevator took him up and down promptly. Another of the committee partners expected me to provide a strategic plan along with the operating budget. I undertook all of those tasks, and everything in between, as I began growing into my position. Since that date, in 1990, the general administrator position has expanded from an office manager role to one with an expanded and higher level of responsibility dealing with external clients, representing our firms in the community as well as internal roles.



We work closely with our managing partners and we are the business managers, leaders and planners of our offices and firms. We handle the operational details so that our attorneys can provide legal services to our clients and obtain new clients. Our position titles are: administrator (or director of administration); chief, director or manager of Human Resources; chief information officer; or director of finance. There are many more titles and positions in our industry but those are the titles of the respondents for this article.

**How did we get here?** We are a group with a significant amount of formal education and on the job experience. 16 of us have college degrees and at least 5 of us have Masters degrees. Accounting, Business and Human Resources are the most common degrees. We also have a lot of experience in our current or previous law firms, collectively more than 320 years, or an average of 18 years per person. The range in years of experience is 4.5 years to 30 years.

Several of us came from other careers or industries such as: railroad, corporate, other service, medical, manufacturing and military. There was no consensus as to the major differences between other industries that we came from, but a couple of examples deserve mention:

- "Unions are the biggest difference, they kept things "equal" for all employees in the same craft, regardless of 'circumstance'. That's something that legal administrators try to do on a daily basis without being governed by a hard/fast set of 'rules'."
- "The most challenging is the matrix management. In the corporate world you have an organization chart which helps with the approval and flow of information. In a Partnership, there is a very flat structure; communication and approvals flow from many directions."
- "Business continuity - firms share resources but each partner is their own little business - and each run differently. Changing the structure of compensation may alleviate some of the 'owner run' business within the firm and allow more business sense to prevail."

Books that have influenced us along the way or in our development include: the Bible; The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey; The Tipping Point by Don Tapscott; The One Minute Manager by Kenneth Blanchard and Spencer Johnson; Don't Sweat the Small Stuff by Richard Carlson; Good to Great by Jim Collins; mid any of the Dale Carnegie hooks. ALA publications received praise for timely value and responsiveness,

I am one of the proponents of The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and highly recommend it. It's a challenging read with some difficult concepts to grasp, so two other administrators and I formed a study group to push through and better utilize its lessons. I used the same study group process with Covey's The Eighth Habit. That approach brought about a synergy within the study group that positively improved our understanding and also provided a greater awareness about others in our profession.

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I've expanded the 7 Habits teachings beyond work, identifying annual goals and objectives each year in the areas of: Personal, Physical/Health, Professional, Spiritual/Religion/Charity, Family, Financial, Self Improvement, Social and Recreational. This outline provides me focus filters to assist with decision making on a daily basis.

Regarding our background education and recommended courses/seminars, all who have had business, accounting, management, computer science and human resources degrees/certificates praise their importance and relevance. Several recommended adding psychology or social work courses, to include a PATIENCE sub-course to assist with team building and conflict resolution. A "sense of urgency" course should also be on the curriculum.

A few of the following are excellent examples of how we stay current:

- "I stay current with peer groups and serving on strategic advisory boards."
- "I honestly believe that ALA offers the best educational sessions for continued development."
- "I attend seminars in HR laws and legal ethics."

My conclusion from reviewing the background of survey respondents is that their education, range of responsibilities and years of experience make them a highly credible resource group. They are trusted advisors and have excellent advice for us to evaluate for our future career development.

**Are we challenged by our career?** An overwhelming majority said they "loved/liked/enjoyed" their work as a whole. Several noted that there were some days and circumstances that were not good. Only two indicated that they had "mixed" feelings about their position or that the job was "very difficult."

Key factors listed by those who enjoyed and found fulfillment with their careers were: the challenges of each day, whether they were in a slightly narrower, in scope, functional area, e.g. Human Resources, Information or Finance, or the broad "do everything" spectrum of administration. Several mentioned that their support, management or functional team members made the work day terrific and a few noted that they had recruited and built out that team. The conclusion here is obvious, be extremely selective in the recruiting process of your staff - they

are not only key to job completion but also, very important to a cohesive and satisfying work environment.

