



Gateway (St. Louis)

A Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators

Gateway Connection

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Association of Legal Administrators – Gateway Chapter



President

Donna L. Sobkoviak
Summers Compton Wells PC
314-991-4999
dsobkoviak@summerscomptonwells.com

President-Elect

Julie S. Hill
Husch Blackwell LLP
314-480-1549
julie.hill@huschblackwell.com

Vice President

Patricia L. Barbachem
Thompson Coburn LLP
618-236-3436
pbarbachem@thompsoncoburn.com

Secretary

Lisa A. Waligorski
Carmody MacDonald, P.C.
314-854-8669
law@carmodymacdonald.com

Treasurer

Lisa K. Lange
Stinson Morrison Hecker LLP
314-259-4543
llange@stinson.com

Past President

Angela M. Louis, PHR
Pitzer Snodgrass, P.C.
314-335-1348
louis@pspclaw.com

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From the President, Donna Sobkoviak

Our Chapter Officers, Chairs and Committees have so many exciting things planned for the next twelve months! We had a very successful Bonny Hop Event, Chaired by Ana Helton and Lisa Lange, in April assembling 2000 baskets of goodies for area children's homes. Currently, President-Elect, Julie Hill, is in the process of renewing our Business Partner sponsorships. The Business Partner year will kick off on August 10th at the NEW combined Legal Management Forum and Business Partner Exposition. The Expo will be



organized by the Business Partner Relations Chair, Cheri Meier and her committee.

Our Professional Development Chair, Sherry Hurst, has already started off a great year with the recent meeting regarding Social Media, which had the highest number of attendees at a monthly meeting in quite some time. The Managing Partner luncheon that Sherry has planned will be held on October 19th (SAVE THE DATE!) at The Four Seasons and you will not want to miss it! Our speaker will be Egil “Bud” Krogh, who is the CSPC Senior Fellow and Chair on Leadership, Ethics and Integrity. Those who have seen him speak say that members and their Managing Partners will be amazed and impressed.

Our Community Challenge Chairs, Joe Taylor and Sherry Smith, have been making plans for our service events for both The Ronald McDonald House and Shriner’s Hospital, which will take place in October. Vice President, Patty Barbachem, is busy planning another October event, Professional Legal Management Week (PLMW). This will be a joint event with other related associations in order to acknowledge PLMW. Patty is also in the process of planning our Chapter Holiday Party taking place in December.

As you can see, there are many networking and educational events planned throughout 2011. We hope that you are able to take part in many of the opportunities presented to you. Before we know it 2012 will be here! Until then, I hope that all of you have some great family vacations planned and are able to enjoy the summer.

Donna Sobkoviak | 2011-2012 ALA Gateway Chapter President

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR ALL ALA-GATEWAY CHAPTER MEMBERS!

ALA National has recently announced that they are offering a **Super Early Bird Registration** for the 2012 National Conference & Exposition which will be held April 22-26, 2012 at the Hawaii Convention Center, Hilton Hawaiian Village, Honolulu, Hawaii. The normal early bird registration is \$795; however, if you register for this conference prior to August 31, 2011, your registration cost will only be \$595. It is important to note that the hotel rates are comparable to the usual National Conference rates, as low as \$199 per night.

When our Chapter Board met in June, we made two important decisions regarding our scholarship budget that we hope will encourage our members to attend both the Region 3 & 4 Conference on September 15-17, 2011 at the InterContinental Kansas City at the Plaza, Kansas City, Missouri and the 2012 National Conference. The Regional Conference scholarship has been increased from \$350 to \$750 per qualified scholarship recipient. The 2012 National Conference scholarship budget has been increased from an overall budget of \$10,000 (which amounted to 10-\$1,000 awards) to an overall budget of \$20,000 (total award per recipient will depend on the number of qualified applicants). Our desire here is to turn our business partner support into discounted education and networking opportunities for as many of our members as possible.

If you would like to take advantage of the **Super Early Bird Registration** for the 2012 National Conference & Exposition you can go to www.alanet.org and click on Education, Educational Events, Annual Conference & Exposition. Listed under Future Conferences is a link to register

for the **Super Early Bird Registration Now Available**. If you are certain you plan to attend and are confident that you will qualify for a scholarship then it makes sense to take advantage of the super early bird registration. It will not reduce the amount of the overall scholarship you will receive, resulting in a \$200 savings that can be applied to some of your other travel expenses.

