

# LEGAL BYTES



## NALS Superstars

Teresa Garber, PP, CLP (NALS of West Michigan; Editor)



NALS is made up of some remarkable individuals. Every year at our national conference, we take time to let them know just how awesome they are. Two NALS of Michigan members were recognized during the 2020 NALS national conference last month for being the tremendous rock stars that they are. Cathy Zackery, CLP, of NALS of Greater Kalamazoo, was honored with the NALS Award of Excellence. Nominated by her peers and selected by a panel of attorneys for judges, Cathy's

dedication to her career at Your Path Family Law, PLLC is sound. But in just the few short years as a member of NALS, Cathy has become a recognized leader at all three levels of the association as the biggest cheerleader of NALS and its members. (cont.. p. 2)

## Tech Mate

Heidi Hopper, PP, PLS (NALS of Lansing; Webmaster)

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Michigan courts had to make major changes as to how they operate. Hearings are now conducted by Zoom. But one of the biggest changes is how documents are filed with the courts. Most courts were still accepting filings the old-fashioned way: in paper format by "snail-mail" or dropped off (cont., p. 2)

## Contents

NALS Superstars	1
Tech Mate	1
School Is Great, But . . . .	3
Virtual NALS 69 <sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Take-Aways	5



## Superstars (cont. from page 1)

Longtime member Diane Berry, PLS, also of NALS of Greater Kalamazoo, was honored with the NALS 2020 Mentor Award. This award recognizes NALS members for mentoring new and potential members by carrying out the NALS mission. Diane always continues to support NALS and engages with legal professionals at all levels and promotes NALS everywhere, including at her job at PNC Bank.



*Congratulations to Cathy and Diane---NALS of Michigan superstars!*

## How to Track Your CLE Certification Journal

An easy way to keep track of your CLE is by using the NALS Professional Development Journal. Visit [https://www.nals.org/page/certjournal\\_ho\\_wto](https://www.nals.org/page/certjournal_ho_wto) for complete journal overview.

- Click  Add Entry.
- Follow the on-screen prompts.
  - Is this entry for a Certificate or Program: Choose Yes.
  - Certification/Program: Select Continuing Legal Education (CLE).
  - Credit Type: Select the type of credit that most closely applies.
  - Entry Date: Enter the date the CLE was earned.
  - Description: List the name of the program/session.
  - Credit Expires: This date will be 5 years from the date earned.
- Click Submit.

Questions on when your recertification is due, contact NALS Certifications Manager, Natalie Shyrock, at [natalie@nals.org](mailto:natalie@nals.org).

## Tech Mate (cont. from page 1)

in person. Realizing the law had to continue in the middle of a pandemic, courts that were not on the e-filing bandwagon had to figure out a quick fix to receive paperwork. The solution: many clerks are now accepting filings by email or by fax.

Kent County's business court uses its own e-filing system, but the remainder of the court does not use e-filing. MiFile is used by the Michigan Supreme Court, Michigan Court of Appeals, Wayne, Oakland, Antrim/Leelanau/Grand Traverse, Macomb, Ottawa, and Washtenaw County Circuits, Warren District Court, and Ottawa County Probate Court.

Here are some courts that have enacted changes in how they accept court filings:

Berrien County Circuit: [clerk@berriencounty.org](mailto:clerk@berriencounty.org), [businesscourt@berriencounty.org](mailto:businesscourt@berriencounty.org)  
 Clinton County Circuit: [countclerk@clinton-county.org](mailto:countclerk@clinton-county.org)  
 Eaton County Circuit: [circuitcourtclerk@eatoncounty.org](mailto:circuitcourtclerk@eatoncounty.org)  
 Genesee County Circuit: [courtfilings@7thcircuitcourt.com](mailto:courtfilings@7thcircuitcourt.com) \*  
 Ingham County Circuit: [circuitcourtrecords@ingham.org](mailto:circuitcourtrecords@ingham.org) \*  
 Ingham County 55<sup>th</sup> District: [55civil@ingham.org](mailto:55civil@ingham.org)  
 Kalamazoo County Circuit: [civilcircuitcourt@kalcourt.com](mailto:civilcircuitcourt@kalcourt.com)\*\*\*\*  
 Lenawee County Circuit: [Roxann.holloway@lenawee.mi.us](mailto:Roxann.holloway@lenawee.mi.us), (517) 264-4790 (fax)  
 Livingston County Circuit: (517) 548-4219 (fax)\*\*\*  
 Muskegon County Circuit: [ccr.filings@co.muskegon.mi.us](mailto:ccr.filings@co.muskegon.mi.us)  
 Saginaw County Circuit: [nperez@saginawcounty.com](mailto:nperez@saginawcounty.com)  
 St. Clair County Circuit: [www.stclaircountyclerk.org](http://www.stclaircountyclerk.org) \*\*