One excellent and representative quote in this regard follows, "I love the diversity of what I do and the challenge of learning something new while trying to keep the wheels on the bus..." Another notes, "I like my job because of the wide variety of responsibilities I have – HR, Marketing, Facilities, Finance. There are no two days alike. Some days when I'm knee deep in HR issues, it's nice to be able to close my door and work on a spreadsheet with numbers where the answers are black and white..."

For me the responses above are right on the mark. This profession allows us to work with highly educated and motivated individuals - attorneys, paralegals, legal secretaries and staff who are providing important services to clients. This "mission" (providing first rate legal services to our clients) is valid and required in our society. We must continue our efforts to succeed.

**Where are we going?** It's clear from all of the responses that the global and national economy are driving "change" to the legal industry and us as we deal with it. We are merging, consolidating, growing or shrinking as we search for the optimum size best suited for our operation. We are re-thinking every expense line on the budget for possible refinement while ensuring that revenues can be increased. We are consolidating attorneys and staff, combining positions or functions, to be sure that the infrastructure is the right size to support out lawyers.

We are also dealing with a large group of our staff and attorneys who are retiring or getting ready to retire and leave our firms. We must improve our succession planning. Additionally, we see challenges with recruiting younger and diverse resources, training new personnel and generations on our culture and work habits and providing the flexibility to retain them. We are concerned about the transportation costs facing our employees and the environmental foot print we are making on a daily basis. We constantly must be evaluating training, benefits and health insurance to provide needed coverage while examining budget impact.



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**How do we manage?** It is clear that none of us completes every task before we leave our office at night, there is always one more project, call, meeting or conversation to make. That's just the nature of the profession. So how do we deal with leaving work behind, or do we leave it?

Every single one of us plans ahead in a pro active way, many will look a month or week ahead frequently. Most of us review those plans at night before we leave work for the next day, and fewer of us wait until we get to work, early, the next day. At least 10 of us use the software on our

computers, generally, we are using Outlook, Groupwise and one with Lotus Notes. Additionally, many of us still utilize hand written "to do" lists to assist our computer programs. Some other individual planning and organizing techniques include:

- Use of a monthly/1-31 drawer in my desk and file the materials in those daily folders for the tasks placed on the calendar.
- Use color coded folders in an organizer on my desk. Bright, different colored folders for different events or projects, and a red folder for items that need immediate attention the following day. Also, use a hanging file system by the month to place items in appropriate month due. Tried to put in daily folders within the month, but that didn't work.
- Use of a Franklin Covey planner that is kept by my side 80% of the time. Uses this planner to keep daily list of events and 1-2 times per week transfers items to a monthly to do list.
- Personally, I use Outlook Tasks and Calendars to track suspense dates and deadlines. I have also carried a steno pad with me (almost 100%) of the time to make notes wherever I'm at. The steno pad augments my memory - I review my notes frequently and number and date each pad. Currently, I'm using pad numbered 140, having started my first pad with this firm, approximately 10 years ago.

For all of the planning this group does, a large part of each day is spent with "putting out fires", reacting to issues, challenges, absences, accidents, emergencies. We also troubleshoot issues or problem solve. In this regard, we must be calm, flexible and responsive to our clients, whether external or internal (our attorneys and staff).

The second question that fits well here, is how do we balance life? More than 50% of us said it was "forced", "difficult", "hard to very hard". We struggle, not wanting to leave work undone, but realizing that there just aren't enough hours to complete it all.

The majority of us work at home, in the evenings and/or on weekends, using the excellent technology that provides us remote access. A couple of individuals cursed the technology but also recognized the time saving features in that we can accomplish weekend work at lunch, dinner or home, saving the commute back to the office. Some of us stay at the office long hours during the week and then try to stay away from work items for all or most of the weekend. Others find themselves working every week day and some on the weekends, too. Two of us leave work at the office and respond only to severe emergencies on the weekends.

**WHO'S WATCHING YOUR FIRM'S 401(k)?**

- Is your firm's 401(k) subject to quarterly reviews by an independent board of directors?
- Does it include professional investment fiduciary services?
- Is your firm's 401(k) subject to 23 contracted service standards?
- Does it have an investment menu with passive and active investment strategies?
- Is your firm's 401(k) sponsor a not-for-profit whose purpose is to deliver a member benefit?
- Does it feature no out-of-pocket fees to your firm?
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Spending time with spouses, children and family members are key to our life balance. We also schedule our off work time with horses, pets, exercise and reading. Some fun books mentioned were: Blink, The Dream Manager, The Shack and The Firm. Finally, religion and volunteering are other activities that provide our balance, Following are some of the statements that are representative here:

- "...On weekends I do as much as I can outdoors including spending time with my horses and spouse. This clears my head and helps keep things in perspective, plus give me lots of fresh air and exercise."