Donna Sobkoviak | 2011-2012 ALA Gateway Chapter President

Catching Up With...Joe Minner

Joe Minner is a new associate member of the ALA. He recently earned an MBA from Saint Louis University prior to going back to school he was the administrator of a local mid-sized defense firm for 4 years.



- 1) I decided to join the ALA because...*I am planning on a career in legal administration, and I think the resources that the ALA provides will be invaluable.*
- 2) As an associate status member, what do you hope to gain from the experience? *I hope to network with members and gain insights on what it takes to be a successful legal administrator.*
- 3) The things I liked best about being a legal administrator were... *the varied nature of the work and the challenge of finding new ways to make a business more profitable.*
- 4) The things I liked least about being a legal administrator were...*dealing with over-the-top non-work-related drama.*
- 5) The hardest situations I had to deal with were... *terminations of employment.*
- 6) As a legal administrator, I never thought I'd have to...*take fencing lessons, leave work to buy diapers, drive a U-Haul to deliver gifts to clients, clean the office slurpee machine, chauffeur celebrity guests (Erik Estrada, William "The Refrigerator" Perry).*
- 7) The best advice I've received from a fellow legal administrator is... *pace yourself and prioritize.*
- 8) My impression of the Gateway chapter is... *this is an active chapter with strong member participation. My sense is that there is a lot of valuable information exchanged, and I want in on that.*
- 9) If I were not a legal administrator I would.... *probably work in finance; I am definitely a numbers guy.*
- 10) In my spare time, I enjoy... *hiking, running, fishing, playing golf.*
- 11) Three words that best describe me are... *hard-working, dedicated, loyal, a good prioritizer and time manager, slightly impatient, creative and seeking employment.*

12) The biggest change I've seen in the legal industry is... *the shift in emphasis toward cost-cutting and efficiency. I think it's a natural result of the recession.*

13) The most challenging part of being a legal administrator is... *juggling responsibilities in a wide variety of areas. That's also one of the things I liked best about being a legal administrator.*

2010-2011 Awards for the Gateway Chapter

Donna L. Sobkoviak | 2011-2012 ALA Gateway Chapter President

The ALA National Conference was held in sunny Orlando, Florida last week. There were over 1200 members in attendance and 17 of them were from the Gateway Chapter. The education and networking events at the National Conference were all outstanding! The Awards Ceremony took place on Sunday evening. I am happy to say that our Chapter won the following awards:

Achievement in Diversity - Third Place
Business Partner Relations - Honorable Mention
Education Excellence in Legal Industry - Honorable Mention
Membership Brochure - Honorable Mention
Newsletter Excellence - Honorable Mention
Visibility Community Challenge Week - Honorable Mention
Presidents' Awards of Excellence - Gold

ALA Code of Professional Responsibility

In 1991, ALA adopted a Code of Professional Ethics to outline professional ethics standards for legal administrators. During the past year, the ALA Board of Directors appointed a task force, chaired by Past President Wendy Rice-Isaacs, to review the existing Code of Professional Ethics and recommend necessary updates to best reflect the current state of the profession and administrators' responsibilities. In addition, the Board appointed a group to review the Member Performance Objectives. As a result of these efforts, the Association has adopted the following newly revised Code of Professional Responsibility that encompasses the spirit of the previous code and performance objectives, and reflects our professional responsibilities in today's profession.

As legal management professionals, members of ALA shall abide by high ethical standards. This ALA Code of Professional Responsibility sets forth standards for the administration of legal management practices. Legal administrators at all levels have a responsibility to uphold and incorporate these standards into their everyday performance. This Code applies to the administration of legal organizations including private firms, corporate legal departments, legal clinics, government agencies and courts.

I. Responsibilities to the Profession of Legal Management:

- A. Uphold the ALA Code of Professional Responsibility and the mission of the Association of Legal Administrators;
- B. Conduct oneself with integrity and project a positive image of the legal management profession;

- C. Pursue continuing education to maintain a high level of proficiency in management procedures and issues;
- D. Promote initiatives for civic, economic and social well-being within our communities; and
- E. Advocate increased diversity in the legal management community and in all legal service organizations.