\*If judge's copy required, send by regular mail.

\*\*Link at top left for "31<sup>st</sup> Circuit Court Electronic Fax Filing"

\*\*\*\$1.50/page if document is over 10 pages

\*\*\*\*See instructions at end of newsletter for e-filing in Kalamazoo County Circuit



## School Is Great, But . . . .

Teresa Garber, PP, CLP (Past President, NALS of Michigan)

You either just received or are close to finishing up your legal studies program at a local university. Congratulations! That paralegal education you worked so hard for is going to pay off. You have every tool you need to be the best paralegal for your future employer. You are going to march in on Day 1 and just own the place. Your employer is going to wonder how that firm survived without you for so long. If that is what you think is going to happen, YOUR HEAD HAS BEEN FILLED WITH LIES!

The fact of the matter is, school is great, but it can only teach you so much in the amount of time it has you. First of all, school has to be generic in its teaching. If you are going to school in Michigan, you cannot just learn Michigan procedures and laws. What if you move out of state? What is done in Michigan courts is not what is done in courts in Colorado. School does not have time to teach you all of the nuances between the states, or even the federal courts. Also, school is not going to cover every single situation you will run into during your career as a legal professional. I spoke to a 101 paralegal class last month and told them about how I had to deal with an apostille many years ago and that no one in the firm knew what that was, nor did any court clerk in West Michigan. Sadly, I made the students in the class panic. What I am trying to tell you is, you are never, and I mean never, going to know everything from school, and you are never going to stop learning as a legal professional.

So, what can you do to help with your learning? to prove your worth to your employer? One thing you can do is to participate in as much continuing legal education (we call it CLE) as you can. When it is offered, many people crinkle their nose at it and come up with some rather lame excuses as to why they do not partake in CLE: "I have way too much work to do"; "I know all that stuff already"; "That's just a ploy to get you to join their association"; "That's during my lunch hour, and that's my personal time"; "My boss doesn't support me going to any CLE"; blah, blah, blah. What these excuses are really saying is, "I do not care enough about the firm I work for or my job to do better at it"; "I do not care about myself to enhance my career"; "This is just a job that pays the bills until something better comes along." That's sad. Your job and your career are what you make of it. It is not up to someone else to make you happy. If there is something that relates to your job that you have always wanted to learn, figure out a way to learn (cont., p. 4)



## Veterans Day

Veterans Day was originally called Armistice Day. It landed on November 11 because it is the anniversary of the signing of the Armistice ending World War I. It was changed to Veterans Day in 1954 to cover veterans of all wars.

On this day, we pay respect to those who have bravely served our country, risking their lives to keep us safe and free. Take time to honor a veteran for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.



## NALS of Michigan

*The Association for Legal Professionals*

President:

Laise Curtiss (NALS of Detroit)

Vice President

Education/Certification:

Heidi Hopper, PP (NALS of Lansing)

Vice President

Membership/Marketing:

Rashonda Wilson (NALS of Detroit)

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Kathy Rood (NALS of Lansing)

Treasurer:

Natacha Valmont (NALS of West Michigan)

Parliamentarian:

Teresa Garber, PP, CLP (NALS of West Michigan)

## School (cont. from p. 3)

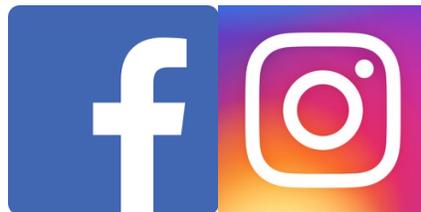
it. Don't think you can afford it? Are you willing to give up your daily Starbucks run? What about your Planet Fitness membership? You could always go run outside.

