

Disclosure | AAPP Newsletter

President's Message | Heidi Semkowich

2022 has been an absolutely amazing year! I am absolutely bursting with pride seeing how the association has grown and developed through 2022. As I have said already, this has, without a doubt, been the busiest year I have seen since stepping up as President.

Despite the pandemic continuing we were able to host several lunch n learns, a Town Hall Meeting and our AGM. The mentorship program launched with amazing success, and member engagement has significantly increased. The Board of Directors is excited about what we have to bring you in 2023. From networking events to webinar series, we intend to start bringing everyone together again. Exciting things are afoot so please stay tuned for details!

Once again, the Board of Directors has not ceased to amaze me. The dedication and tremendous amount of work they put in, tirelessly, to ensure that our members are looked after, is nothing short of

incredible. I truly am blessed to work alongside each and every one of them. To the Board of Directors, thank you so much for everything you do!

To all of our volunteers working on the numerous committees we have going, thank you so much! Your commitment is so, so appreciated. Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank each and every one of you, the members, for your continued support of the AAPP. It is so touching to see the pride demonstrated by each of you by being a member, enrolling in webinars and staying active in the association. It is because of this pride that the AAPP continues to grow and flourish.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to wish you all a joyous and safe holiday season and a healthy, happy and prosperous 2023!

Happy holidays everyone!

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Alberta Association of
Professional Paralegals

The Annual General Meeting was held on October 19, 2022 @ 12:00 pm MDT by Zoom. We thank all of those who attended and for your ongoing support.

**ALBERTA ASSOCIATION OF
PROFESSIONAL PARALEGALS
YOUR ELECTED 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals



Alberta APParalegals



aapp.aralegal.assn

*Wishing everyone a warm and happy holiday season.
Looking forward to working with all of our volunteers
in the new year and making many new strides in our
profession. Michaela Russell, ARP —Secretary AAPP*



COMMITTEE FORMATIONS

A very special thank you to all of the volunteers that came forward when the call out was made – we were overwhelmed and thrilled at the numbers!

The AAPP Board is committed to the promotion of its Objects. The Bylaws provide that there be a standing Education Committee and allows for the creation of additional committees by the Board as they deem necessary.

The following Committees were formed to support the current and developing needs of the AAPP: Membership Initiative Committee; AGM/Town Hall networking Meetings Committee; Conference/Award Planning Committee; and Professional Conduct & Disciplinary Review Committee.

The expansion and growth of our membership has necessitated the creation of these committees. We look forward to the work that has begun and is anticipated to start on various initiatives that will benefit our Association and its members.

Membership Initiative Committee (MIC) | Penny Doyle

Penny Doyle | VP Membership



This group has hit the ground running! We have had a few meetings and are eager to get the campaign going to build the AAPP membership across Alberta. I would like you to meet the group of volunteers that have so graciously agreed to share their time and talents in this committee:

Membership Outreach Representative
Student Liaison Representative
New Member Representative
Project Assistance and Administration

Vanessa Wilson
Christine Savoy
Melanni Partridge
Crystal Li

We look forward to engaging with our members to hear their feedback and suggestions to keep them connected to their community of Legal Support Professionals.

The MIC is working with the other AAPP committees in continued efforts to support and foster professional and personal success in our industry for our members.

Thank you Members for your continued support – We look forward to organizing a regional member meet and greet in the new year!

AGM/Town Hall/Networking Meetings Committee | Heidi Semkowich

Heidi Semkowich | President



This group has been formed to head up the planning for any in-person events that are being planned for 2023 (except for the conference/awards). The committee was formed in late 2022 and will meeting early in 2023 to start planning. Your in-person event planning committee is comprised of:

Adam Anderson
Melanni Partridge
Ali Naqvi

Vanessa Wilson
Nikki Ebbers

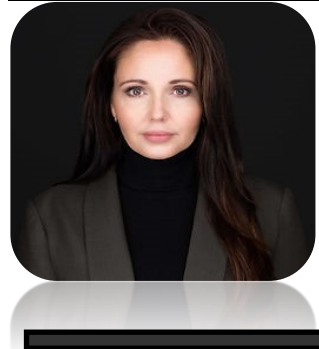
If you have any suggestions for in-person networking events for 2023, please feel free to reach out to me at: president@alberta-paralegal.com and I will be sure to pass it along to the committee.

Thank you to the volunteers who have graciously agreed to work on this committee!

Conference and Award Planning Committee | Ryan McDougall

Ryan McDougall | Vice

Volunteers: Crystal Li, Vanessa Wilson, Sandra Meier



3rd Annual Professional Excellence Awards-PLANNING HAS BEGAN!