- Another, "...I try to leave close to 5 each night to have relaxed evening time with my family, I work some on weekends but usually not if family commitments, I enjoy reading books and I work out 3-5 times per week to relieve stress.."
- One of our senior respondents stated the following, "...I find myself more cognizant of reality - most things can wait without causing major disasters or inconvenience for others. Therefore, I find myself putting things away and leaving tasks not quite finished that I would have previously stayed at the office until midnight to get done. None of us are guaranteed a certain number of days and I want to enjoy my days. I didn't get that concept for a longtime... And, while I can't do everything, I sure want to do as much as possible."
- "Delegation with the proper mentoring and supervision is often overlooked as one of the most important tools a legal administrator has. Guiding another staff person through a difficult project develops and improves the overall skill set of the office."



In summary, this article, using survey input from 18 current administrators, primarily in the St. Louis area, provides discussion about:

Who are we? We are leaders and managers of dynamic, fast paced professional service organizations that provide important services to a demanding client base.

How did we get here? We got here from other careers/industries or rose up through the legal career field, we have a strong education background and continue to learn.

Are we challenged by our career? We like the challenges and stresses of our jobs. The people we work with bring us fulfillment and satisfaction.

Where are we going? We are traveling a more difficult road through a troubled economy that will re-shape our firms and offices. Our work forces are changing. Our roles as key leaders and change agents in our firms will continue to grow as the industry faces new challenges.

How do we manage? We recognize the need to pro-actively plan for the very important strategic and tactical aspects of our firms and refine our skills to reach that level. In this regard we use technology and planning tools to block the time needed for this effort. At the same time, we spend an immense amount of time reacting to minute by minute demands and crises. Finally, we are sensitive to the needs to keep our lives balanced and healthy.

### ***Addressing the Starbucks Effect: Leveraging Beverage Service to Boost Employee Morale and Productivity***

By Lori Hill, Aramark Refreshment Services

[Click here](#) to download a copy of the article.

Today's employees expect more. More than a good salary. More than a secure work environment. They want the fulfillment that comes from the freedom to make their own choices, the satisfaction that results from believing their employer has their best interest in mind.

Smart companies are looking for straightforward, cost effective ways to deliver workplace differentiators that will pay off in higher employee morale, increased worker productivity, and reduced turnover. They're seeking innovative new ways to build employee-friendly work environments — whether they employ 50 people or 5,000. For a growing number of organizations, that innovative differentiator is on-site beverage service.

### ***Amassing Customization***

Call it the “Starbucks Effect”: Consumers who were once happy with a cup of Joe now won't settle for anything less than a half-caf double-pump caramel latte with foam. While in the past employees once demanded coffee that was “hot and black,” today's employees are calling for coffee customized to their individual tastes. And the industry's eagerness to cater to individual tastes, initiated and driven by Starbucks, led to a coffee-drinking craze that's lasted for more than a decade.

This increasing demand for customization and individualization is not just evident at the local coffee shop. Advances in information technology have combined with improvements in customer service to make it a customized world, both inside and outside the workplace. Workers have grown accustomed to getting the products they want personalized to meet their individual needs — from the coffee they drink to the car they drive to the music they download and listen to.

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For years, it was a common myth that the only things employees really wanted were a secure job and a good salary. But during the past decade, research has increasingly shown that a variety of factors produce a satisfied and productive workforce. These factors range from enjoying respect from bosses and co-workers to feeling part of a team to working toward common and achievable goals. They also include work space issues such as having convenient access to on-site food and beverage options.

As a result, the organizations that want to attract and retain the best talent have focused on creating a better work environment. They've invested in team-building exercises, brainstorming processes, and other ways of promoting collaboration among managers and employees. They also began paying more attention to the work space itself — installing ergonomic furniture and equipment, improving lighting, and enhancing food and beverage service.

