Section 25
NFPA Annual Awards and Scholarships

25A. Awards. The NFPA annual awards and scholarships recognize excellence in individual paralegals and paralegal associations; demonstrate to the community the strengths and commitment of professional paralegals; and confirm NFPA's position as *The Leader of the Paralegal Profession®.*

These awards include the following categories:

- NFPA Individual Pro Bono
- NFPA Association Pro Bono
- PACE Ambassador
- William R. Robie Leadership
- NFPA Outstanding Local Leader
- NFPA Paralegal of the Year

NFPA also awards a PACE scholarship and further recognizes excellence in paralegal students by the presentation of two student scholarship awards. (See specific scholarship award procedures below.)

25B. Awards Committee. An Awards Committee ("Judges") will determine the recipients of each of the awards. At the Winter Board Meeting, the Board of Directors shall appoint three Advisory Council members (one of whom shall be selected by the NFPA President to serve as Chair) to serve on the Awards Committee for a 12-month term. The Board of Directors may, at its discretion, appoint more than one Awards Committee. The Advisory Council appointments for the student scholarship awards will not include any paralegal educators.

The purpose of the Awards Committee is to ensure independent selection of award recipients. All submissions will be confidential: only the Awards Committee, Managing Director, Treasurer (for purposes of approving travel arrangements/reimbursements only) and those persons presenting a specific award will be aware of the recipients' identities (except as noted in the sections for individual awards).

25C. Nominations Procedures. The nominations for awards will be announced through the *Reporter,* NFPA listservs, *Inside NFPA*, social networking sites used by NFPA, and other media as determined by the Board of Directors. Nomination forms and requirements for each specific award will be located on the NFPA website.

Eligibility requirements for each award will be contained in the nomination forms. The nominating person or Association is responsible for confirming the nominee meets the eligibility requirements for the award, including membership in good standing. All nominations will be submitted to National Federation of Paralegal Associations, Inc., Post Office Box 2016, Edmonds, WA 98020-9516, or 23607 Hwy 99 Suite 2C Edmonds, WA 98026, to the attention of the specific award, *i.e.* Association Pro Bono Award, Individual Pro Bono Award.

All submissions must be postmarked by the deadline identified in the nomination form and must be made by delivery requiring signature. An original and three copies of the nomination form and accompanying documentation is required (exception is made for student scholarship applications, as noted below). Neither NFPA nor the management company will acknowledge receipt of individual submissions. Incomplete submissions will be reviewed "as is" with no

opportunity to supplement. No applications will be accepted via fax or via email.

All award recipients receive formal recognition at the NFPA awards luncheon on Saturday of the Annual Convention, on NFPA's website, in the *Reporter*, and in press releases. All awards and scholarships (except for the Association Pro Bono Award) may include paid expenses to attend the NFPA Annual Convention to receive the award/scholarship, dependent upon sponsorship for any individual award. Should such expenses be paid, the expenses for only the award/scholarship recipient shall include coach airfare, hotel room for Friday and Saturday nights (to be shared with another recipient or individual designated by the Managing Director of the same sex with arrangements made by the Managing Director), social event and meal per diem for travel days and dinner on Saturday night. All reimbursement requests must be submitted to HQ (with final approval by the Treasurer) within 45 days after the end of the Annual Convention. Registration fees for the Policy Meeting for each recipient shall be waived (if the recipient is not a Delegate for a local Association).

The NFPA will appoint the Awards Committee at the Winter Board Meeting

The following provides an overview of the timeline for the awards:

1. April 1: Call for nominations announced.
2. July 1: All submissions due to NFPA Headquarters.
3. July 15: Submissions to awards/scholarship Committee.
4. August 15: Selection of award/scholarship recipients.
5. August 30: Scholarship recipients notified of their selection.
6. August 30: Notification to award recipients or to appropriate association president, primary or secondary representative.
7. Convention: Presentation of award/scholarship
8. 30 days post-convention: Letters of recognition to all nominees who did not receive the award/scholarship.

25D. Specific Award Procedures

ASSOCIATION PRO BONO AWARD

Purpose: Recognizes NFPA member association that has exhibited outstanding dedication and service in the area of Pro Bono services.