NALS and NALS of Michigan has been offering discounted or even FREE CLE lately. Have you been taking advantage of that? When you tell your boss what you just learned, their face changes to one of interest. You can see the wheels start to turn as to how they are going to put that newfound knowledge to use in their practice. Most of the CLE offered is by local attorneys. Your employer will be interested to know who is teaching—your attorney may even be one of the presenters! When you attend a CLE presentation, you may not learn something you can apply to your job immediately. However, you have met a presenter who specializes in a certain field that you may need assistance with in the future. You will be the only one in your firm who will know whom to call when the need arises. That, in and of itself, is invaluable. You don't learn this in school.

School is a starting block for the foundation of a beginning legal professional. But any solid house needs more than just a portion of the foundation. To become the true legal professional, you need more materials. Attending CLE is some of that material you need for your house. Get as much of it as you can to make your house strong.

For more information about NALS of Michigan:

<https://www.nalsofmichigan.org/>



## Virtual NALS 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Take-Aways, by Heidi Hopper, PP

Thank you to NALS of Michigan members for providing me with the opportunity to attend the NALS 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in September, 2020. It began with “Know Before You Go” packet. The packet provided a “Virtual Code of Conduct”, agenda, speaker bios, sponsorships’ information, advertising, and tips for a successful virtual conference. The platform was “Remo” and I cannot emphasize enough how comfortable the overall virtual experience was with meeting different NALS Pals from around the country in chats (general, table, and/or privately).

The kick off to the meeting began Friday, September 25, “NALS Got Talent” showcase where videos were shown of the contestants. Holly Mitchell, PLS, Member-At-Large Nevada, botonist twirled away with the first place prize, while yours truly took runner-up. The showcase was followed up with game of trivia that got everyone excited about the shenanigans the first place table was displaying. 😊 Seriously, it was a fun night of introductions of the things to come and expectations of what a virtual conference would entail.

The education was held in private “session rooms”. There were two tracks to choose from. Below is the information I gathered during my virtual learning experience on Saturday, September 26, 2020.

### David M. Buday, Esq. of Miller Johnson: How Covid-19 Has Changed the American Workplace

First, as of Saturday, September 26, 2020, 181 Executive Orders had been issued by Governor Whitmore as relating to Covid-19. However, in Pennsylvania case law was beginning to be seen challenging executive order. See *Cnty. of Butler v Wolf*, Civil Action No. 2:20-cv-677 (W.D. PA Sep. 14, 2020).

Some of the changes Covid-19 brought to the workplace include the following:

- Medical examinations before work
- Greater amount of money by unemployment than 40/work week
- Beer and liquor stores essential, but law office not
- Speaking to co-workers is a health hazard
- Mask wearing
- WFH
- Cake no longer
- Tracking
- Gamble in greater numbers but not for a conference
- Homes are not private

While we have been in the pandemic for over half-year; we continue to see changes on how the virus effects us in both the workplace and mentally.

### Aaron Burrell, Esq. of Dickinson Wright PLLC: Diversity in the Workplace

Diversity in the workplace in its simplest terms means the presence of workers with different characteristics. Inclusion of diversity for a meaningful meeting provides the feeling of “I’m a part” and my voice matters. The integration of diverse individuals is highly beneficial because of the variety of knowledge and opinions gained. Credibility in the legal profession is essential and being diverse can strengthen the creditability.

Be mindful about stereotypes. Go to [implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html](http://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html) to measure your attitude and beliefs. Steps to prepare for unconscious bias include the following:

- ❖ Mindfulness
- ❖ Perspective taking
- ❖ Slow-down (learn to)
- ❖ Individualization
- ❖ Check your messages before you send
- ❖ Fairness
- ❖ Take Two minutes before responding
- ❖ Identify, understand, and unlearn implicit bias

In the workplace, a few practical things employers can do to move from the side-lines to effective include: checklist, sponsor/mentor, and calling out inappropriate behavior.