### ***Unbridling Worker Enthusiasm***

The payoff for organizations that invest in worker satisfaction is clear and measurable. In short, companies that maintain high employee morale outperform their competitors. That's according to last year's breakthrough book, *The Enthusiastic Employee: How Companies Profit by Giving Workers What They Want*, by David Sirota, Louis Mischkind, and Michael Irwin Meltzer.

Based on the results of 2.5 million employee surveys taken since 1994, the authors found that people have three key expectations at work.

One is a sense of achievement. Workers want to feel proud of the work they do and feel that they are part of the larger picture of corporate success. They want a sense that their work has broader meaning. And in a time marked by corporate scandal, they want to work for a good corporate citizen that plays an active role in improving the community at large. Studies confirm that satisfied workers are more effective workers. But today's employees want more. On-site beverage service can be a simple, cost-efficient way to optimize your workforce.

The second is camaraderie. Employees find satisfaction in being able to work together as a team toward shared goals. Team members form personal bonds that benefit both the individual and the organization.

The final expectation is fair treatment. Employees want fair pay, health benefits, and job security. They also desire less tangible aspects of fairness: being treated with respect, having a say in the way they do their jobs, and controlling their work environments.

These expectations are nearly universal. Despite recent suggestions that different generations of workers have different interests — for example, that Generation X doesn't care about job security — the authors found little evidence to support such claims. And perhaps surprisingly, they found no differences between men and women and even across countries and cultures.

Studies conducted by global research firm Sirota Survey Intelligence — where author David Sirota is chairman emeritus — have confirmed that achievement, camaraderie, and equity are the critical factors in creating a winning work environment.

Surveying 100,000 workers between 1998 and 2005, Sirota found that when these three factors are present, employees are 15 times more enthusiastic than when only one is present. Fully one-third of employees described themselves as enthusiastic when all three factors were part of the corporate culture, while just 2 percent were enthusiastic with only one factor.

### ***Beyond the Water Cooler***

Even organizations that recognize the importance of high employee morale sometimes struggle with identifying the best ways to enhance their workplace. But a growing number of companies are finding that enhanced food and beverage service is a simple, cost effective approach to improving worker morale and productivity. And as more individuals come to expect products that are customized to their unique requirements, specialty beverage systems are paying even greater dividends.

The fact is, the traditional office coffee pot no longer suffices. Today's workers want more than just regular and decaf. Instead, they expect a choice of flavored coffees, more sophisticated coffee drinks such as cappuccino and espresso, and even other beverages now growing in popularity – green tea, sugar-free hot chocolate, bottled water, and more.

Experts expect this trend to continue. As consumers' expectations for more sophisticated coffee rises, and as the market for in-home coffee brewing systems expands, workers will increasingly demand a range of on-site beverage options that meet their individual tastes and offer single-cup brewing convenience.

In addition, many consumers are opting for tea, as studies show the health benefits of regular tea consumption, and as beverage companies broaden tea's appeal through new flavors and herbal supplements such as ginseng and Echinacea. The result is that more and more workers look for tea products in the office pantry.

What's more, recent years have seen a huge spike in the consumption of both filtered and bottled water. As a result, studies show, workers are calling for water in the workplace more than for any other beverage.

### ***Serving Up Results: Specialty Beverage Systems***

The most effective way to deliver such a broad range of beverage choices is through a high-quality, specialty beverage system. In fact, there's a strong link between a quality beverage system and the value employers place on their staffs, according to a study by the National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA), conducted by Wirthlin Worldwide and sponsored by Mars Inc.

Based on more than 400 in-person interviews in Chicago, Dallas, Atlanta, and Stanford, Conn., the study found that 74 percent of employees and decision makers would like to have a range of beverages to choose from during the workday. It also found that four out of five employees would prefer a better coffee option at work, and that such an option would make them less likely to leave the office.

Furthermore, the study showed that employees believe that offering hot beverages is an excellent way for organizations to demonstrate that they value their workers. For example:

- 91 percent believe that a hot-beverage break is a good way to reduce stress before starting a new activity.
- 83 percent of employees feel that offering hot beverages is one of the most visible daily expressions of employee benefits.
- 86 percent believe that companies that value their employees would most likely offer a high-quality beverage system.
- 67 percent agree that if they could get the beverage they wanted when they wanted it at work, they would be more productive.