Nomination Process: Anyone may nominate an NFPA member association for this award. The submission can also be self-nominating. The nomination form shall be submitted with a letter of nomination of no more than two pages that outlines the specific Pro Bono Program ("Program") to be considered and shall include, but not be limited to:

- Name and address of the nominated Association
- Name, address and telephone number of the nominated Association's Pro Bono Coordinator or other designated representative

- A description of the target sector of the community for which the Program was developed (*e.g*. low income families, children, indigent, battered women, elderly)
- Requirements used to determine if an individual is eligible to participate in the Program
- Name, address and telephone number of the individual or group who developed the Program
- Type of service(s) provided by the Program
- Name, address and telephone number of the supervising attorney for the Program
- The goals of the Program
- Timeline for the Program (when it was started, or will start, anticipated completion date or if it is an ongoing program)

Eligibility/Criteria for Selection: This award is open to all NFPA member Associations in good standing. The determination of the award recipient will be at the sole discretion of the Judges. The general criteria to be considered shall include, but are not limited to:

- The Program must be designed to target a portion of the community which cannot otherwise afford to seek legal assistance.
- Each paralegal participating in the Program shall comply with the ethical standards of NFPA and the local Association.
- At no time will the Judges consider the number of hours contributed by the Association's members, nor the number of individuals assisted by the Program.

Award Presentation: Award will fund a $500 donation to support the local Association's Pro Bono Program and a plaque to commemorate the award.

INDIVIDUAL PRO BONO AWARD

Purpose: Recognizes an individual practicing paralegal who has exhibited extraordinary dedication to the delivery of quality legal services to a portion of the population that cannot afford to pay for legal services.

Nomination Process: Any individual or Association may nominate a practicing paralegal for this award. The submission can also be self-nominating. The nomination form shall be submitted with a letter of nomination of no more than two pages and shall include, but not be limited to:

- Name and address of practicing paralegal being nominated
- Name, address and phone number of the nominating individual or contact information for the nominating Association
- A detailed synopsis, including, but not limited to, a clear identification of the services and accomplishments of the nominee in the area of Pro Bono services.

Eligibility/Criteria for Selection: This award is open to all practicing paralegals. The nominee need not be a member of NFPA or an NFPA member Association.
The determination of the award recipient will be at the sole discretion of the Judges. The general criteria to be considered shall include, but are not limited to:

- The nominee must have offered Pro Bono services designed to target that portion of the population which cannot otherwise afford legal assistance.

- The nominee must have contributed to the delivery of quality legal services directed to members of the community who are unable to pay reasonable or customary legal fees.
- Did the nominee further enhance the delivery of such legal services?
- Does the nominee exhibit a true dedication to the delivery of quality legal services?
- At no time will the Judges consider the number of hours contributed by the nominee, nor the number of people assisted by the services, but rather the dedication and motivation of the individual paralegal who has most enhanced the delivery of quality legal services to that portion of the population which cannot otherwise afford legal services.
- Greater weight shall be given to those nominees who provide Pro Bono services outside of or in addition to their normal course of employment.

Award Presentation:.The award includes a commemorative plaque and a $1,000 donation to the pro bono project of the recipient's choice.

NFPA OUTSTANDING LOCAL LEADER AWARD

Purpose: This award recognizes an individual NFPA member for outstanding leadership contributions to his/her local Association.

Nomination Process: NFPA member Associations or a member of an NFPA member Association may nominate an individual NFPA member for this award. Nominations must be accompanied by a letter of nomination by the nominating member or Association detailing how the nominee meets the criteria for eligibility. The letter may also contain the following:

a. clippings from newspapers, professional publications, etc.; and/or
b. photograph of nominee; and/or
c. resume or vita of the nominee.

Eligibility/Criteria for Selection: Nominees for this award must be a member of an NFPA member Association and must be nominated by a member Association or individual Member of the same association. The nominee will have demonstrated influential behavior in the paralegal profession; promoted interest and active participation in the activities of his/her local Association; motivated others to work toward establishing and carrying out professional goals; and will have been recognized by the legal community as a committed professional dedicated to the advancement of the legal profession.

Award Presentation: The award is a commemorative plaque.