The 3rd annual AAPP Professional Excellence Awards will be held again this summer. The Events Committee volunteers are already meeting, discussing, and tossing ideas around to make 2023’s Awards an outstanding evening.

Do you know someone who deserves to be recognized for their hard work? For their mentorship? Or someone new to the profession that shows incredible potential? Nominations for the Awards will open in the spring. Below is a list of the award categories:

- | | | |
|----------------------|--|-------------------------|
| Volunteer Award | Student Award | Instructor Award |
| Best Mentor | Litigation Support | Precision Award |
| Best Teacher Award | Trail Blazer Award | Wills & Estates Support |
| Criminal Support | Conveyancing | Family Law |
| Corporate/Commercial | Administrative (Courthouse staff etc.) | |

WHO’S READY FOR A CONFERENCE?

Now that we’re (starting) to come out of the COVID fog we thought it would be a great time to host a conference for legal support staff. The conference would be held in conjunction with the Professional Excellence Awards. The Events Committee is hard at work determining what our dream conference would look like and offer. The conference would be intended to give us hard working professionals an opportunity to get away from our regular, crazy busy lives, breath, relax, eat great food, partake some learning catered to our profession and maybe meet a few new people.

THIS IS WHERE YOU COME IN...

Please let us know if you would enjoy a day-and-a-half conference, out of town, with break-out sessions offering a variety of different topics, and awards gala included. We’d love to hear from you to help us gauge the interest and potential size of such a conference. Our goal would be to put on a professional development event that attendees leave raving about the food, the energy, the fun, the learning and the value!

Please email us at aappawards@gmail.com to let us know if you’d be interested in attending (pending cost, dates etc.) and offer us any ideas for break-out sessions you would be interested in attending. This is not a commitment to attend; simply information gathering for the planning stage.

TIP: Keep this in mind if your employer offers professional development funds each year 😊

Conduct & Disciplinary Review Committee

Veronica McGuire |



The AAPP Board is excited to have Veronica McGuire join us. Veronica has recently relocated to Alberta from Ontario. Veronica brings with her a lengthy resume of extraordinary legal experience that our Association is fortunate to benefit from!

This committee was formed out of the need to address complaints about our members, from the general public, other members, and the AAPP itself.

The role of the Committee is to collect the facts of all complaints and to ensure that they are given

the attention required, and to determine if a complaint has merit. Should additional measures need to be taken, policy will be in place to facilitate amicable resolution, or, if required, disciplinary action.

We welcome Veronica to our Board and look forward to her contributions to form policies that will allow us to handle complaints, professionally and fairly within the limited scope of our permitted power under the AAPP Bylaws and applicable legislation.

Upcoming Professional Development Courses

Education and Professional Development | Katherine Quantz

Katherine Quantz |



It has certainly been an exciting year on the Education and Professional Development front, and there is so much more to come in 2023!! Starting in the new year, we will be offering some more in-depth professional development webinars on many topics, in several different areas of law including civil litigation, family, wills and estates, and real estate. Work is already underway in developing course material, and I would like to thank the volunteers who have stepped forward to assist in developing content and material for this initiative.

We also look forward to continuing with our Career Profile Webinar Series. This project is aimed at bringing awareness of the abundant and diverse career options available to those with an educational background in legal administration. Taking a legal assistant diploma program does not mean you are limited to working only as a legal assistant. The goal of this series is to bring folks together to share the stories, career paths, and experiences of folks who leveraged their legal background to gain success in different roles and industries. Earlier this month, we heard from Christina Nickerson, Senior Adjudicator at SafeRoads Alberta, who shared her very interesting and unique career path, which took her from assisting lawyers in a private law practice in Nova Scotia, to managing court operations above the arctic circle, to publishing decisions in CanLii. Thank you so much for sharing your journey with us, Christina!

Stay tuned for all the exciting opportunities in 2023 and be sure to check the [events page](#) on the AAPP website frequently - this is where you can find all the information on upcoming webinars and the links to register.

As always, we welcome your questions, feedback, suggestions, comments, and ideas with respect to the webinar series and our professional development programming. Please feel free to contact us by reaching out directly to Katherine Quantz, Director of Education and Professional Development via e-mail: education@alberta-paralegal.com.

Wishing you the happiest of holidays, and all the best for 2023!

As you are all aware, the AAPP continues to work on regulation of the paralegal profession in Alberta. Following a meeting with the Assistant Deputy Minister for Court Services the AAPP began authoring a “white paper” on regulation of the profession in Alberta. Members of the Board of Directors have spent the last several months drafting, revising and finalizing the white paper and we are thrilled to announce that we are on the eve of releasing this white paper to the government, and any other interested stakeholders.