And it's not just the employees who think that beverage systems are an effective way to keep employees feeling valued. The NAMA study revealed that decision makers share many beliefs about beverage systems with their employees. In fact:

- 81 percent of decision makers recognize that companies that value their employees are more likely to offer high-quality beverage systems.
- 80 percent believe that offering employees a variety of hot beverages is one of the most visible daily expressions of staff benefits.
- 90 percent believe that employees will be more productive if they can get the drink they want at work.

### ***When the Glass Is Half-Empty***

Of course, beverage service isn't a panacea for every workplace challenge. Even an optimal work environment will have its share of dissatisfied employees. In part, that's because of factors outside the workplace — and outside your control.

For example, a recent study by Nancy Rothbard of the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and Steffanie Wilk of Ohio State University found that not everything that affects a worker's performance occurs within the workplace. Employees who walked in the door in a bad mood — after missing their train to work, say, or following a household disagreement — were more likely to stay in a bad mood. Consequently, that bad mood affected their work performance. Employees who came to work in a good mood, on the other hand, were more likely to maintain that mood and have a more productive workday. Such employees took less break time and felt more focused while on the job.

But without question, a well-implemented, tailored refreshments program can help boost employee morale and productivity. That's according to research carried out in October and November of 2005 by ARAMARK and Survey Sampling International.

The study involved more than 400 online interviews of a nearly equal number of clients and non-clients across the United States. Of those sampled, 81 percent were the primary or one of the primary decision makers regarding the coffee and beverages offered at their workplace.

The key finding of the survey is that both clients and non-clients recognize the benefits of outsourcing the refreshment operation and believe that a high-quality beverage service can yield significant rewards in terms of employee satisfaction. In fact, the majority of decision makers surveyed agreed that providing free coffee or beverages to employees contributes to increased satisfaction and morale of employees at their location, and is an effective way to reward employees and show that they are valued.

Overall, respondents saw additional advantages in employee productivity. Nearly half believe that providing employees with free coffee and beverages contributes to increased productivity and their location.

## *Customization Means Both Productivity AND Cost Savings*

When asked in the ARAMARK survey to name the single most important benefit of coffee and beverage service, decision makers named employee satisfaction and morale. But business environments focused on cost reductions may be concerned about the potential expense of an on-site beverage service.

The fact is, many businesses that opt for an on-site beverage service find that customization really does go hand-in-hand with cost savings, and that an on-site beverage service can actually save companies both time and money over the long term.

Consider that one-quarter of employees leave the office to get a hot beverage. On average, they spend 14 minutes outside the office for such a trip, according to recent research by Wirthlin Worldwide and Harris International.

Based on those numbers and an average employee salary of \$40,000, a company with 50 workers loses 102 work days a year — at a cost of \$15,625 — to employees who leave the facility to purchase beverages. Likewise, a company with 1,000 workers loses 2,031 work days, at a cost of \$312,500.

ARAMARK has developed a Workplace Productivity Calculator that estimates how much time and money are lost by companies when employees go off-site to purchase beverages.

Participants in the ARAMARK study agreed with the potential cost savings of on-site beverage service. Nearly half believe that having the right selection of coffee and beverages can significantly reduce the time employees spend away from work purchasing items on their own.

By selecting and implementing a high-quality, on-site beverage service, organizations can offer their employees an increased level of choice and satisfaction — especially if they offer a selection from marquee brands such as Starbucks, Seattle's Best Coffee, Dunkin' Donuts, Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, and FLAVIA. Choosing a service that offers a wide range of beverages that includes fresh leaf teas, cappuccino, flavored lattes, and chai lattes also meet workers' demands for a broad range of beverage options.

Workers are looking for help in recharging and getting back to work in a positive frame of mind. Employers who offer their employees a real coffeehouse experience without leaving the office are well on their way to a more satisfying and productive workplace.

***Congratulations to DNT, winner of the best decorated booth at the Legal Forum & Expo on August 10<sup>th</sup>!***



***ALA Gateway Chapter Diversity Scholarship Recipient***

By Michelle A. Martin

ALA Gateway Chapter awarded Lauren Olivia Rodriguez, a student at the University of Missouri- St. Louis with the Diversity Scholarship for \$1000.00 on August 15, 2011. Lauren has dedicated her time to helping others, advancing Hispanic rights, students and family. As the recipient of the scholarship, she will be able to pursue her professional goal of obtaining her masters' in public policy with an emphasis in health policy.