NFPA PARALEGAL OF THE YEAR AWARD

Purpose: This award recognizes an individual NFPA member whose on-the-job achievements have contributed to expansion of the paralegal profession, including contributions to his/ her employer, colleagues and the paralegal profession in general.

Nomination Process: Anyone may nominate a member of an NFPA member Association or an individual sustaining member of NFPA for this award. Nominations for this award must include no more than a two page description of how the nominee has taken the initiative beyond typical job duties to contribute to expansion of the paralegal profession, including how an expanded role has served the paralegal's employer and/or others for whom the paralegal performed additional duties, cost savings, added efficiency, added professionalism, increased visibility, or other factors that have been a positive result of the paralegal's initiative and how his/her efforts have

been recognized and appreciated by the individuals who the paralegal performs paralegal duties for.

Eligibility/Criteria for Selection: Nominees for this award must be members of an NFPA member association or an individual sustaining member of NFPA. Paralegals working as either traditional or non-traditional paralegals are eligible to receive this award. If the nominee is a freelance or independent paralegal (within the scope of the authorized practice of law), the nominating individual may be a client. All nomination forms must be signed by the individual making the nomination.

Judges for this award will consider the two page description with particular attention to the initiative taken by the nominee, overall contributions to the legal team with which the nominee works, the framework within which the nominee functions on the job and how the nominee has changed that framework, the effects the initiative has had on the nominee's career, the environment in which the nominee works, and other paralegals in the organization. The award recipient will be chosen on the basis of her or his impact on expanding the paralegal profession and contributions to the nominee's employer, colleagues, and the paralegal profession in general.

Award Presentation: The award is a commemorative plaque.

WILLIAM R. ROBIE LEADERSHIP AWARD

Purpose: This award recognizes an NFPA member in honor of the Honorable William R. Robie and his dedication to the paralegal profession, the expansion of the delivery of legal services and equal access to justice for all Americans.

Nomination Process: Any NFPA member Association may nominate a voting, student or affiliate member of an NFMA member Association for the Robie Award. The nomination shall be accompanied by a letter/letters of nomination from the nominating Association's President and/or other individuals and contain the following information:

- Information that confirms the nominee is a voting, student or affiliate member of an NFPA member Association, which Association must be in good standing.
- A description of the following qualities of the nominee:
  - Dedication to the paralegal profession
  - Service to the legal community
  - Leadership
  - Participation in the NFPA member Association work
  - Positive attitude toward paralegal education either by service on an advisory board, as an instructor in a paralegal program, or as a speaker in a continuing education project; and
- Has created a lasting legacy to the paralegal profession through some distinct contribution(s).

Supporting documents shall be provided (e.g. newspaper articles, CLE programs).

Eligibility/Criteria for Selection: Any NFPA member Association may sponsor an Association member for the award. The nominee need not be a member of the nominating Association but must be a member of an NFPA Association. Currently serving NFPA Board Members, including the NFPA Board Advisor, are not eligible for this award. Nominees cannot be a vendor, full-time

legal educator, lawyer or sustaining member of NFPA.

The award recipient will have demonstrated: dedication to the paralegal profession; service to the legal community; leadership; participation in Association work; a positive attitude toward paralegal education either by service on an advisory board, as an instructor in a paralegal program, or as a speaker in a continuing education program; and, have made a lasting legacy to the paralegal profession through some distinct contribution(s).

Judges, at their sole discretion, will determine the award recipient based on the criteria set forth in the nominations procedure.

Award Presentation: The award is a commemorative plaque.

PARALEGAL CERTIFICATION AMBASSSADOR & ASSOCIATION AWARD

Purpose: The award recognizes outstanding achievement in promoting NFPA's paralegal certification exams.

Nomination Process: Any NFPA member may nominate its Paralegal Certification Ambassador and the Association for the award by submitting a letter of nomination, providing evidence of all the marketing efforts made by the Ambassador and/or the Association in the previous year. The nomination must be specific as to dates with respect to accomplishments, projects or any other information submitted. It should address the questions posted in the Eligibility/Criteria for Selection section below.

Eligibility/Criteria for Selection: This award is presented to an NFPA member Association and its Paralegal Certification Ambassador.