### Imran Syed & Jennifer Simmons: The Michigan Innocence Clinic

The Michigan Innocence Clinic assists those that have been wrongfully convicted. The first process of determining who can benefit from their services is an application (questionnaire). The number of applicants and the process is long and lengthy. The process may be determinant on non-DNA and /or new evidence in the case.

Reasons why wrongfully convictions take place include some or more of the following:

- Defense attorney not prepared
- Overcrowded jails
- False Evidence
- Junk/Science
- Misconduct of Police, et al.
- False Confession

No system is perfect, but with the Michigan Innocence Clinic there are opportunities for those innocent to get exonerated. Suggested reading: "The Innocent Man" or "The Guardians" by John Grisham

**Closing Keynote: JoDee Curtis of PurpleInk LLC: Choosing a JoyPowered® Life**

To manage a joyful life you have to take a look at your engagements; do you have too many or too little. The thoughtfulness of where am I in my life at the present moment and, if you are not joyful with where you are: what can be done about it.

Gallup CliftonStrengths provides testing for finding your top five talents ([GallupStrengthscenter.com](http://GallupStrengthscenter.com)).

Some quotes from closing include:

"It is our choice, our option, not look for the 'Joy' each day, and when it is harder to find it, create it!" Bonnie

Are we sleeping through opportunities? JOMO is the acronym for "Joy of Missing Out" and it simply refers to the gratifying feeling you get when you break away from the (real or virtual) activities of your social group and spending time doing exactly what you most want to do. In short, do what you love!

Thank you again for providing me with this opportunity and Driving NALS into the Future!

## **KALAMAZOO COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT E-FILING INSTRUCTIONS**

You will be able to file any document via the below email. This includes new case filings and Orders. You will still need to mail in any payments for motions/new cases and you will still need to call/email ahead for a hearing. Please continue to email or call the court at 269-383-8837 for hearing dates. Motions for Summary Disposition will still require you file a Praecept\*\* with the MSD.

1. Email your civil pleadings/filings, in **PDF format**, to [civilcircuitcourt@kalcourt.com](mailto:civilcircuitcourt@kalcourt.com)
2. Each pleading/document\* will need to be its own attachment, i.e. Motion (with attachments, if any) Brief in support (with attachments, if any), Notice of Hearing (Praecept\*\* for Dispositive Motions), Proof of Service. Exhibits must be part of a specific document **DO NOT SEND THEM AS A SEPARATE FILING. We also do not need a cover sheet.** Please use the body of email for any additional information you feel we need.
  - a) \*New Cases- Summons (no proof of service page), then the Complaint and any exhibits/attachments as one document, Jury Demand (please use form MC22) as a separate document.
  - b) **DO NOT SEND DOCUMENTS TO THE COURT THAT HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL.**
3. Once your documents have been reviewed, you will get an email confirmation that your pleadings/document has been accepted. If your pleading/document is rejected for some reason, you would get an email regarding why it was rejected.
4. New cases will be processed and returned via email. You would then print what you needed for service.
5. Your email confirmation of acceptance shall serve as your “time stamp” copy, if your firm requires that.
6. Payments will need to be mailed to the court. Please make sure you include the case number and the date of the motion/new case filing. For new case payments, please wait until you have received your documents back with the case number so that we can make sure the payment is applied to the correct case. At this time, we are unable to accept credit card payments over the phone. **Payments need to be received prior to any hearings.**

\*these email filing instructions are ONLY for the 9<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court Civil Trial Division only- filings for any criminal matter, family court, probate court and district court are not accepted via this email filing option.

\*\*the Praecept form can be found at [www.kalcourt.com/courts/circuit/trial](http://www.kalcourt.com/courts/circuit/trial) at the bottom of the page



# Fall CLE Series:

We are happy to share with you the lineup for NOM's **Fall CLE Series**. See below and watch for the invites and more information coming your way.