II. Responsibilities to the Legal Employer and its Employees:

- A. Foster an environment that promotes the use and improvement of sound business practices where all employees can develop, contribute and prosper;
- B. Be truthful and forthright in all forms of professional and organizational communication;
- C. Report financial information promptly, completely and accurately, and in a manner that facilitates informed decision making;
- D. Implement policies and procedures to address professional responsibility, business ethics and conduct;
- E. Establish an appropriate grievance and appeals process tailored to the legal organization's size and structure; and
- F. Promote a work environment that does not discriminate, intimidate or allow harassment based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, age, religion, disability, veteran's status, marital status, sexual orientation or other legally protected characteristics.

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III. Responsibilities to those Outside the Legal Organization:

- A. Respect the customs and practices of clients, prospective clients, business partners and the community at large;
- B. Avoid actual or apparent conflicts of interest and advise all appropriate parties of potential conflicts;
- C. Refrain from soliciting or accepting any fee, commission, gift, gratuity, discount or loan on behalf of oneself, family or friends, that may influence business decisions;
- D. Ensure the existence of policies and procedures to provide quality client service;
- E. Utilize confidential and proprietary information solely for legal practice or management purposes and not to further private interest or personal profit; and

- F. Support outreach activities that cultivate pro bono assistance and law related public education to meet community needs

Bunny Hop

Ana Helton, Human Resources Director | Reeg Law Firm

We would like to thank everyone for their participation in the 14th ALA Operation Bunny Hop. With your help, we were able to assemble 2, 000 baskets in less than 3 hours! In addition to that, we raised \$3,635.50. Thank you for your generous contributions and help assembling baskets. We could not sponsor this event without your participation. See pictures at the end of the newsletter.

Partners

Johnna S. Ferguson, Legal Administrator | Gray Ritter & Graham, PC

It is 3:00 p.m. on Thursday afternoon and one of your attorneys advises you he needs some rooms set up by noon on Friday for a group of attorneys who are coming in for a three-week trial. He is really sorry he forgot to tell you earlier.

Who do you call?

Ghostbusters are no longer in business so the best choice is to reach out to the Gateway Chapter Business Partners. I did. Space was arranged through our building management office, a business partner delivered a copier the following morning, and another brought me tables and chairs. We were able to have everything arranged and ready when the first attorney arrived.

As you know, I have not described an unusual situation. Every day we receive last-minute requests to “do this” or “get that done.” It would be impossible for us to fulfill those requests without a strong network behind us. That network includes those business partners who provide an array of services to our law offices:

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Insurance & Related Services	Legal Staffing	Litigation Support/Services
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Office	Office Supplies/Stationery & Forms	Printing/Engraving
Furniture/Rental/Refinancing/ Upholstery		

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Receivables Management
Space Design & Planning
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Water Filtration/
Vending/Bottled Water

Records Management
Technology Support
Travel

Not every administrator will work with every ALA partner since some of them are competitors providing the same service. But, getting to know these individuals and what they have to offer will make your job much easier. As you develop your relationships you will be able to identify the vendor that is a perfect match for your firm. While we may not need their services today, we never know when they will be able to provide exactly what we need tomorrow; or when we will be able to assist them.

In addition to the daily assistance these partners give our firms, they also provide the funds which allow the Chapter to offer scholarships to the National and Regional Conferences and high-quality monthly educational programs to our members. The Gateway Chapter has been able to present outstanding nationally-recognized speakers at the local level because of support provided by these organizations. These partners are instrumental in working with the Gateway Chapter on our community service programs. Whether it is putting together Easter baskets for various children's agencies or volunteering and/or raising money for special events that benefit the Ronald McDonald House and Shriners Hospital, the business partners are front and center with their time, talent and treasure to make these events a success.

Make your plan today to become acquainted with the fifty-eight Gateway Chapter Business Partners who offer services in over forty-one different areas of operation. You'll be glad you did.

ALA Gateway's New Website

ALA Gateway Chapter has a new website! The website is filled with tools to view the latest news, upcoming meetings, and most current newsletters, post your own position openings in the Job Bank, RSVP for meetings and pay online, view the monthly calendar to make sure you don't miss any networking, education, or other chapter events, and allows members to update your member profile, register for meetings, and much more... If you haven't already, please take the time to explore our new site and provide feedback to ensure our website offers everything you need to stay connected. Visit us at www.ala-gateway.org. If you have questions, please contact our Webmaster, Kara Brostron, at kmbrostron@lashlybaer.com or via phone at (314) 436-8366.