The criteria are based on the previous calendar year. Activities, projects and/or accomplishments, whether started and/or finished in said time frame, will be considered. Consideration is given for:

20%: Utilization of the Paralegal Certification Ambassador Program
Considerations:

- Has the Association appointed a Paralegal Certification Ambassador?
- Has the Association sent its Ambassador or other representative to the NFPA Paralegal Certification Ambassadors' Conference?
- How effective has the Ambassador been?
- Any other evidence presented by the association.

20%: Assisting members by helping them prepare to take PACE or PCC Exam
Considerations:

- Has the Association formed and mentored study groups?
- What is the percentage of members who have participated in study groups?
- Has the association sponsored any PACE or PCC Exam overview seminars or other seminars geared toward helping their members prepare for either exam?
- Has the Association encouraged participation in the PACE Review Course or overview seminars?
- Any other evidence presented by the Association.

20%: Participation by individual members in PCC Exam and PACE
Considerations:

- What percentage of the Association's members have taken either the PCC or the PACE exam and what percentage took their exam during the previous calendar year?
- What percentage of local Association's board members have taken either exam?
- Any other evidence presented by the Association.

20%: Marketing PACE and the PCC and exams within the Association
Considerations:

- Has the Association provided its members with exam information?
- Has the Association marketed the PACE Review Course, study groups, overview seminars and other preparatory materials?
- Has the Association printed articles in its newsletter promoting NFPA's paralegal certification exams?
- Has the association visited schools to promote NFPA's paralegal certification exams?
- Has the association marketed to vendors to sponsor an exam scholarship?
- Any other evidence presented by the Association

20%: Marketing the PCC and PACE exams to other members of the legal community
Considerations:

- Has the Association made exam presentations to employers or assisted paralegals in such presentations?
- Has the Association submitted articles regarding the NFPA certification exams to bar association(s)?
- Has the Association met with the bar association(s) to promote NFPA's certification exams?
- Has the association educated and promoted the NFAP certification exams to judges?
- Any other evidence presented by the Association.

Award Presentation: The award is a commemorative plaque.

25E. Specific Scholarship Procedures

PACE SCHOLARSHIP

1.Background: NFPA and a selected sponsor (or sponsors) ("Sponsor(s)") will award one PACE scholarship each year.

2.Award: Provided that sponsorship is obtained, NFPA will award one (1) PACE Scholarship each year.

This award will include the PACE Exam fee, the PACE Application and Handbook, the PACE Study Manual, enrollment in the NFPA on-line practice exam; and enrollment in the AIPS online study course.

a. A copy of the winning essay will be sent to the Sponsor(s) for the award. The essay will be reprinted in the *National Paralegal Reporter*, when space can be allocated. The recipient's entire application will be kept on file at t NFPA Headquarters in accordance with NFPA's Record Retention Policy. All other materials will be destroyed per the Records Retention Policy.

Materials cannot be returned. The winning essay shall become the property of NFPA and the recipient shall surrender any claim to the ownership of said essay upon acceptance of the scholarship. The recipient's name will be mentioned in the *National Paralegal Reporter* and press release(s) issued by NFPA to appropriate parties about the scholarship recipient.

b. The recipient will receive commemorative plaque provided by NFPA.

3. PACE Scholarship Committee ("Judges"):

a. The PACE Scholarship Committee will evaluate each complete application.
b. The Judges shall consist of the PACE Standards Committee and
c. A member of the NFPA Advisory Board (to be selected by NFPA Board of Directors) who shall act as Chair of the PACE Scholarship Committee. The Chair shall be responsible for coordinating the individual scoring sheets from the other Committee members, tabulating the votes, and transmitting the results to NFPA Headquarters.

4. Filing Requirements/Methods of Acceptance:

All application must be submitted in accordance with the instructions in the application form. The application form shall be posted on the NFPA website for download. Any application not postmarked or submitted by the deadline shall be automatically ineligible. Applications must be submitted by July 1 and must be made by a delivery method requiring signature. An original and three copies of the application and accompanying documentation are required. It is the responsibility of those submitting the nominations to follow up with NFPA Headquarters to confirm the nomination has been received. Incomplete applications will be reviewed "as is" with no opportunity to supplement. Applications may be sent to the Judges in PDF format by HQ.