<b>Date/Time</b>	<b>Topic/Title</b>	<b>Presenter</b>
November 12, 2020 @ 12:10 p.m. EST	Indigent Defense Law	Miranda Gatlin NALS of South Carolina
November 18, 2020 @ 12:10 p.m. EST	Social Media Bootcamp, Part 2 (Facebook)	Rashonda Wilson NALS of Detroit, NALS of Michigan Vice President Marketing/Membership

**RSVP to Teresa Garber, PP, CLP at [tgarber@silvervanessen.com](mailto:tgarber@silvervanessen.com) to receive the Zoom link.**

We hope you are able to take advantage of these CLE opportunities. Thank you for your support.

Tami Carl, CLP ([carlt@millerjohnson.com](mailto:carlt@millerjohnson.com))

Kathleen Hutchins, PLS ([kehutch60@yahoo.com](mailto:kehutch60@yahoo.com))

2020-2021 Co-Chairs, NALS of Michigan Legal Education Committee



Andrea M. Kardatzke  
NALS of Michigan Scholarship Chair  
Email: andreamkardatzke@gmail.com  
Phone: 269-599-7197

October 23, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: NALS of Michigan Scholarship Award

Enclosed is an application form for the NALS of Michigan Scholarship Award, along with a copy of the scholarship rules and regulations. NALS of Michigan is offering one annual scholarship in the amount of \$2,500.00 (Two thousand five hundred dollars) to an individual enrolled, or planning to enroll, in a school of advanced education pursuing a degree in the legal field. High school seniors as well as college students are eligible.

You may submit as many applications as desired from your school and photocopy the enclosed application materials as often as needed. Please note, the completed applications must be returned to me postmarked no later than January 15, 2021. Applications postmarked after that date will not be accepted.

If you have questions regarding our scholarship award, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Andrea M. Kardatzke,  
NALS of Michigan Scholarship Chair

Enclosures

*Dedicated to enhancing the competencies and contributions  
of members in the legal services profession*



## NALS of Michigan Scholarship Fund 2020-2021

### Application Form

<b>NAME:</b>		<b>TELEPHONE:</b>	
<b>ADDRESS: Street</b>			
City	State	Zip	
<b>NAME OF SCHOOL:</b>		<b>EXPECTED DATE OF GRADUATION:</b>	
<b>SCHOOL ADDRESS: Street</b>			
City	State	Zip	
<b>PRINCIPAL/DEAN'S NAME:</b>			
<b>GRADE POINT AVERAGE:</b>		<b>RANK OF APPLICANT IN CLASS:</b>	
<b>PARENT/SPOUSE OCCUPATION:</b>			
<b>NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY:</b>			
<b>COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY STUDENT PLANS TO ATTEND &amp; MAJOR:</b>			

Return this application with all required attachments to:

Andrea M. Kardatzke  
 NALS of Michigan Scholarship Chair  
 205 Spaulding Street, Ste. 101  
 Dowagiac, Michigan 49047  
 Email: andreamkardatzke@gmail.com  
 Phone: (269)599-7197

For Scholarship Committee Use Only:

Date Received:	Meets Qualifications: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Notification of eligibility sent on:	Selected as Finalist <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Notification of status sent on:	Applicant Number:
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**NALS of Michigan  
Scholarship 2020-2021  
AWARD RULES AND REGULATIONS**

NALS of Michigan Scholarship Fund shall present a \$2,500.00 non-renewable tuition/books-only scholarship available to those enrolled in a school of advanced education in the legal field. The scholarship will be awarded on the basis of scholastic or legal career achievements, future career goals, demonstration of financial need and leadership ability. The scholarship award may be granted to any qualified applicant in the legal field.

The candidate must:

1. Be a high school senior or enrolled in a school of advanced education (including the current school year).
2. Be a resident of Michigan and be enrolling in a Michigan school of advanced education in the legal field.
3. Have at least a B average, or if percentile system is used, not below 90 percent.
4. Be in need of financial assistance.
5. Be able to enroll in the fall term (2021). Candidates nominated in prior years who meet current qualifications are eligible for renomination.