The white paper takes an in depth look at regulation of the profession and what it will achieve in Alberta. The AAPP engaged in consultation with interested legal stakeholders to ensure that an accurate picture is created within the paper.

I would like to thank the Directors involved with authoring this paper. It was a long process, but the finished product is fantastic!

If you are interested in reading the AAPP’s white paper on regulation, please contact [me](#) directly and I will be happy to provide you with a copy.

Thank you to our Corporate Sponsor



Professional Liability Insurance for Paralegals in Alberta



As of January 6, 2022, the AAPP opened its membership to Independent Paralegals. In order to become an Independent Paralegal Member, you are required to provide your degree, diploma, certificate, recognized by the province of Alberta and provide proof of valid Professional Liability insurance, also referred to as Errors and Omissions Insurance (E&O).

Professional Liability or E&O insurance coverage, protects the holder from loss if a client sues them for mistakes or omissions in their professional services. Lawyers carry this insurance, which legal support professionals are covered under, provided the services are done under the supervision of a lawyer.

There are a number of Insurance Agencies that provide this insurance to Independent Paralegals in Alberta. Some of

the feed back we have received from our members is criteria varies from company to company as does cost, but it isn't difficult to get.

"It is actually 40% cheaper to get e&o insurance here. I pay \$110/month or \$1320 a year. Whereas in Ontario my insurance is \$398/month with little liability protection." **Adam A., ARP—Member**

"Insurance: Really wasn't an issue, I went through Rogers Insurance in Calgary. I currently have a 5m E&O policy (which was a required in SK to expend my practice into wills and estates out there.) It was no hassle whatsoever. I know some providers such as Zen Insurance will only deal with Ontario Licenced Paralegals so there is a struggle there." **John M, ARP —Member**

"In Spring of 2022 I decided to get business insurance with Costen Insurance (out of Calgary) as they were referred to me. The representative is great and it's a great policy however I failed to look at it closely enough and it didn't cover me for E & O liability. I was then referred to Rogers Insurance and I now have business insurance with E & O liability under EasyCover Inc. (a division of Rogers Insurance). My only regret is that I did not get proper insurance earlier. Take the time to research business insurance and make it a priority. You will be glad you did!" - **Christine S., ARP Member**

Next Newsletter—Interested in going out on your own? Information from our Independent Paralegal members, sharing their knowledge and experience for those making, or thinking of making a change to their career.



Red Deer Polytechnic

PARALEGAL POST-DIPLOMA PROGRAM

INTAKE:

January 9, 2023

PROGRAM LENGTH:

2 semesters of coursework and a practicum

PROGRAM LENGTH:

January 9, 2023

DELIVERY METHOD:

Online

The Paralegal Post-Diploma Certificate program is a part-time program for those who are already working in the legal field as Legal Assistants. This is the only paralegal program endorsed by the Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals. This one-year certificate includes eight theory-based courses and one consolidated practicum course. This program will prepare graduates to focus on contracts law, professional ethics, legal research, legal drafting, torts, rules of evidence and legal interviewing. The Paralegal Post-Diploma Certificate will allow graduates to take on more responsibility within the legal field under the supervision of a lawyer.

PRE-REQUISITES:

- High School diploma with English 20-1 or 20-2 with a grade of at least 60%
- Graduate of an approved legal assistant program
- 3 years experience working as a legal assistant
- Candidates, where English is a Second Language (ESL), must meet the English Language Proficiency requirement in addition to the Academic English requirement. Equivalencies are as follows:
 - * Required Canadian Language Benchmark (CLB) of a minimum of 7 in each of the 4 language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and not an average of 7; or
 - * By completing high school in Canada. Studies must have been in English at an approved Canadian high school (grades 9, 10, 11, 12) with at least three consecutive years of full-time academic study; or
 - * By completing a recognized post-secondary degree or diploma program in Canada.

The program must have involved at least two full years of full-time, consecutive academic study in English.

RDP has an offering starting on January 9, 2023 and can add more cohorts as registrations increase, click to register <https://rdpolytech.ca/programs/extended-education/programs-and-courses/paralegal-post-diploma-certificate>.

For questions regarding this program, please email extended.ed@rdpolytech.ca.

PARALEGAL POST-DIPLOMA PROGRAM



This one-year Post-Diploma Certificate program was developed to assist/help/launch working Legal Assistants develop the knowledge and skills needed to advance to the role of Paralegal by offering a part-time learning opportunity that offers flexible delivery to help you work around your schedule.

