Ready for Trial
Litigation for Paralegals, Legal Staff and New Attorneys
October 17, 2014

Agenda
8:00 Registration & Coffee

8:25 Welcome & Introduction to the Program
Peter O'Neil, Attorney at Law

8:30-9:30 Session 1: Getting Started: Intake, Investigation, and Medical Records
Good practices for opening a new file or case
Theda Yandell, Paralegal, Forsberg & Umlauf, P.S.
Investigating your case
Christine Beck, Investigator, C.D. Beck and Associates
A discussion of the role of the investigator in the attorney/paralegal/client relationships and in development of the case itself, specialized areas of expertise of a good investigator, and the many functions of an investigator throughout the duration of the case. Outlines methods of investigation in preparing the case for paralegals and attorneys, in civil and criminal investigations, including records identification and collection, witness interviews and relationships, and interaction with experts and first responders.
Medical Records: How to Find, Organize and Use Them
Shelley Smith-Jones, Paralegal, Schroeter Goldmark & Bender
Medical records are the foundation from which our cases are built. They are only useful if they are complete and organized to make sense. This presentation will provide tips on how to do that and then how best to summarize and tab them.

9:30-10:30 Session 2: Taking Care of Business Through the Lens of Legal Staff
Case Management in a Multi-Lawyer Practice
Mary Jane Brogan, Paralegal, SU School of Law Ronald A. Peterson Law Clinic
The heart of practicing law revolves around client representation. Effective case management is fundamental in legal practice, particularly when multiple lawyers are involved. A view of case management, through the lens of legal staff.
Case Management in a Solo Practice
Wanda Creitz, Legal Assistant, Coluccio Law
Building and Organizing the Damages Case
Shelley Smith-Jones, Paralegal, Schroeter Goldmark & Bender
Building and organizing damages is best begun early in the case. This presentation will provide a checklist for comprehensively establishing and documenting special damages and a practical way to present them. It will also touch on how to find and present comparables to help the attorneys determine the value of general damages.

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45-11:30 Session 3: The Art of the Interview: How to Let Your Client and Witnesses Tell the Whole Story
Prof. Tomas Guillen, SU Communications Studies Department

11:30-12:00 Session 4: The Power of Discovery
Peter O’Neil, Attorney at Law
Discovery offers a powerful chance to put your imagination and natural inquisitiveness to work in ways that can change and make a case. Learn about informal and formal discovery; interrogatories and requests for production; how to prepare effective depositions; and the follow-up work that can turn your good discovery into a win for your client and the Bar.

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00-2:00 Session 5: Great (Legal) Writing
Ken Masters, Masters Law Group PLLC
This presentation will address a few simple rules that will help make your writing clear, cogent, and concise.

2:00-3:00 Session 6: Documents & Depositions - Preparing Your Expert Witness
What Your Expert Will Want to See
Will Martin, Construction & Premises Safety Expert, Robson Forensic Expert Speaker
The Care and Feeding of Expert Witnesses
Jessica Vick, Paralegal, Brodkowitz Law Firm
How to get the most bang for your buck and best result for your client by getting your experts the documents and information they need in a format they can use.

3:00-3:15 Break

3:15-3:45 Session 7: Mediation: What a Mediator Needs from You
Judge Cynthia Morgan, BIIA, J.D., SU 1996
Mediation, if properly prepared for, can resolve your case and help your client find closure. This session will provide a short list of tips and suggestions for new attorneys and paralegals to avoid non-issues the day of your mediation.

3:45-4:15 Session 8: The Modern Digitized Trial: Techniques & Technologies
Chris Tiedemann, Prolumina
This seminar will provide an overview of the latest trends and technologies for electronic presentation in the courts. From an overview of the very first use of “multimedia” in the courtroom to the latest courtroom installations in present day, this program gives insight into the emerging trends taking place nationally. With the changing age of our jury-eligible population, the rise of technology across the board, and the intimate integration of electronic messaging into our daily lives, we will look at how modern trial are capitalizing on these trends in order to help attorneys be more persuasive and get better results.

4:15-4:45 Session 9: Taking the Next Step: From Paralegal to Attorney
LLLT – Brenda Cothary, President, Washington State Paralegal Association
Law School – Brittany Molnar, 2nd Year Law Student, Seattle University School of Law
Rule 6 Program - Peter O’Neil

5:00 Adjourn
Faculty Biographies

Christine Beck
Christine D. Beck is a graduate of the University of Washington where she completed a Bachelor of Arts in German Language & Culture and English. Ms. Beck entered the legal support profession in 1984 as a paralegal for the law firm of Robert M. Krinsky, practicing in Tacoma and Seattle and dealing primarily with plaintiff personal injury litigation and medical malpractice. In 1987 she apprenticed for approximately one year with the investigative firm of Roger Dunn, before opening the offices of C.D. Beck & Associates in Seattle in 1988, providing services to law firms and corporations. Ms. Beck was a Certified Trainer of private investigators which authorized her to train and test both her own investigators as well as those of other agencies who do not have a Certified Trainer on their premises. She sat on the Test Committee for the Private Investigator’s Section of Washington State Department of Professional Licensing, and designed and implemented a curriculum for a 9 month certification program for investigators for the University of Washington Extension/Outreach Program. She is a past Board member and Treasurer for the Washington Association of Licensed Investigators; the founding chair of the Associates Committee of the Washington Criminal Defense Lawyers (WACDL); and the founding President of the Washington Association of Legal Investigators.