The application and all required attachments must be submitted on the forms provided to the NALS of Michigan Scholarship Fund Chairman and must be postmarked no later than January 15, 2021. Any application postmarked after that date will be disqualified. One business leader, one judge, and one civil leader shall select not less than three, nor more than five, finalists from the entries submitted. The winner will be chosen from the list of finalist by member vote at the annual meeting and educational conference of NALS of Michigan on Friday, January 15, 2021. Prior to submitting the application to the judges, the NALS of Michigan Scholarship Fund Chairman shall remove from each application all identification of the applicant and assign a number to each application. The NALS of Michigan Scholarship Fund Chairman shall retain in sealed envelopes bearing corresponding numbers the identity of the candidates until the final decision has been made. The winner will be immediately notified to enable him/her to make arrangements for his/her ensuing school term. In the event the winner does not accept the scholarship award, the scholarship shall be awarded to the next highest candidate in order. The scholarship winner must notify the Chairman of a final decision regarding enrollment no later than Monday, August 30, 2021. Should the winner not enroll in the ensuing term in school, thereby forfeiting the award, it shall be presented to the first runner-up. The scholarship monetary award shall be paid directly to the school of the winner's choice for enrollment in the ensuing term in school. Any scholarship award must be used in full within one year from the date of the written notification to the winning candidate of his/her selection as a winner.

Any unused scholarship award, or portion thereof, shall be refunded by the school to the NALS of Michigan Scholarship Fund by June 1 of the year following the presentation of the award.

THE NALS OF MICHIGAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND APPLICATION MUST BE FULLY COMPLETED WITH ALL OF THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTATION ATTACHED AND RETURNED TO THE CHAIRMAN POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN JANUARY 15, 2021.

1. An official transcript of grades.
2. A one-page letter of recommendation from the applicant's current major teacher or counselor, addressed to NALS of Michigan Scholarship Fund, stating:
  - a. Applicant's activity and leadership record;
  - b. A description of applicant's personal traits, character, drive, home background and brief statement of financial need;  
and
  - c. Reasons the applicant should be awarded this scholarship.
3. One additional letter of recommendation from someone other than a member of the applicant's family, such as an employer, teacher, pastor or friend, may be submitted if applicant so desires, but is not required.
4. A one-page autobiographical statement prepared by the applicant, showing the date of birth, school attended, employment, school and outside activities, accomplishments, family background, hobbies and a brief description of applicant's goals and desires, including the name of the college the applicant will be attending and their major.

## NALS OF MICHIGAN COMMITTEES NEED YOU



Rashonda Wilson, Vice President of Membership & Marketing is looking for at least one NOM member to assist her with membership and marketing. If this interests you, please reach out to Rashonda.

If you're trying to decide where to use your gifts and talents, we have other committees that can use your help. Our committee chairs look forward to hearing from you, and would love your help, so be sure to reach out to them, even if it's just an idea that you may have for their committee.

2022 Annual Meeting Chair: Teresa Garber, PP, CLP  
Certification Chair: Deborah Surls, CLP  
Credentials Chair: Nancy Thomas, PLS  
Finance Chair: Cathy Zackery, CLP  
Financial Review: Marion R. Stone, PP, PLS  
Legal Education Co Chairs: Tami Carl, CLP & Kathleen Hutchins, PLS  
Legal Professional of the Year: NALS of West Michigan  
Past Presidents Chair: Dolores Oliver, PLS  
Scholarship Chair: Andrea Kardatzke  
State Bar Liaison: Sherry Miedema  
State Newsletter Publication Chair: Teresa Garber, PP, CLP  
Strategic Planning Chair: Lynn Philp  
Technology Chair: Teresa Garber, PP, CLP  
Website Chair: Heidi Hopper, PP, PLS

Also, if you have any items/permanent history in your possession that we can scan/digitize, and preserve, please get those items to Jeanette L. Ransom, PLS, Historian (NALS of Lansing)

Laleise D. Curtiss, President  
NALS of Michigan  
2020 - 2021  
Driving NALS Into the Future

