

# The Advocate

A Publication of the Center for Paralegal Education at the  
Professional Development Institute of the University of North Texas  
Fall 2011



## Spring/Summer Graduates Honored

Congratulations to recent program graduates!

### Spring 2011 Blended Program Graduates:

Dawna Alberty	Jeana Altom	Sarah Biglow	Sonia Cardona	Sonya Cooley
Damiko Erskine	Erin Ewing	Christina Guerra	Kristi Hanley	Valerie Hoerner
K.C. Holiman	Susan Holley	Sara Jackson	Frederick King	Kriss Lott
Lynda Mane	Valerie Masters	Waheed Mazhar	Brandy Niemuth	Caroline Shaffer
Rorie Smith	Rhonda Tarver	Melissa Thompson	Giselle Van Zandt	Lacee Young

### Spring 2011 Online Graduates:

Celeste Abaunza	Katondra Clark	Heather Coe	Jacqui Cooke	Rene Curtis
Steve Gilmer	Lorna Golden	Toni Hutchins	Natalie Keathley	Dwane Kelley
Sherrie Lacy	Jaclyn McMillan	Susan Moon	Lanee Mose	Andrea Nicholson
Derek Nuckols	June Pilles	William Powell	Kasie Roth	Robin Smith
Catherine Steele	Tina Tran	Melissa Vanderford	Amy Vinson	Linh Vu
Vicky West				

### Summer 2011 Graduates:

Rachel Andrade	Taylor Baca	Lakesha Bell
Leighton Foreman	Greer Guthneck	Kendra Miner
Meagan Piper	Krystal Rauls	George Spiel
Jamie Stapleton		

## Private Investigations Program Underway

PDI Certificate in Professional Private Investigations prepares you to enter the exciting field of Private Investigations. Complete 210 hours of instruction over 4 1/2 months to be eligible to receive a Certificate in Professional Private Investigations.

### Topics Include

- Foundations of Private Investigation and Professional Ethics
- Legal aspects of Private Investigations In Texas
- Investigative Techniques & Research I and II
- Surveillance & Undercover Operations
- Criminal Investigations I
- Civil/Insurance/Domestic/Family Investigations
- Pre-Employment/Background/Corporate Investigations
- PI Practice Management
- Special Topics in Private Investigations
- Process Server Training Program

### Who Should Attend

Anyone interested in P.I. training / Loss prevention agents / SIU investigators / Claims adjusters / Lawyers/paralegals / Investigators in legal, corporate, financial or retail / Police officers seeking P.I. training / Licensed P.I.s seeking formal training

### PREREQUISITES

- Have a high school diploma (or GED)
- Fluent in English
- Basic working knowledge of computers and the internet
- Online access for computer-based proficiency testing

### Price

- Entire Program: \$3,125.00. Includes all materials and fees

### Dallas Classes

- Fridays from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
- Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (visit us online for Houston schedule)

Call us for more details or learn about the program at [certificate.pdi.org](http://certificate.pdi.org)!

## On the Docket

### Spring 2012 / Blended

Class hours:

9 a.m. to 5 p.m. / Saturday Only  
(followed by on-line)

Open House

9 a.m. Saturday, February 4

Class begins February 18

Open House and Class Site:

Crowne Plaza North Dallas/Addison  
14315 Midway Road

### Spring Online Only Begins March 10, 2012

**The Paralegal Certificate Program**

is for individuals seeking their  
paralegal certificate.

For information, contact PDI at  
**866.374.0876** or visit

<http://legal.pdi.org>

**We want to hear from you!**

Write to us at 2301 Hinkle Dr.,  
Denton, Texas, 76201.

E-mail us at

[trussell@pdi.org](mailto:trussell@pdi.org).

Call us at 866.374.0876.

Fax us at 940.565.3362.

Help spread the word about PDI's  
Paralegal Certificate Program.

Tell your friends, family  
and business associates.

# May I Quote You?

## What can a Paralegal Certificate Do For You? We Asked Program Graduate Marianne Higgins...

"During several career transitions, I was told that I was not qualified to do paralegal work and would receive lower job placement due to not having a certificate..."

"At a prior law firm, I worked for a very busy paralegal. We had so many cases on the court's docket that needed to be filed, that due to time restraints, she and I split the work load. I would draft the Motions, obtain documentation from opposing counsel and prepare Final Dispositions for the attorneys to file..."