5. Application Packets:

a. All Applications must include:

i. Completed Applications for PACE Scholarship (must be legible or the submission will not be considered).

ii. An essay of 4 pages or less on a topic to be determined by the Vice President and Director of Paralegal Certification with the concurrence of the NFPA Board of Directors. Essays must be double spaced, typewritten, and provided in no less than a 12-point font. Margins must be 1 inch on all sides. Each page of the essay must include a header with the applicant's name. Each page must be numbered as "page _ of __."

iii. An Affidavit from the applicant (form attached to the application) attesting that (i) he/she meets the eligibility requirements for PACE; (ii) that he/she agrees to take the exam within one year of receipt of the scholarship; and (iii) that he/she is either an individual sustaining member of NFPA or is a member in good standing in an NFPA member Association in good standing.

iii. Applicant's current resume'.

b. No applications will be considered without all component parts included.

6. Basic Eligibility Requirements: The criteria listed below may be utilized in selecting scholarship recipients:

a. Must meet PACE eligibility requirements.
b. Must be an individual sustaining member of NFPA or a member in good standing of an NFPA member Association in good standing at the time of the NFPA Annual Convention in the year for which the scholarship is awarded.
c. Must agree to take PACE within one year of the scholarship award.
d. Must acknowledge that the scholarship is to be used solely and exclusively for the purpose of taking PACE. The scholarship recipient will be asked to sign a statement acknowledging this fact.
e. Prior unsuccessful attempts to take PACE will not cause the applicant to become ineligible for the scholarship award. However, scholarship winners may not receive the scholarship as a reimbursement for PACE expenses already incurred prior to the date of the award.

7. Award Criteria: The Judges will review applications based on the following criteria and weightings which were determined by the NFPA Board of Directors:

a. Application/Affidavit – 5%
b. Essay – 40%
c. Years of paralegal experience/education – 15%
d. Efforts to further the paralegal profession in the community. (This may be through pro bono work, serving on committees, local association boards, bar association committees, etc.) – 20%
e. Leadership in place of employment and within local association and/or in the community – 15%
f. Miscellaneous other criteria (might include financial need, whether the applicant's employer will reimburse for costs associated with PACE) – 5%

8. The award includes expenses to attend the NFPA Annual Convention as set forth in Section 25C above and a commemorative plaque. The PACE Application, Handbook, and Study Manual shall be promptly ordered for the recipient within 60 days after the NFPA Annual Convention.

9. At the direction and under the name of the Vice President and Director of Paralegal Certification, the Management Company will send letters to applicants who did not receive the scholarship.

10. Disqualification: applicants may be disqualified for any one of the following reasons:

a. Conviction of a felony or comparable crime as defined by an individual state that does not have felony designations; or
b. Currently under the suspension, termination, or revocation of a certificate, registration of a certificate, registration or license to practice by a professional organization, court, disciplinary board or agency in any jurisdiction.
c. Falsification or misstatements on any part of the PACE Scholarship application or plagiarism of any part of the essay.
d. Failure to meet the PACE eligibility criteria or dishonesty in the affidavit

accompanying the application.
NOTE: Applicants will not be disqualified for prior unsuccessful attempts to take PACE.

11. Default:
    a. In the event that the scholarship recipient does not meet PACE eligibility criteria, the scholarship shall be forfeited.
    b. If, during the nine months following the scholarship date, the scholarship recipient is not able to use the scholarship, he/she must notify the Vice President and Director of Paralegal Certification immediately. In the case of a default by the scholarship recipient, the applicant with the next highest score from the judges shall receive all previously unused benefits of the scholarship.
    c. In the event that a PACE Scholarship recipient does not either (a) use the scholarship in the one-year time frame for any reason, or (b) does not notify the Vice President and Director of Paralegal Certification within nine months of receiving the scholarship of the inability to use the scholarship for any reason, that person shall be ineligible to reapply for the scholarship.

NFPA/THOMSON-REUTERS SCHOLARSHIPS

1. NFPA and THOMSON-REUTERS will award annual scholarships totaling $5,000.00 to paralegal students in the United States. The number and amount of scholarships to be given shall be determined annually by the NFPA Board of Directors at its Winter Board Meeting upon the recommendations of the NFPA Education Coordinator who shall meet at the discretion of the NFPA President. The amount of money allocated each year for scholarships may be increased or decreased by either NFPA or Thomson-Reuters, with the party increasing the fund responsible for contributing the increased amount.