Mary Jane Brogan
Mary Jane Brogan is a paralegal in the Ronald A. Peterson Law Clinic, Seattle University School of Law where she enjoys working in the profession of educating future lawyers. After completing the paralegal program in the University of Washington, she worked for various legal offices. She has worked in King County Records & Elections and in the City of Seattle Office for Civil Rights. She has a Masters in Organizational Systems.

Brenda Cothary
Brenda Cothary is the Office Manager at the Office of Administrative Hearings in Tacoma. She has 15 years’ experience in bankruptcy and collections, working for a national equipment leasing company, private law offices and the State of Washington. Brenda has a B.A. in Political Science and minor in Criminal Justice from the University of Idaho. She worked in law enforcement for 7 years prior to obtaining her paralegal certificate from Highline Community College in 2001. Brenda has been a WSPA member for 11 years. She attended the NFPA Leadership Conference in 2003 and the NFPA National Convention in 2005 and 2006. She is currently serving her third term as WSPA's President, and has previously served as the Vice President of Membership, NFPA Primary Representative, South Puget Sound Chapter Director and co-chair of WSPA's Regulation (Positions and Issues) Committee. She is a past member of the Tacoma Community College Paralegal Advisory Committee and currently serves on the Washington State Bar Association's Limited License Legal Technician Board.

Wanda Creitz
Wanda Creitz is a legal assistant to Kevin Coluccio at the firm Coluccio Law. She began her career in the legal field in 2001 by answering a classified advertisement for a part time receptionist job at Stritmatter Kessler Whelan Withey Coluccio. In the 12 years that she worked at this firm she held the following titles, receptionist, administrative assistant, legal assistant and paralegal. All of her experience and knowledge has been obtained in the so to speak legal trenches and through networking working with and learning from colleagues in the legal field. A member of the Washington State Association for Justice since 2003.

Professor Tomás Guillén
Seattle University Professor Tomás Guillén teaches investigative information gathering for advocacy and the Art of Interviewing. Before joining S.U., he worked as a journalist at The Seattle Times. In 1988 he and a colleague were Pulitzer Prize finalists for their articles on the Green River killer and in 1995 his stories on crime laboratories won the Silver Gavel in the American Bar Association investigative reporting competition.

In 2008 Guillén was selected to be a Fulbright Senior Specialist Scholar in Cali, Columbia. And in 2011 he was selected to be a Fulbright Senior Specialist Scholar in the United Kingdom, where he taught at Staffordshire University.

**Shelley Smith Jones**
Shelley Smith Jones began her career as a paralegal in 1989 in Twin Falls, Idaho. She was hired by one of Idaho’s premier trial lawyers to prepare over 100 Petitions for Compensation under the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program. Upon completion of that project, she was asked to take over the firm’s sizable caseload of silicone breast implant claims. Shelley was also introduced to medical malpractice, product liability, and insurance bad faith cases during her twelve years in Idaho.

In 2001, Shelley was hired by Schroeter Goldmark & Bender as a medical malpractice paralegal. Given her extensive knowledge of and long history with breast implant claims, SGB turned over its 300 cases to her for completion of the process. She also worked on fen-phen, Vioxx, Yaz, and, currently, hip implant and transvaginal mesh cases. Shelley also manages complex individual medical malpractice and product liability cases for SGB.

**Will Martin**
Will Martin is a registered architect in multiple states and is a licensed general contractor in the State of Washington. His background includes thirty years of building design and construction, with projects ranging from small single family renovations to large mixed-use buildings, schools, casino additions, and military installations. He has been responsible for jobsite safety procedures and company-wide safety programs.

Will can explain the practical applications of established codes and standards in cases involving unguarded edges and openings; building component and maintenance failures including stairs, balconies, walking surfaces, doorways, and egress; worker training; and jobsite and industrial housekeeping. As a registered architect and licensed contractor, he understands and can communicate the proper construction and maintenance of schools, industrial and institutional facilities, single and multi-family housing, retail and restaurants, and site improvements. His background includes CPM schedules, estimates, specifications, and a wide variety of building materials and techniques in all phases of the construction process, starting with initial design and continuing through demolition, sitework, structural elements, envelope detailing, and interior finishes.

Will conducts casework for both plaintiff and defense counsel throughout the Pacific Northwest. He is a certified user of the English XL slip tester. His educational background includes a BA from Yale University and M.Arch and MBA degrees from the University of Washington.