Lauren helped to inaugurate a new student organization and mentoring program to improve graduation and retention rates for Hispanic students she is a member of the Chancellor's

Diversity Council for UMSL, Census Project 2010 and participates in the Sue Shear Institute for Women in Public Life.

Lauren was very grateful to be selected as the recipient of the ALA Gateway Chapter Scholarship. She stated, “It is very much needed! These funds will pay for books, fees and other costs associated with college.” On hand for the presentation were Althea Reese, Lauren Olivia Rodriguez and Michelle Martin.



### ***ALA Through the Decades — a Retrospective***

Over the past 40 years, ALA has been at the forefront of the legal management profession. Since its inception in 1971, legal management professionals have turned to ALA as their connection to knowledge, resources and networking.

As ALA celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2011, you are invited to take a brief tour down “memory lane” and look back on the profession and how it, and the association, have changed and evolved over the last four decades. Following is a selection of photos and images, broken down by the decades, of important ALA milestones and events from the last 40 years. We hope you will enjoy looking at them and find them interesting as well as informative. Look closely, you might see yourself or some friends along the journey!

Full article found at <http://www.alanet.org/ala40/default.aspx>

### ***View it on the ALA National Website - Question of the Month***

**Question:** Do you have any information on handling toxic behavior in the workplace, or taming employees with serious entitlement/self-importance issues?

**Answer:** I hope something in the following resources will help you convince your employee that disrupting the workplace isn't professional behavior. A couple of the items discuss what professional conduct really is; you might be able to use that as a starting point in “re-educating” those with inflated egos.

One thing we noted while searching for resources is that this sort of behavior is sometimes equated with bullying. Whether or not that's the case with your problem employee, you certainly don't want these incidents to rise (or descend) to the bullying level. Depending on the nature of

the disruptions, there may be an element of harassment, too. In either situation, some of the material here should help you come up with a plan to address the issue if it's gone that far.

Marsha Petrie Sue has written quite a bit on toxic people; she has spoken at some of our conferences, and has written for our publications. You'll find articles from her in the October/November 2007 issue of [Legal Management](#) and also in the February/March 2007 issue of [News](#). You can also visit her [website](#) for access to her blog postings (sort by topic to find relevant discussions).

This [article](#) posted on Entrepreneur.com points out the effects a toxic employee can have in the workplace, and outlines ways to identify and address negative workplace behavior. The Wisconsin Bar posted this [paper](#) on professional conduct; it's directed toward attorneys, but almost everything here can be applied to administrative staff as well.

The [Workplace Bullying Institute](#) offers excellent material, including suggestions on developing a good harassment/violence/anti-bullying policy. Books and training videos are available here, and might be a good addition to your reference shelf.

“[Workplace Bullying: The White Paper](#)” points out how bullying behavior differs from someone displaying difficult behavior. It offers suggestions for an organization on protecting itself against bullying, and creating a respectful workplace.

Workforce Online recently posted a [brief Q&A](#) article on curbing toxic behavior, with links to additional material. Please note that some material from this source requires free registration for access, but we find a lot of useful information here. If you don't have access to SHRM, this is a good site to know about for HR topics.



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Behavior such as you mention can sometimes be considered harassment; if it's gotten to that point, you might want to review the *ALA Management Encyclopedia*SM article "[Harassment: An Administrator's Guide to Various Forms and Situations of Harassment](#)," by Marie Kramer.

There seems to be increased focus on this problem in the Canadian workplace, because of laws specifically mandating a respectful workplace (broader than U.S. laws barring harassment). An extensive [guide](#) from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety, Occupational Safety and Health Division, discusses ways to handle all kinds of harassment, and points out specific behaviors that constitute personal harassment. Sample policies and forms are provided.

Several academic entities have incorporated guidance on what constitutes professional conduct into their employee handbooks; if your own firm's handbook doesn't include something similar, you may wish to consider adding it. As examples, Portland [OR] Community College offers [Standards for Professional Behavior](#) for employees and MIT Sloan promulgates [Professional Standards: Personal Conduct](#) for all members of the school community.

Finally, you might want to review Google's Code of Conduct, which boils down to "[don't be evil](#)" – yes, that's how it's described on their website. Interestingly, the Code includes a statement that it applies not only to all staff and Board members, but also to contractors and other service providers.

