

North Hennepin  
Community College

Volume 2021, Issue 1

# Gears of Law

## NHCC Paralegal Student Association

### Welcome Your PLSA Board!

By: Amanda Buys

The elections are over and your PLSA Board has been elected! You can view all of their names on the back page of this edition. Please give them a warm congratulations and ask them what type of things they are working on here in the PLSA to see how you can become involved or what events you can plan on looking forward to!

Please remember that you don't have to be part of the board or attend all of the meetings to join the D2L and actively participate or weigh in on PLSA activities!

### Presidential Election on November 3rd

By: Amanda Buys

The 2020 Presidential Election has shown us why it is so important that every chance that we get we make the effort and get out and let our voice be heard through voting. From presidential candidates to our local governing officers, the elections offer us the opportunity to help make decisions that affect us for years to come.

For those who are unable to vote, for whatever reason, continue to let your voice be heard by the people around you so they may help make better informed decisions.

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#### Special points of interest

- Paralegal Study/Mentor Mixers
- Spring Registration
- Join the MPA!

### Mary Fenske Blog Spotlight

Mary Fenske, our program director, recently sat down to speak about the paralegal program at NHCC. She answers questions all of us ask about, including students who aren't even sure if they're interested in becoming a paralegal. She covers everything from what a paralegal is, what paralegals can do, what kind of jobs paralegals can get, and why our program at NHCC is so special.

If you're a current paralegal student or someone who has considered enrolling as a paralegal student, this blog post is chock full of information. A URL to the blog can be found below. We would like to encourage anyone and everyone to give it a read.

<https://blog.nhcc.edu/blog/paralegal-spotlight-qa-mary-fenske>

## WANTED: Paralegal Peer Tutors!

The Paralegal department is looking for students who have completed PLEG classes to assist other students by becoming Peer Tutors. This is a paid, part-time opportunity that can be done completely remotely with a flexible schedule.

You should have strong customer service and communication skills, a strong desire to serve your peers, and be dependable, friendly, and self-motivated.

Please reach out to one of the Paralegal Faculty members if you are seeking a recommendation to become a Peer Tutor.

When you apply please reach out to Rachel Fraser via e-mail at [Rachel.fraser@nhcc.edu](mailto:Rachel.fraser@nhcc.edu) or via phone at 763-424-0943 to set up a virtual interview.

<https://nhcc.edu/about-nhcc/employment-opportunities/student-worker-positions/student-worker-details.aspx?ID=98>

### **Job Details:**

- 10 to 20 hours per week Monday through Thursday between 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM
- Tutor sessions are 30 to 60 minutes via zoom accounts established by the Tutoring Department
- \$12.00 / hour



## Paralegal Study/Mentor Mixer Events

On Wednesday, November 18th, we held our first virtual Paralegal Study/Mentor Mixer Event, a chance for Paralegal students to socialize and ask questions about homework to classmates as well as other students who had already finished courses they are taking currently. It was a great opportunity to just sit and socialize and get some outside ideas and perspectives on things that we didn't understand. From helping analyze cases and blue book citations to discussing the best class progression and things to know for different instructors; we had a wonderful time getting to know one another better.

We hope to be hosting more of these events in the future and look forward to meeting new and returning students to help build our social and professional networks while we are here at North Hennepin, as well as beyond once we have entered the workforce.