## Mark your calendars What's Going on in NALS?

November 14, 2020	Noon EST	Engage Chapter Leaders Meeting with National
November 19, 2020	6:00 pm EST	Office Operations at the Federal Public Defender's Office James Gerometta, Staff Attorney for Federal Public Defender's Office, Eastern District Hosted by NALS of Detroit via Zoom Cost: Free RSVP to Gayle Lawson at <a href="mailto:gaelawson@gmail.com">gaelawson@gmail.com</a>
December 10, 2020	7:00 pm EST	Virtual General Membership Meeting/Holiday Celebration NALS of Michigan Zoom
January 13, 2021	Noon EST	Reading for Knowledge Book Club <i>Just Mercy</i> by Bryan Stevenson Hosted by NALS of Michigan via Zoom Cost: Free RSVP to Teri Garber, PP, CLP at <a href="mailto:tgarber@silvervanessen.com">tgarber@silvervanessen.com</a>
February 11, 2021	Noon EST 6:30 pm EST	Collaborative Divorce Attorney Randall Velzen, Velzen Law Office, PLC Hosted by NALS of West Michigan via Zoom Cost: Free RSVP to Teri Garber, PP, CLP at <a href="mailto:tgarber@silvervanessen.com">tgarber@silvervanessen.com</a>

**Does your chapter have an event? Send it to Teri Garber, PP, CLP at [tgarber@silvervanessen.com](mailto:tgarber@silvervanessen.com) for inclusion in the newsletter.**



NALS OF WEST MICHIGAN

# Giving Hope to Children During the Holidays



Dear Association Members,

Currently, we are living in unprecedented times. The ongoing uncertainties of the global coronavirus pandemic, the fight for racial justice, and raging wildfires are only a few of the national and global issues that are affecting the way we live, work, interact, and even grieve. Our thoughts and prayers go out to anyone that has been affected by COVID-19, to those that have lost their jobs, that are sick and suffering, and to families that are grieving the loss of a loved one. We are truly grateful for the heroic firefighters, police officers, and healthcare workers who are working around the clock to provide support, care, protection, and relief to people in need. As we navigate through these challenging times, we extend our warmest wishes to all of you for a safe and healthy holiday season.

The safety of our Association Members during the coronavirus pandemic is of the utmost importance. As it is now vital to limit social contact, our in-person holiday luncheon will be postponed until 2021. We hope you can understand the steps we are taking to help keep our Members safe and help prevent the further spread of the virus. This event traditionally includes a community service fundraiser. For many, giving is a fundamental aspect of enjoying the holidays, and simple acts of kindness can go a long way in demonstrating that *We Care* about others. NALS of West Michigan understands this and, in support of our *We Care* initiative, has made a generous donation to **Kids' Food Basket** on behalf of our Members.

People are talking a lot about the ways in which the pandemic has impacted their lives. They are talking about the difficulties of socially distancing while caring for their aging parents, whether it is safe to send their children to school and the challenges of remote learning. They are talking about teenagers that have been deprived of proms and graduation celebrations, and unexpected job loss and financial insecurity. What has received far less attention is the impact that the pandemic is having on childhood hunger. Even before the pandemic, millions of children were living in food-insecure families. In Michigan, 1 in 5 children are affected by hunger and thousands of West Michigan children are food insecure. **Kids' Food Basket** helps provide a solution to childhood hunger. The organization's sack supper program provides well-rounded nutritious meals to approximately 8,800 children at 45 locations across four counties – nutrition that is critical to the good health of our children.

While we are in uncharted territory, NALS of West Michigan remains focused on continuing our long tradition of helping those in need. This moment reminds us that we are called upon to be our best selves, with patience, understanding, and compassion. During this time, NALS of West Michigan is committed to supporting our community, each other, and persevering together in all the days and years ahead.

As we go forward and enter the holiday season, stay safe and healthy, and please let us know if you have any questions. If you would like additional information regarding **Kids' Food Basket**, please contact Donna Raaymakers, Chairperson, NALS of West Michigan Community Service Committee, or visit [www.kidsfoodbasket.org](http://www.kidsfoodbasket.org).

*"It is our desire to give hope to children by giving them the nourishment they need to make it through another day."*