This program includes eight theory-based courses and one consolidated practicum course. It is the only Paralegal Certificate program approved by the Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals.

Courses include: Contracts Law, Professional Ethics, Legal Research, Legal Analysis, Legal Drafting, Torts Law, Legal Interviewing, Rules of Evidence & Work Experience

For questions regarding this program, please email extended.ed@rdpolytech.ca.

2022 Bev Boyden Heart for Justice Scholarship \$500.00 Value

Submission Deadline: February 28 , 2023

Scholarship award: Scholarship recipient will be notified directly on or before **Friday, March 17, 2023**

Bev was actively involved with the AAPP as a member and a Director on the Board, constantly rising to the challenges and taking to task the recognition of the legal support profession by degrees of education, knowledge and experience. She was a resilient campaigner for access to justice and shared her experience to bring awareness to the fundamental importance of the roles that paralegals and legal support provided to the practice of law. She believed that law should be accessible to everyone and not just those with money to spare.

Bev started her legal career after graduating from Red Deer College (now Red Deer Polytechnic) in 1979, in the Law Clerk Program. She would then spend the next 40 plus years in the industry as a respected paralegal. Driven by her desire to leave the world better than she found it, Bev would seek out opportunities to support those around her and in her community. Her empathy knew no bounds, she was passionate about supporting women in need, funding affordable housing, and making law and justice accessible to all.

Her philanthropy efforts extended to affordable housing when her daughter was assigned a "Pay it Forward" school project, an assignment to plan and carry out an idea that would make a difference to the environment or community. Having been close to a single parent family that had experienced homelessness, Bev and her daughter were inspired to make a difference by addressing the lack of affordable housing in Calgary. As a single parent herself, Bev knew the challenges that separated families could face and she was determined to create something that would have a lasting impact. Using her paralegal knowledge and organizational abilities, Bev set up the Heartprints – KIDS for a Cause Foundation, incorporating it in March of 2008.

2022 Bev Boyden Heart for Justice Scholarship

Eligibility Requirements

A single parent ¹ student who meets the requirements outlined below is encouraged to apply for consideration:

- Be a part-time or full-time student in a legal assistant or paralegal program.
- Not be an immediate family member of any current sitting Board member of the AAPP

¹ Single parent means a parent who lives with a child /children and does not have a live-partner or spouse to assist in the residence and in the support or upbringing of the child/children

Selection Criteria

This award recognizes the student who “shine their light” by contributing to their communities through voluntary endeavors to promote access to justice, poverty reduction and/or family support.

A community clean up project, assistance at a shelter for vulnerable persons, programs at your children’s school, children’s extracurricular activities, and any general acts of kindness— something that makes a difference.

Your Efforts to support access to justice, poverty reduction, or family support in one’s community

We want you to:

- Describe a time when you went above and beyond to Pay it Forward to improve your community through volunteer work or any other means of philanthropy; OR
- Explain your understanding of access to justice and ways in which you have, or imagine you will, improve access to justice in your career; OR
- Describe how being a parent, or single parent, has changed or inspired the way you move through the world and empathize with those around you.

Please prepare and upload one of the following with your application form:

- A one-page written summary of your experience; or
- A series of photos (3-5) with 1-2 sentence descriptions for each photo; or
- A 1– 5 minute video

Please direct your questions and applications to: scholarship@alberta-paralegal.com

“I am an open and worthy woman, inspiring others to shine their light” - Bev’s Life mission



Bev Boyden & her daughter Tamara

“That’s who you were Bev. Determined. Committed. Always there to help out. Always willing to do what ever was needed to make a difference. To do one thing every day to make the world a better place.” -

PLEASE CONTACT scholarship@alberta-paralegal.com SHOULD YOU WISH TO DONATE TO THIS SCHOLARSHIP— 2022 Scholarship Donors:

Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals	\$300.00
Tamara Van Staden	\$100.00
J M Doyle Professional Corporation	\$100.00

Thanks to everyone of our members, we have increased our membership and are almost 300 strong - the excitement and momentum is catching on!

As I continue my 2nd term with the AAPP, I am encouraged by the growth of our membership and the participation and engagement of our members.

The AAPP is finally getting noticed by stakeholders across Alberta, some of which have been in the industry as long as the AAPP has been, and are only now becoming aware of our existence.

As we quickly finish off 2022 in a little more than a week, I am confident that regulation of our profession is near, and I look forward to working with the Board and our members on this and other initiatives supporting the objects of the AAPP.

