

Wyoming Lawyer

June 2017

Behind the Scenes

of the legal profession



Inside this issue:

Law School Admissions Process

Demystifying the Judicial Nominating Process

Paralegal Perspective

A Court Reporter's View



The *Fantastic* Four

by Holland & Hart

*P*aralegals are typically behind the scenes supporting attorneys and clients in a myriad of ways—from document preparation, detailed research, assistance with filings, to trial preparation and in-trial management. Holland & Hart’s Cheyenne office paralegal team does all of this and much more. While firms and organizations utilize paralegals in many different ways, at the firm’s Cheyenne office paralegals are integral team members alongside the attorneys, providing sophisticated and innovative client service from beginning to end. Even though they do not provide legal advice, they are essential members of the client team who provide invaluable substantive thinking and strategy.

TEAM – Together Everyone Achieves More

The Holland & Hart Cheyenne paralegal team includes Sami Falzone, Michelle McCallum, Pauline Stevens, and Carri Svec. All highly educated and experienced professionals, several of the paralegals have been with the firm for over 25 years. They support attorneys in the firm's Cheyenne and Jackson offices and clients across the state and nationwide. They provide a vast array of sophisticated legal services and support for the Wyoming attorneys and their clients ranging from complex litigation, environmental and natural resources issues, labor and employment matters, to local business disputes and matters of real estate finance and land development.

“Michelle McCallum, Carri Svec, and Pauline Stevens are indispensable members of every trial we undertake,” said Pat Day, Administrative Partner of the firm's Cheyenne office. “Inevitably, both the judge and opposing counsel come to rely upon their help as well, because they manage the evidence, documents, and witnesses so seamlessly. I can't imagine trying a case without one of them on the team.”

The TEAMWORK culture of the Wyoming office puts these paralegals at the forefront of virtually every transaction or dispute. They attend depositions, client meetings, strategic planning sessions and trial proceedings. They are knowledgeable, experienced, trustworthy and provide guidance to not only the attorneys, but clients, and, on occasion, even opposing counsel!

“Sami Falzone knows Wyoming's state and federal agencies so well that she often advises them where to look in their own files for the documents we need,” Day said. “Need copies of a mine permit? Sami knows which shelf it is on at DEQ!”

By anticipating attorney requests, the paralegals can proactively address and accomplish clients' needs more efficiently than waiting for direction from the attorney. The attorneys appreciate the preemptive and tactical nature of the paralegals' initiatives. Because there is no traditional office hierarchy, the paralegals are considered a valuable resource, sought out by members of the office for their ideas, viewpoints and questions.

Client Relationships are Golden

The paralegals deliver quality service and add value by managing the day-to-day customer calls and needs of clients. They are individually and collectively strategic customer relationship partners. They form long-lasting personal as well as professional connections with clients. From her work on many mineral tax cases with an accounting expert, Sami Falzone and a senior Cheyenne attorney have been invited as guests to the expert's vacation home in Florida. In turn,

the same expert often attends the firm's Cheyenne Frontier Days celebrations.

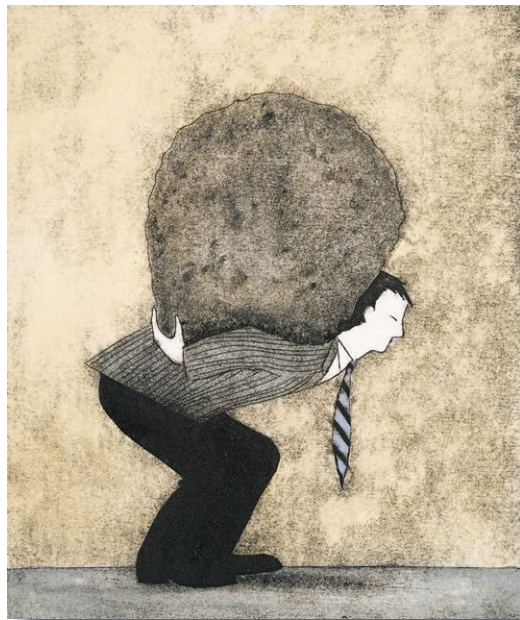
The contributions made by these paralegals over the years is astounding. They take on the lion's share of the time-intensive tasks, particularly in litigation. On one case, Carri traveled to Houston every other week for six months handling document review with the client and opposing counsel. Years later, when the same client went to trial on a different case, the in-house counsel specifically asked that Carri (given her royalty litigation experience) and Persuasion Strategies be included on the new case.

A paralegal with a national oil and gas industry company who has worked with Carri Svec for more than 12 years says, “There is a lot of behind-the-scenes work we do to achieve the end results. For both me and for Carri, our goal is to make the process as easy as possible for our internal business group clients, even if that means late hours at night and over the weekends. We work efficiently, get the work done, and get it done right.”

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She describes how one of the first cases she and Carri worked on laid the foundation for their working relationship:

Back in 2004-2005, Carri and I met face-to-face for the first time in our corporate office in Denver, something paralegal peers rarely do. We immediately hit it off...on a very complex, document intensive case. We literally went door-to-door together to collect documents from each of the internal business groups involved in the case. Carri and I are both conscientious, very thorough, and want to do everything we can for the business groups to make their lives easier. This case had several thousands of documents to review – so many that we had to reach out to our respective teams to parse out the work and then we pulled it all together to do another review, and then to the lawyer's hands for final review. This was our first working relationship, which turned into a great personal relationship. Carri is an extension of me – we are a very seamless team. Hands-down, I still put in my request to pick Carri as my col-



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league on a case.

Every member of the paralegal team provides this level of dedication to clients. The Cheyenne paralegal team builds excellent client relationships and are often clients' 'go-to' contact when questions arise, or assistance is needed. By working as intermediaries between clients and attorneys, they provide efficient project management and allow the client team to deliver cost-effective solutions.

Kayla Parry, a human resources professional with a regional hospital, describes how she and her organization rely on Pauline Stevens for day-to-day employment advice. "I know that I can always reach out to Pauline knowing she will send me in the right direction. It's so nice to have a go-to person that I can send a quick email to at any time for any question, large or small. She is always friendly, prompt and professional and I am grateful knowing that I can always count on her reliability."

Even when the paralegals don't meet clients in person, through responsive service, they create valuable bonds. Kayla adds, "I haven't actually met Pauline in person, but it never feels that way in our communication. Our work together is sometimes urgent, sometimes full of information, and sometimes requires a lot of back and forth, but I never become lost in the midst of it. Pauline keeps our conversations guided and always helps keep us on track. I appreciate all of her hard work to make this working relationship so level!"

What makes the Cheyenne paralegal team unique? In their own words, they are an interactive, seamless, "well-oiled machine," who each take great pride in their service, ownership of their projects and the hard-working team.

The Fantastic Four includes:



Sami Falzone – assists with protecting clients' interests in corporate and real estate transactions, including large ranch properties, and has experience with renewable energy project development and financing, particularly wind farms. Sami is also a published co-author of trade related articles.



Michelle McCallum - assists in the representation of both plaintiffs and defendants in construction, personal injury, oil and gas, mining, class actions, and commercial cases.



Pauline Stevens – as a litigation paralegal, Pauline has experience handling matters at both the federal and state level and currently focuses primarily on labor and employment matters.



Carri Svec - has experience assisting attorneys and their clients with all facets of complex litigation including oil and gas, natural resources, personal injury, wrongful death, construction, and commercial cases. **WL**