One more suggestion – do consult your firm's EAP [Employee Assistance Program] if that benefit is available to you. The EAP staff should be able to offer guidance on how to handle the "offender" as well as provide counseling directly to the problem employee. They may also conduct office-wide presentations on dealing with such behavior; that would help empower other staff to address the behavior as it affects them.



*Annual  
Conference &  
Exposition*

### **2012 Annual Conference & Exposition**

April 22-26, 2012

Hawaii Convention Center, Hilton Hawaiian Village

Honolulu, Hawaii

The Association of Legal Administrators (ALA) Annual Conference & Exposition is the legal management profession's most comprehensive event of its kind. Featuring dynamic and relevant education presented by recognized leaders in their field, the ALA Annual Conference will enhance your knowledge, develop your management skills, and enable you to achieve greater personal and professional growth.

ALA's three-day Exposition is a vital extension of the educational program and provides the opportunity to update yourself on the latest technologies, find solutions to business issues, solve problems, uncover emerging trends, and develop valuable resources and partnerships in the legal industry.

The Annual Conference also provides ample opportunities for networking. Various events, including receptions, lunches, and idea exchanges, will allow you the time to discuss your day-to-day challenges and unique issues with other legal management professionals from around the world. You're sure to learn tips, tactics, and wisdom that you can implement back at your workplace.

### **Your Checklist to Obtain Support**

- Plan early! In addition to early bird registration discounts, planning early will enable you to obtain lower airline fares and ensure availability in the Conference hotel (which offer significant ALA discounts over standard room rates). An early request shows that you are a careful planner.
- Formalize your request in writing. Support your request with specific reasons you should attend. Specifically identify what benefits your firm will obtain by your attendance at the conference. What sessions meet objectives and learning opportunities that are of critical importance to your firm? Prepare a list of exhibitors that you want to meet with to discuss their products and why?
- Prepare a budget for cost of attending (or use the form located on the Conference website) and be willing to show your commitment by absorbing a portion of the cost personally if needed. Use frequent flyer miles or hotel points to offset the cost of attending. Would you be willing to share a hotel room with a member of your chapter? Consider using vacation time for some of the days out of the office. Remember that you are making a commitment to your own education as well as the firm. Be sure to note that most meals are covered in the Conference registration fee.
- Involve your staff. Share your Conference materials and ask them for input on which education sessions would benefit them. Agree to bring back Conference materials and share with them.
- Share Conference materials with your partners. Ask them for input on which sessions and vendor partners information they feel would benefit the firm the most.
- Identify those individuals on your staff that will handle your responsibilities while you are out of the office. Remind the partners that current technology, cell phones and Blackberries, allow you to be easily accessible during your time away from the office.



## **Gateway (St. Louis)**

*A Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators*

### **ALA GATEWAY CHAPTER ANNUAL LAW FIRM LEADERSHIP EVENT**

**Speaker:** Egil "Bud" Krogh

**When:** Wednesday, October 19, 2011

Noon to 1:30 p.m.

**Location:** Four Seasons Hotel – Mississippi Room  
999 North 2nd Street, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Saint Louis

**Cost:** \$25.00 for members and \$35 for non-members

Don't miss the 2012 Nat'l Scholarship drawing compliments of our Diamond Sponsor—must be present at this meeting to win. An alternate winner will be drawn in case winner cannot attend Nat'l. CLE and CLM credit approved.

Bud's work in integrity is rooted in his experiences at the highest level of government decision-making. After graduating from Principia College, a three year tour as an officer on the USS YORKTOWN during the Vietnam War, and graduation from the University of Washington Law School, Bud joined the Nixon White House staff as Asst to the Counsel to the President. Bud's responsibilities included federal law enforcement, narcotics control, and transportation. His final position was Under Secretary of Transportation. In 1971, President Nixon assigned him to co-direct a Special Investigations Unit (the White House "Plumbers") to plug leaks related to the leak of the Top Secret Pentagon Papers to the NY Times. Told by the President that this leak was a matter of the highest national security importance and would not be allowed, Bud approved a covert operation as part of this investigation. Later, he pleaded guilty to conspiracy, served four and a half months in prison, and was disbarred. With the assistance of Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski, Bud was reinstated to the bar in 1980. Today, he is a practicing lawyer and also serves as Senior Fellow, Leadership and Ethics, at the Center for the Study of the Presidency in Washington, DC.