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Salary Survey Results

Salary Survey results will be ready by June 25th – thank you to all of the firms that participated. For the 2012 salary survey year the chapter has found an electronic version and you will be getting more information on this as the year goes along. If you would like to purchase the survey but did not participate please contact Sarah Whitehead saw@greensfelder.com, (314) 345-5415.

Business Partner Renewals

The Gateway Chapter is pleased to announce that we are planning our annual Business Partner program for the renewal period August 1, 2011, through July 31, 2012. We will offer current and prospective Business Partners an opportunity to sponsor the Chapter at various levels, making it possible for us to plan community service events and provide educational opportunities and networking events for ALA Gateway Chapter members and Business Partners. Renewal packets will be mailed by the end of April.

We appreciate the support of our Business Partners!

ALA's LinkedIn Group

In our ongoing efforts to better serve the needs of the ALA membership, we have reorganized the ALA LinkedIn group. As a result of this reorganization, if you were a part of the old group you will need to rejoin. If you haven't joined us on LinkedIn yet, we encourage you to [join now](#). We are sure you will find the new LinkedIn group discussions timely and informative, and you are invited to connect or reconnect and become involved with the new ALA group.

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

Q: I am working on a policy covering how attorneys deal with newspaper or television reports – it could encompass much more. Do you have any samples I can use to get started?

A: We're going to suggest you start with the [ALA Management Encyclopedia](#) article "A Strategic Approach to Crisis Management and Media Relations," by Christine S. Filip – it gives an outline of procedures to follow when dealing with critical events (which are not always negative). Make sure you're logged in for access to this members-only area of the ALA website; the article is posted in the Marketing category. The article "[Media Policies and Guidelines for Law Firms](#)" ... [Read more](#)

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2011 Bunny Hop





Photos from Roosevelt Center children receiving Easter Baskets and from East St. Louis children.

ALA Regions 3 & 4 Conference & Expo

September 15–17, 2011

Join us in Kansas City for the 2011 ALA Regions 3 & 4 Conference & Expo!

This year's ALA regional conference will combine Region 3 with Region 4 for a truly outstanding event. It will take place at the InterContinental Kansas City at the Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri and for budgeting purposes, hotel rates follow:

2011 Intellectual Property Retreat

October 27-28, 2011 | Washington, D.C.

The ALA Intellectual Property Retreat provides the latest legal information from leaders in the industry. In addition to up-to-the-minute intellectual property information and education, there are many opportunities to address concerns and share experiences and information with fellow legal managers. The open dialog is designed to create and cement professional ties among members, providing a strong network of peers from coast to coast. We hope to see you in October for the ALA 2011 Intellectual Property Retreat. For more information, go to <http://www.alanet.org/meetingsevents/ip/default.aspx>.

2011 Large Firm Principal Administrators Retreat

This annual retreat provides the principal administrator in a law firm (with 100 or more lawyers in all locations) an opportunity to learn how to handle the challenges and demands of running a large organization. The retreat's highly focused educational program addresses some of the unique challenges and issues facing large law firms today. In addition, ample time is offered for idea exchanges where attendees can discuss a wide range of topics of interest to law firm leaders. Next year's conference will be held September 22-24, 2011 at the Ritz-Carlton in Chicago, IL. For more information contact the [Director of Conferences & Meetings](#) at ALA Headquarters

Calendar of Upcoming Events (2011 through 2014)

2011

July 15-16, 2011

- Program: ALA Chapter Leadership Institute
- Location: The Cosmopolitan | Las Vegas, NV
- Contact: Lisa Mikita, ALA Headquarters

July 20, 2011

- Program: Financial Panel, Profitability Analysis monthly lunch meeting
- Location: Point of View/BAMSL

August 10, 2011

- Program: 2011 Leadership Forum and Business Partner Exposition
- Speakers: Michael Nash/Judy Hissong
- Time: 8:00AM – 4:30PM
Followed by a networking opportunity with Business Partners

August 12-13, 2011

- Program: ALA Board of Directors Meeting
- Location: Hotel Monaco | Denver, CO
- Contact: Lisa Mikita, ALA Headquarters