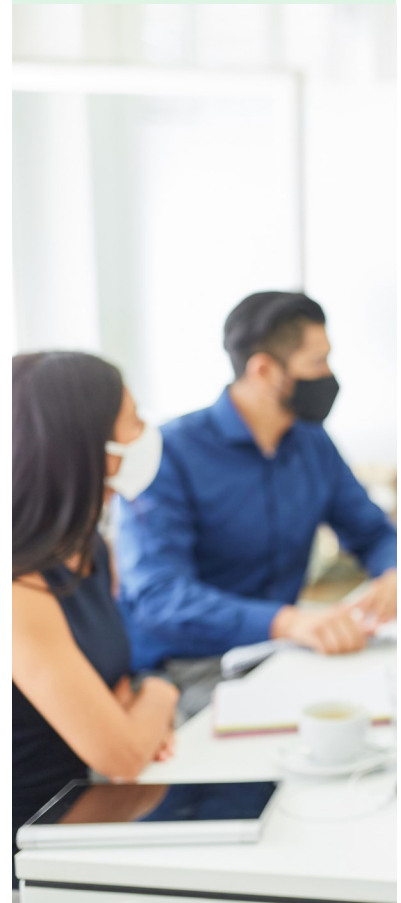


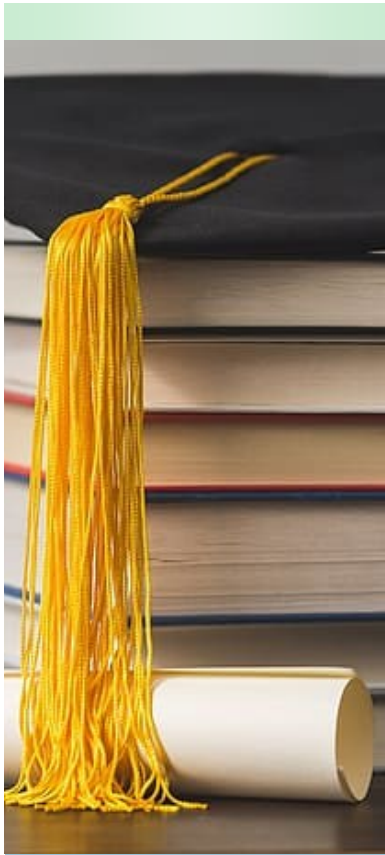
The PLSA is planning on hosting more of these social events as well as various networking and development opportunities. If you have an idea or suggestion for an event or resource you would like to see the PLSA host, please send us an e-mail at [psa@nhcc.edu](mailto:psa@nhcc.edu) and we will send you an event evaluation form and an invitation to discuss it at the next PLSA meeting!

## Responsibly Socializing during a Pandemic

Socializing has become a foreign concept to many of us during this pandemic. We at the PLSA feel the desire to connect more with other students at NHCC while we're enrolled in online classes. Our mixer events are intended to be a way to safely bring our school together during a time when we're so far apart from one another. We encourage every paralegal student to stop by, even if just to listen or to say 'hello!'

Please remember during this holiday season to stay safe, stay healthy, and socialize responsibly!





## Certificated vs Certified: What's the Difference?

By: Amanda Buys

Many students who are graduating with a Paralegal Certificate struggle to understand the difference between having a certificate and being a certified Paralegal, especially when it comes to their resume!

A Certified Paralegal is one who has undergone some sort of certification process that is put forth by a regulating body. Certification is generally achieved through an exam process meant to test your knowledge and competency.

A Certificated Paralegal is one who has acquired a certificate, usually simply through the completion of course work. There is generally not an overall exam required in order to obtain a certificate—just completion of a program, usually though ‘passing’ a certain number or selection of classes.

Students who graduate from NHCC With a Paralegal Certificate are not Certified Paralegals.

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*“Our students leave NHCC with the skills they need...” -Mary Fenske*

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### Join the MPA!

The Minnesota Paralegal Association (MPA) offers a discounted membership to Paralegal Students! A NFPA Membership is included free with your MPA Membership. Get access to networking and social events, Pro Bono and volunteer opportunities, the mentorship program, and more!

Let them know you were referred by the NHCC PLSA!

Questions? [info@mnparalegals.org](mailto:info@mnparalegals.org) or (651) 633-2778

## Our Growing Field

By: Maxwell Pellingier

As our young profession continues to develop and grow, new opportunities present themselves. On September 29th of this year, the Minnesota Supreme Court issued an order to implement the Legal Paraprofessional Pilot Project. The objective of this project is to provide improved access to legal services through the use of paraprofessionals. Those of us who seek to become paraprofessionals will have an increased professional capacity relative to paralegals. Namely, paraprofessionals will be allowed to make court appearances on behalf of clients in housing disputes and certain family law cases. If court appearances are intriguing to you, consider working as a paraprofessional!

## Spring 2021 Semester

Registration for the Spring 2021 Semester is open!