RSVP to Lisa Waligorski at 314.854.8600

or [law@carmodymacdonald.com](mailto:law@carmodymacdonald.com) no later than 5pm on Friday, October 14

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## *Calendar of Upcoming Events (2011 through 2014)*

### *2011*

#### October 19, 2011

- **Program:** Law Firm Leadership Event, Bud Krogh
- **Location:** Four Seasons Hotel
- **Speaker:** Egil “Bud” Krogh, an official of the Richard Nixon administration who was imprisoned for his part in the Watergate scandal, joined the Nixon White House as an advisor on the District of Columbia and later served as liaison to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs.
- **Topic:** Professional Ethics: Keep you and Your Law Firm in the Integrity Zone. Egil Krogh’s Lessons Learned.

#### November 11-12, 2011

- **Program:** ALA Board of Directors Meeting
- **Location:** Kiawah Island Golf Resort | Charleston, SC
- **Contact:** Lisa Mikita, ALA Headquarters

#### November 16, 2011

- **Program:** Roundtable Discussions
- **Location:** BREAKFAST MEETING, Husch Blackwell

#### December 14, 2011

- **Program:** Holiday Party
- **Location:** Moulin

### *2012*

#### January 18, 2012

- **Programs:** 2012 Nominating Committee Selection & Meeting on Substance Abuse
- **Location:** Sandberg Phoenix

February 2012                      2012 Slate of Officers Presented to Membership

#### February 15, 2012

- **Program:** Monthly Educational Meeting
- **Location:** Thompson Coburn
- **Speaker:** Rita Alli, Past President of ALA National, Director of Professional Development, Recruiting and Diversity for Stoel Rives LLP.
- **Topic:** Building a Culture of Client Service Among Your Staff - Client service is what distinguishes a good law firm from a great law firm. Building a culture of

outstanding client service starts with your staff and how they deliver services to your internal “clients” – the lawyers.

March 21, 2012

- **Program:** Election of 2012-2013 Officers – Monthly Educational Meeting and ALA Update
- **Location:** TBD
- **Speaker:** Karen Griggs, ALA National President

April 18, 2012

- **Program:** Monthly Educational Meeting
- **Location:** The Westin
- **Speaker:** Patti Groff, Past President of ALA National – Disaster Planning

April 23–26, 2012

- **Program:** ALA National Annual Educational Conference & Exposition
- **Location:** Hawaii Convention Center, Hilton Hawaiian Village | Honolulu, Hawaii

May 16, 2012

- **Program:** Monthly Educational Meeting
- **Location:** TBD
- **Speaker:** Jeff Lanza, Retired FBI Agent, Special Agent for over 20 years. He investigated corruption, fraud, organized crime, cyber crime, human trafficking and terrorism and will speak to the ALA Gateway Chapter on Leadership Ethics.

*2013*

April 15-18, 2013

- **Program:** ALA National Annual Educational Conference & Exposition
- **Location:** Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center | National Harbor, MD (Washington DC area)

*2014*

May 19-22, 2014

- **Program:** ALA National Annual Educational Conference & Exposition
- **Location:** Metro Toronto Convention Center | Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## *2011-2012 ALA Gateway Chairs and Committees*

### **Bar Liaison**

Dianne Feltz, Co-Chair  
Angela Schaefer, Co-Chair

### **Community Challenge Weekend**

Sherry Smith, Co-Chair  
Joe Taylor, Co-Chair

### **Diversity**

Michelle Martin, Chair  
Timothy Tyler

### **Education/Professional Development**

Dianne Feltz  
Althea Respass  
Sherry Hurst, Chair  
Tracy Bollig  
Mary Jennings

### **Human Resources**

Cindy Reeg  
Angela York

### **Membership Committee**

Mary Jennings, Chair  
Lisa Hollerbach

### **Newsletter**

Patty Brokaw, Co-Chair  
Sherry Smith, Co-Chair

### **Operation Bunny Hop**

Angela Louis, Chair  
Ana Helton, Co-Chair

### **Salary Survey**

Lisa Lange, Co-Chair  
Donna Sobkoviak, Co-Chair

### **Business Partner Expo/ Business Partner Relations**

Sarah Allen, Co-Chair  
Jennifer Sloop

### **Website**

Angela Louis  
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