



## TBPA 2022 SPRING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear TBPA Members and Guests:

It is hard to believe that we are already well into spring (and almost summer)! Your TBPA Board has been very busy this year since I have had the honor of serving as your new President for 2022! The Board and I look forward to working with you all and continuing to grow the success of our Association with your help.

Below is our current TBPA Board:

President: Melissa J. Cook, FRP  
President Elect: Frank Steinbeck Jr., FRP  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Linda Woolard, ACP, FCP, FRP  
2nd Vice President: Emily Merlin, CP  
Secretary: Irene Hahn, CRP  
Director: Katie Turley, CP, FRP  
Director: Jeff Rizzo, CP

We are still seeking a Treasurer; however, the President Elect, Frank Steinbeck, has agreed to continue to assist with our treasury until we have a new Treasurer. Also, we are seeking a few more Directors to assist us as we resume activities with the pandemic waning, so if you are interested in being a part of this great group of leaders, please reach out to myself via [president@tbpa.org](mailto:president@tbpa.org).

### **Accomplishments to date in 2022:**

We have accomplished many things in 2022, including continuing to provide Monthly CLE Events in-person since September 2021. Prior to that we provided the Monthly CLE Events via virtual pre-recorded participation with the assistance of Trial Consulting Services (TCS). If you know of any attorneys you'd like to present a legal topic during an upcoming Monthly CLE Event, please let our Monthly CLE team know. We are lining up speakers through next year, so your suggestions are welcome! You may reach the Monthly CLE Team via email [monthlycle@tbpa.org](mailto:monthlycle@tbpa.org).

In addition, our Seminar Committee worked diligently in preparing for the first TBPA Seminar since 2019. **"Paralegals vs. The Pandemic: Our Power & Positivity!"** was held on Friday, March 11, 2022, at the Hilton St. Petersburg Carillon Park with the lineup of wonderful speakers, sponsors and exhibitors. The 2022 Seminar was a great success with the tremendous support of the sponsors, exhibitors and speakers. In addition, I would like to give a special **"Thank You!"** to the TBPA 2022 Seminar Committee and TBPA Board, especially Yvonne DeAntoneo, Emily Merlin, and Katie Turley for their dedication and hard work behind the scenes overcoming obstacles encountered to ensure the event took place at the facility with the engaged speakers, so that everyone attending enjoyed the educational event.

Our new 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President/Seminar Chair, Linda Woolard, and the 2023 Seminar Committee is starting to work on the 2023 Seminar. The date and location will be announced soon! If you are interested in helping with the Seminar Committee

announced soon. If you are interested in helping with the Seminar Committee, please reach out to Linda Woolard, via [Seminar@tbpa.org](mailto:Seminar@tbpa.org). This is truly a team effort, and we welcome your involvement no matter how much time you can dedicate.

We are back to being involved with the quarterly Pro Bono/Community Service events of **Wills For Heroes** hosted by the Hillsborough County Bar Association. The next scheduled event will be held on Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested in helping with being a notary or witness for estate planning and medical directive documents for our First Responders, please reach out to our Pro Bono Chair, Lance Cochran LaFleur by email at [probono@tbpa.org](mailto:probono@tbpa.org).

Our **Certification Committee** is gearing up to offer a **Study Group for Certification** starting this August. The focus will be on studying for the NALA Certified Paralegal Examination. The fee for joining the Study Group is \$25 for TBPA Members and \$45 for Non-Members. If you are interested in this Study Group, please reach out to our Certification Chair via [certification@tbpa.org](mailto:certification@tbpa.org). Also, there will be an event announcement released closer to the Study Group start date for you to register, so please be on the lookout for the email.

I am confident that the 2022 TBPA Board and I will continue to have a successful 2022.

### **Call for Monthly CLE Sponsors:**

We have secured a number of Sponsors for our 2022 Monthly CLE Lunch & Learn Events for most of the **2022 Monthly CLE Lunch & Learn Events**; however, we are still accepting Sponsorships for a few remaining monthly events, including the November 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Membership Meeting. The December Holiday Luncheon Sponsorship will be a special opportunity and announced shortly. These Sponsorships help support our continuing legal education efforts, including covering room rental and A/V fees for the luncheons, and assists us with other community endeavors supported by TBPA. If you are interested in being a Monthly CLE Sponsor, please send your request to [monthlycle@tbpa.org](mailto:monthlycle@tbpa.org) so we can confirm the date(s) you would like to be a sponsor are still available. These will be filled on a first come, first secured basis with non-competing business sponsors. Once these last dates have been filled, we will open the 2023 Monthly CLE Sponsorships.

### **Volunteers Needed:**

Our volunteer committee members are crucial to our Association and continuing the work it takes to grow and promote the paralegal profession. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please contact me for more information.

Please keep a lookout for announcements and invitations to join us in events TBPA will be participating in or hosting in the coming months and into 2023 as more events will be starting up in the legal community.

### **Other Upcoming Events:**

NFPA Joint Conference (recently occurred): May 19-20, 2022, Minneapolis, MN (Hybrid event). Officers of our current board will be attending virtually representing TBPA for leadership, regulation and certification updates. This conference helps our TBPA Board in their leadership roles.

NALA 2022 Conference: July 14-16, 2022, Phoenix, AZ. Our NALA Liaison will be attending virtually.

NFPA Annual Convention: September 15-18, Cleveland, Ohio. TBPA 2 Delegates will be attending representing TBPA.

FAPA 2022 Seminar: Postponed to 2022 FALL – Rescheduled date will be announced shortly.

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**Suggestions Welcome!**

If you have any suggestions, ideas for speakers, updates, or information on any subject that you feel might be of interest to other paralegals, please feel free to reach out to me at [president@tbpa.org](mailto:president@tbpa.org).

Please be sure to visit our website: [www.tbpa.org](http://www.tbpa.org)!

Sincerely,  
Tampa Bay Paralegal Association, Inc.

Melissa J. Cook, FRP  
TBPA President  
[president@tbpa.org](mailto:president@tbpa.org)  
[www.tbpa.org](http://www.tbpa.org)

**Thank you to our 2022 TBPA Seminar Diamond Sponsors**



**and to our 2022 Seminar Gold Sponsors:**

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