"I certainly had the legal knowledge, but because I did not have the certificate, I was told by the department manager that she needed to demote/replace me from my current position into one that was more suitable for an admin and replaced me with my peer that had acquired her certificate. I then had to train her on how to do my job..."

"I decided to tour a two-year accredited paralegal school, was optimistic about furthering my education until I found out that tuition alone was over \$15,000..."

Having two small children, I didn't know how I was going to be able to juggle night school with my family and expensive tuition for two years..."

"Two years later, I applied for a position and was told by the manager that she was excited to hire me based upon my legal knowledge and work related experience. Human Resources declined my application, informing me that without paralegal education, once again, I did not meet the job requirements."

"I was frustrated with being held back in my legal career which motivated me once again. A co-worker told me about the on-line program through UNT, which allowed me time with my kids and was much more affordable so I enrolled in the PDI program the first opportunity I had."

"The staff was personable, very helpful and I learned lots of valuable information in just two months. This was the best decision I could have made. The day I took my final exam, I was offered the litigation paralegal position that I was originally turned down for. I was now eligible because I had fulfilled the job requirements as previously requested. Not only did I move two positions up the corporate chain of command, obtain a salary increase, but finally, I was able to get my foot in the door and be recognized as a paralegal."

"After 10 years of being held back, I finally hurdled my biggest professional obstacle and I am now able to move forward with my professional career. I would like to thank UNT and the PDI staff for making this a great experience and for helping me finally accomplish my goal."

*Marianne E. Higgins*

## Other Comments from Our Students

"I got a job! I will be doing everything from office administration to technical support to paralegal duties. Once again, thank you so much for all your help and support."

*Cindy Steenson*

"The class was great and the instructors and Tami were helpful and willing to go the extra mile. Don't be fooled by the short class. There is a lot of great information to get you going in your new profession as a Paralegal."

*Kenny Bebensee*

"I wanted to let you all know how beneficial I felt the class was. I learned so much, and am really excited to put it to use in my career. I thought PDI had a great group of instructors assembled, each with their own style, and a grasp on how to relate their particular area of expertise to the class. Thanks so much, and I will recommend it to anyone I know looking to further their education."

*Libby Dines*



"I can't believe how much was covered and so quickly. There were a couple of weeks there that I didn't know if I could get it all in with all the reading, vocab and the exercises. I thought the course was very thorough and will recommend it to friends who are looking to promote."

*Kristy MacDonald*

"Making a career change at mid-life is often described as "crazy", but PDI made my switch easy. I have always been fascinated with the law and after some online research, I found the PDI paralegal course and was impressed that it was affiliated with the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas. I'm a graduate of the University of Texas, and the course lessons challenged me and the weekly exams certainly made sure that I had read and understood the terms and topics. I would recommend the paralegal course to anyone and look forward to my new career!"

*Karol Wilson*

"Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association recently created a new job position, Paralegal - Contract Administration. I applied, along with several external applicants and was offered the job..If it wasn't for you and PDI's excellent instructors, I wouldn't have been in the running for the job. Thanks so much!"

*Dana Coffee*



## Earn \$50 by Referring Others

Don't miss your opportunity to refer your friends and colleagues to the Paralegal Certificate Program. For more information, contact Tami Russell at [trussell@pdi.org](mailto:trussell@pdi.org), or via phone at 866.374.0876.

As a graduate of PDI's Center for Paralegal Education Paralegal Certificate Program, don't forget to hand out your business referral cards and earn \$50 for each person that registers and attends PDI's program.

If an individual registers, pays in full and completes the program due to your referral, then you get a \$50 American Express Gift Check.

## Specialized Paralegal Certificate Programs

PDI and partner The Washington Online Learning Institute offers a series of Specialized Paralegal Certificate Programs for paralegals and legal staff who wish to expand their knowledge of specific areas of the law. Each curriculum is designed to focus on a particular subject area. Students are awarded Specialized Paralegal Certificate in the subject. Sessions start every four weeks.

Each program is between two and three months in length, and tuition ranges from \$1,175 to \$1,675.

**Visit <http://certificate.pdi.org> for in-depth information.**

Tuition Includes: Textbooks, 24/7 Access to Interactive Online Classroom, Hands-on instruction, Audio lectures (downloadable), Westlaw® Training

Education loans are available. For more information, contact Tami Russell at 866.374.0876 or via email at [trussell@pdi.org](mailto:trussell@pdi.org).