**Ken Masters**
For over 20 years, Ken Masters has assisted many great trial lawyers, handling hundreds of civil appeals at Masters Law Group (formerly Wiggins & Masters). Ken was elected to the WSBA Board of Governors in September 2012, currently serves a Governor for the 1st District, and is the Treasurer-Elect. Ken previously chaired the WSBA’s Court Rules and Procedures Committee and Amicus Curiae Brief Committee, as well as numerous Committees for the King County Bar Association. He has chaired or presented at dozens of CLEs on appellate advocacy, legal writing, and other subjects. He is a past president of the Washington Appellate Lawyers Association, and is a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation, the Litigation Counsel of America, and the American Academy of Appellate Lawyers.

**Brittany Molnar**
Brittany Molnar graduated from Arizona State University with a B.S. in Political Science, Certificate in International Studies and a Minor in Sociology. After graduation Brittany went on to work in a small boutique estate planning/administration, probate and civil litigation law firm. While working, Brittany went on to earn a Certificate in Paralegal Studies from Phoenix College. Brittany is currently a second-year law student at Seattle University School of Law.
Judge Cynthia M. Morgan
Cynthia M. Morgan joined the Board of Industrial Insurance Appeals as a hearings judge in 2012. She currently works as a Review Judge in the BIIA's Seattle Office. Prior to 2012, Cindy worked for the Office of Administrative Hearings in Seattle as an Administrative Judge hearing employment security appeals. She also serves as an arbitrator and mediator through the various county court civil programs and Washington Arbitration and Mediation Service.

Cindy is a graduate of the Seattle University School of Law and has a Bachelor's degree from the University of Washington. Cindy has been a frequent presenter at CLE's sponsored by various groups, including the Washington State Bar Association, and the Washington State Association for Justice.

Peter O'Neil
Peter O'Neil focuses his work on complex product liability and negligence cases. He has represented catastrophically injured individuals and the families of people killed by cars and trucks with defective fuel systems, airbags, seat belts, roofs, rollover stability, doors, seats, tires, and more, in dozens of automotive product cases over a span of decades. He has worked on dozens of other product liability cases involving everything from badly designed bottle caps and heating pads to defectively designed windows, tractors and dangerous drugs. His work on negligence cases runs the gamut from simple auto crash cases to highway construction. He studied law the old fashioned way, foregoing law school, and opting instead for the Washington State Bar Association's Rule 6 Law Clerk Program. He is of counsel to the firm Schroeter Goldmark & Bender.

Chris Tiedemann
Chris Tiedemann is one of the Northwest’s leading experts on technology in litigation and has designed and taught Continuing Legal Education seminars for local and state bar associations as well as for many law firms, professional associations, and industry conferences nationwide. In addition, he has authored numerous articles on the effectiveness of technology in the courtroom.

Mr. Tiedemann has more than 25 years of experience in electronic trial consulting and has been involved in matters as far back as in re: Exxon Valdez, to the more recent Toyota “unintended acceleration” cases as well as the Deepwater Horizon litigation to name just a few.

Mr. Tiedemann is the principal of Prolumina, a jury consulting and trial services company located in Seattle, WA.

Jessica Vick
Jessica Vick is a paralegal at Brodkowitz Law where she works as part of a team representing plane crash victims, commercial airline passengers, pilots, flight attendants, helicopter crash victims and their families following injury or loss. Brodkowitz Law’s aviation practice has been nationally recognized.

Jessica became a paralegal in 2000 upon completion of the American Bar Association (ABA) Certified Paralegal Certificate Program from Highline Community College. Prior to completing the paralegal program she worked at the firm of Lane Powell in Seattle. Upon receiving her Paralegal Certificate in June 2000 she began work as a paralegal at a local insurance defense firm. In 2002 Jessica began advocating for injured people when she had an opportunity to join a plaintiffs' personal injury firm as a paralegal. In doing so Jessica found a practice area that she could be passionate about. She has been with Brodkowitz Law since September 2008. Jessica is a member of the Washington State Association for Justice.

Theda Yandell
Theda is employed as a paralegal in the law firm of Forsberg & Umlauf, P.S., a litigation defense firm. She currently participates in personal injury, premise liability, property damage, and product liability cases. She has been a paralegal for 26 years. During her paralegal career, she has assisted in the areas of legal malpractice, medical malpractice, employment litigation and construction defect. While she has been involved primarily in defense work, she has also participated in plaintiff cases. She has assisted in many trials during her career and has been a speaker on trial preparation for WSPA and IPE. Theda is a
member of and past director for the National Federation of Paralegal Associations (NFPA). She is also a member and past president of the Washington State Paralegal Association (WSPA). Theda became a PACE Registered Paralegal (RP) in December 2006. She graduated from Highline Community College with an A.A. degree and an A.A.S. degree, Legal Assistant. She is a member of the Highline Community College Advisory Board and volunteers at the Kent Legal Clinic.