Just a reminder that membership renewals start January 1, 2023, for the calendar year. We also offer bundled rates (not available to Independent Paralegals) for purchases of multiple memberships.

Independent Paralegals must, in addition to certification documents, provide a copy of their professional liability insurance valid in the Province of Alberta.

Independent Paralegal memberships are effective as of the commencement date of their Professional Liability (E&O) policy and are renewable annually with proof of their renewed insurance.

We have **increased the fee for Paralegal and Independent Paralegal memberships to \$120.00** for the year. All other fees for membership remain the same.

We confirm that Paralegals having received their Alberta Registered Paralegal designation certificates will receive a 2023 updated seal once their membership fees have been paid.

Thanks to all who have joined and continue to participate in the development and promotion the Association.

Visit our site for more information: <https://www.alberta-paralegal.com/join-us>



MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Discounted insurance through Johnson Insurance

Highlander Wine Club

Perkopolis Membership

Discounts at Sherwin Williams

Private Shopping events at Ricki's

Continuing Education/Professional Development - monthly webinars on soft skills and technical topics

Mentorship Program

ARP designation

Performance Excellence Awards

Job Postings

Salary survey

Member Newsletter

Networking Events And more to come as we grow!

A New Year—To Your Health | Penny Doyle

With the New Year comes new resolutions. Personally, I do not make resolutions in the new year, rather I resolve on my birthday to keep in check my physical and mental health, reflect on what I have done since my last birthday and the regular “things I need to adapt to or change” list.

This year, I turned 55 on December 5, the day Kirstie Alley passed away from colorectal cancer. A week later, [Jocelyn Laidlaw](#), from CTV Calgary, shared her story of her detection and current treatment of colorectal cancer.

My first real understanding of this disease was in 2012, a dear friend [Jennifer Gardiner](#) (Jenn Unplugged as she was known) had been diagnosed with colorectal cancer at the young age of 48. She harnessed her force and powered through her days ahead to raise money and awareness about this disease, having passed away before her 50th birthday.

Jen introduced us to the [Fecal Immunochemical Test](#) (FIT). FIT - a home stool test (poop test) that finds blood in the stool. This test **saves lives**.

In 2019 I turned 52, I did my first FIT, which came back normal. Of course, I eat “wellish” – I exercise, *there’s no family history*, I limit my “participation” because I am no longer 20 and it hurts! *See you in 2 years* – was the message from the letter and my doc!

Fast forward 2 years—April 2021, I’m feeling great, I’m in the best shape of my life, submitted my FIT, and this time, it came back “Positive” – which could be a [false](#)

[positive](#) as a number of them are.

May 2021, scheduled for a colonoscopy and 2 polyps removed – Dr. says, “you’ll probably get your results in a month or so” – I replied *“oh, I thought it would be couple of weeks”* to which he replied *“only if its cancer”* – fast forward 12 days - one polyp was cancerous. Next week, I’m seeing a surgeon. In between the scheduled surgery, which was scheduled to happen in 2 weeks (they move fast!), I have had a CT scan, an ultra sound, blood work – all is clean – nothing present.

June 2021, rectal resection surgery 3cm removed, removal of lymph nodes that may be at risk. Everything has been removed that was of any concern – I am good to go to my daughter’s wedding in August! – fast forward 2 weeks, *“all but one lymph node was clear there was microscopic evidence that cancer was present.”* I was stage 3.

July – August 2021 – summertime and wedding fun and set up appointments for chemotherapy in September. – I was fortunate, I was well and was present to share in the joy and happiness of our daughter’s wedding. It was an experience that has moments I relive to remind me of the love and fun we shared with family.

September 1 to November 27 2021 – Chemo – enough said, it’s as ugly and as awful as you can imagine, but – don’t be scared – this treatment is part of the cure that is possible. Without it, there is a 30% chance of return of the disease, it drops to a whopping 8% return with chemo – no guarantees – but I like those odds!

December 2021 – Our son lets us know that we are going to be grandparents in 2022. Treatment is complete, I am cancer free and I just need to follow up regularly over the next 5 years with my team of life savers!

Today (December 22, 2022), I had my 1 ½ year check-up. I am cancer free and feeling great – and on this Birthday, I reminded myself that making time for my health is and will always be priority number 1, I caught it early.

So I leave you with this when it comes to your resolutions:

If you don’t make time for your health, you will be forced to make time for illness.

Love yourself and be well!

#readthatagain [#owncancer](#)

Wishing all of our members a wonderful holiday season filled with joy! Best wishes for a fulfilling and happy 2023 - Penny Doyle