NOTE: SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS ARE TO BE USED TO PURSUE A PARALEGAL EDUCATION. CHECKS WILL BE MADE PAYABLE TO THE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT AND THE RECIPIENT'S PARALEGAL EDUCATION INSTITUTION. TRAVEL EXPENSE CHECKS WILL BE PROVIDED DIRECTLY TO RECEIPIENTS BY NFPA FROM THE FUNDS PROVIDED BY THOMSON REUTERS.

2. The scholarship essay topic will be selected by the NFPA Education Coordinator, submitted to the NFPA Board of Directors for approval at the Winter Board Meeting, and posted to the NFPA website no later than March 15. All applications must be postmarked on or before July 1 and must be made by a delivery requiring signature. Absolutely no exceptions will be made. An original and three copies of the application form and accompanying documentation are required, except for one original transcript and two copies. Incomplete applications will be reviewed “as is” with no opportunity to supplement. No applications will be accepted via fax or email.

3. NFPA through the Education Coordinator and others, will begin to solicit applications as soon as possible after approval of the essay topic from students enrolled in paralegal programs. Announcements will be placed in *The National Paralegal Reporter*, NFPA social networking pages, the AAfPE listserv and other outlets as determined by NFPA’s President, NFPA’s Vice President and Director of Marketing, and NFPA’s Vice President and Director of Profession Development. The NFPA Education Coordinator will send announcement emails/letters and

application forms to paralegal programs no later than April 1, using the most current paralegal school listing available.

4. Candidates may be disqualified for either one of the following reasons:

(a) conviction of a felony or comparable crime as defined by an individual state that does not have felony designations; or
(b) currently under the suspension, termination, or revocation of a certificate, registration of a certificate, registration or license to practice by a professional organization, court, disciplinary board or agency in any jurisdiction.

5. The criteria listed below will be utilized in selecting scholarship recipients. The applicant:

(a) Must be a full or part-time student enrolled in a paralegal program;
(b) Must demonstrate and maintain a B average;
(c) May demonstrate extracurricular activities and/or community service;
(d) May demonstrate active participation in paralegal program clubs or activities; and
(e) May demonstrate financial need.

6. The NFPA Board of Directors will select three Judges plus one alternate from the NFPA Advisory Board during the Winter Board Meeting to judge the scholarship applications. None of the Judges will be a paralegal educator. The names of the Judges will be provided to NFPA's Education Coordinator within two days of the Winter Board meeting so the Education Coordinator can contact the Judges as to their responsibilities. If the Education Coordinator learns from any of these Judges that they will not be available to assist, the Education Coordinator will contact the alternate.

7. The Judges will select one of the members to serve as Chair. Each Judge will evaluate each submission using the attached evaluation form and return all forms to the Chair. NFPA's Management Company will provide the Judges all complete submissions no later than July 15. No representative of NFPA (other than NFPA's Management Company) will have access to the submissions applications. The Judges will provide the names of the scholarship recipients to the Education Coordinator no later than August 15. The Education Coordinator will contact the scholarship recipients no later than August 30.

8. Thomson Reuters will provide a travel stipend for each scholarship recipient so that he/she may receive his/her scholarship at the NFPA Annual Convention.

9. Scholarship recipients will be advised to contact the NFPA Managing Director by the Education Coordinator regarding travel arrangements and such arrangements must be made by the scholarship recipients as soon as practicable. NFPA will assist with travel arrangements and send the travel stipend to the winners as soon as possible.

10. A copy of the winning essays and bios will be sent to Thomson Reuters. The scholarships and commemorative plaques will be presented to the recipients during the awards luncheon at the NFPA Annual Convention. Winning submissions will be kept on file at the NFPA Management Company; all other submissions will be destroyed per NFPA's Record Retention Policy.

11. The Education Coordinator will arrange with NFPA's Management Company for posting of the winning essays bios and photographs on NFPA's website no later than one month following the NFPA Annual Convention. Other posting may be in the NFPA *Reporter* or other media as

deemed appropriate by the NFPA Board of Directors

12. At the direction and under the name of the Education Coordinator, the Management Company will send letters to those nominees who did not receive the scholarship.