August 21, 2011

- Program: Alycia Sutuor, Marketing
- Location: Thompson Coburn

September 15-17, 2011

- Program: Region 3 & 4 Conference & Expo
- Location: The InterContinental | Kansas City, MO
- Contact: Lisa Mikita, ALA Headquarters

September 22-24, 2011

- Program: ALA Large Firm Administrators Retreat
- Location: The Ritz-Carlton Chicago | Chicago, IL
- Contact: Lisa Mikita, ALA Headquarters

October 19, 2011

- Program: Annual Partner Event, Bud Koegh
- Location: Four Seasons

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: Topic to be determined
- Location: BREAKFAST MEETING, Hilton Hotel, Frontenac

2012

January 2012 2012 Nominating Committee Selection & Meeting

February 15, 2012 2012 Slate of Officers Presented to Membership

March 21, 2012 Election of 2012-2013 Officers

April 23–26, 2012

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

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 Diversity	Sherry Smith, Co-Chair Joe Taylor, Co-Chair Michelle Martin, Chair Timothy Tyler
Education/Professional Development	Sherry Hurst, Chair Tracy Bollig Mary Jennings Cindy Reeg Angela York
Human Resources	Mary Jennings, Chair Lisa Hollerbach
Membership Committee	Patty Brokaw, Co-Chair Debbie Schneider, Co-Chair
Newsletter	Angela Louis, Chair
Operation Bunny Hop	Ana Helton, Co-Chair Lisa Lange, Co-Chair
Salary Survey	Sarah Whitehead, Chair Steve Heinle Angela Louis Carla Lucz
Business Partner Expo/ Business Partner Relations	Cheri Meier, Chair Patty Barbachem Julie Hill Lisa Waligorski
Website	Kara Brostron, Chair



We are pleased to announce the fourth Annual St. Louis Diversity Job Fair and invite you to be part of this event. The Job Fair will take place on August 20, 2011, from 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at the Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel, 9801 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis, Missouri and will be coordinated by several St. Louis bar associations and law firm volunteers. The primary goal of the Job Fair is to attract a diverse group of 2L and 3L students to the metropolitan St. Louis

legal community; encourage them to practice law in the area; and become an integral part of our community. Students from law schools across the country are invited to participate.

Employers will be allowed to pre-select 100% of their interview schedule. With pre-selection, each employer is assured of meeting those students it considers the most promising among the students expressing an interest in that particular employer. Students have the opportunity to submit their resume to 12 employers.

Each schedule allows for 16 total interviews. Interviews begin at 8:30 a.m. through 11:45 a.m. (there will be a fifteen minute morning break at 10:05 a.m.) and interviews commence again after the lunch break at 1:30 p.m. through 4:30 pm. (there will be a fifteen minute afternoon break at 3:15 p.m.) Each interview is 20 minutes in length.

Your final schedule will be sent to you approximately one week before the Job Fair. Employers are asked not to replace or remove anyone from your schedule at that time. In the event of interview cancellations, most cancellations will be filled from each employer's alternate list. If there are cancellations on the day of the Job Fair, these slots will be randomly filled by students who express an interest in meeting with the firm. We will make every attempt to notify employers of any schedule changes as they occur. Job Fair interviews will be conducted in private rooms in the hotel.

Registration fees for the 2011 Job Fair are as follows:

Law Firms and Corporate Legal Departments

1-24 attorneys - \$250

25-74 attorneys - \$350

75-100 attorneys - \$450

100+ attorneys - \$500

Each additional interview room is \$250

Governmental Agencies - No Charge

Not-for-Profit Agencies - No Charge

Employer registration deadline is Tuesday, May 17, 2011. Complete registration at:

<https://law-sldjf-csm.symplicity.com/employers/>.

On Friday, August 19th, the Job Fair Planning Committee will host a Welcome Reception for law students, employers, and members of the St. Louis business and legal community. The Welcome Reception will provide guests in attendance with an opportunity to mix and mingle on a more informal basis. Employers who are registered for the Job Fair may donate promotional gifts for goodie bags that will be distributed to students at the conclusion of the Welcome Reception. More details regarding the Welcome Reception will be posted on the Job Fair web site, www.stldiversityjobfair.com, as we get closer to the date.

If you have any questions about the Job Fair, please don't hesitate to contact me at (314) 552-6414 or aschaefer@thompsoncoburn.com. We hope that you will join us in August for the 2011 St. Louis Diversity Job Fair.