### PLEG Courses for Spring 2021

PLEG 1111 Introduction to Law and Paralegal Studies	Vaia
PLEG 1210 Computer Applications in the Legal Profession	Woodbury
PLEG 1330 Family Law	Woodbury
PLEG 1411 Litigation I	Reid Selth
PLEG 1412 Litigation II	Woodbury
PLEG 1510 Intellectual Property	Woodbury
PLEG 2211 Legal Research and Writing I	Fenske
PLEG 2212 Legal Research and Writing II	Fenske
PLEG 2510 Contracts and Business Organizations	Vaia
PLEG 2710 Wills, Trusts and Estate Administration	Vaia
PLEG 2810 Employment Search for Paralegals—First Half	Vaia
PLEG 2930 Legal Studies Seminar and Internship*	Fenske

Per the e-mail sent by the Vice President of Student Success, Julio Vargas Essex, on October 8th, courses for Spring 2021 will primarily be online and Student support will continue remotely, with in-person opportunities as needed. You can find more information by visiting [www.nhcc.edu/spring](http://www.nhcc.edu/spring).

### PLEG 2930: Legal Studies Seminar and Internship

If you missed the **mandatory** orientation for the Legal Studies Seminar on Friday, December 4th from 4:45—5:45 p.m. Mary Fenske discussed the internship process and required paperwork, practicum option, and went over the list of internships. If you were not able to attend, you must contact Mary Fenske at [mary.fenske@nhcc.edu](mailto:mary.fenske@nhcc.edu).

#### Contact an Advisor

If you're feeling overwhelmed about which classes to sign up for, contact your advisor to schedule an appointment. They may be able to help you decide which classes to take at the same time to balance your class load. It may be hard to determine what you should or shouldn't take congruently, so it's never a bad idea to ask!

You can schedule an appointment with the advising office at :

Phone: 763-424-0703

Email: [advising@nhcc.edu](mailto:advising@nhcc.edu)



## Join the PLSA!

**Attend one of our virtual meetings for the Fall 2020 Semester.**

The first meeting of the semester is January 19th, 2021 from **4:00 PM to 5:00 PM**.

Join and help offer ideas or plan events for the Paralegal Students at NHCC!

If you have any questions please reach out to the PLSA by e-mail at [psa@nhcc.edu](mailto:psa@nhcc.edu), any existing member of the PLSA, or to Carrie Vaia ([carrie.vaia@nhcc.edu](mailto:carrie.vaia@nhcc.edu)), our faculty advisor.

## Your PLSA Officers

**President:** Amanda Buys

**Vice-President:** Rachel Collins

**Secretary:** Rebecca Eckerman

**Treasurer:** Ashley Wagner

**Media Officer:** Cristina Savery

**Faculty Advisor:** Carrie Vaia

## About the Paralegal Student Association (PLSA)

The Paralegal Student Association is a wonderful opportunity to connect students in the Paralegal degree and certificate programs with enriching opportunities to supplement their in-class studies. From fun gatherings to trip opportunities across the country—there is an emphasis on opportunities that otherwise would not be available to other students.

The PLSA hosts events such as a graduation party for Paralegal Students; Networking Events with attorneys and paralegals in Minnesota.

At the time of this publication the current President is Amanda Buys ([amanda.buys@my.nhcc.edu](mailto:amanda.buys@my.nhcc.edu)).

## About Gears of Law and the PLSA

The Gears of Law newsletter is a wonderful resource to keep students in the Paralegal Studies Program informed of the current events and direction of the Paralegal Student Association, as well as provide insight into current events in the legal field and the school. It is to be used as an informal resource to help students on their journey to pursue careers with their Paralegal degrees or certificates.

There is no cost or membership required to access the Gears of Law, but we do strongly encourage all Paralegal students to participate in the PLSA and take advantage of the amazing events and opportunities that we organize. It is also a wonderful way to begin your career by growing your network.

Please reach out if there is a topic you would like to see us address or you would like to submit an article for consideration please send your requests and submissions to [psa@nhcc.edu](mailto:psa@nhcc.edu).

This publication was assembled with the assistance of Maxwell Pellingier.