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Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

We're thrilled to unveil the fresh new look of our quarterly newsletter! As we dive into the latest edition, let's recap the exciting happenings from the past few months.

During our annual business partner social we collected donations for Community Education Building while having a blast with Trivia. VP Jessica stunned with knowing that giraffes are the only mammals that don't make sounds!

A group of our ALA members attended the National Conference, and it was a game-changer. Not only did they learn from industry experts, but they also formed meaningful connections with fellow professionals. Networking at its finest!

We had a workshop from Just Listening that emphasized active listening and understanding, fostering an inclusive environment within our workplaces. Let's continue these important conversations.

As the days get longer and warmer, we're gearing up for more education and social events. Stay tuned for workshops, webinars, and gatherings that will enrich your professional journey.

The ALA board extends its warmest wishes to all of you. We hope you enjoy this revamped newsletter and find inspiration within its pages. Let's make this summer one to remember!

Warm regards,

*First State Chapter
Board Members xxx*



First State Chapter
Delaware

A Chapter of the Association of Legal Administrators

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A Message from our President:

It seems like the year just started and here we are, ready to greet Summer! I personally am in need of some sunshine and fresh air. In our busy work and personal lives, we oftentimes forget to “stop and smell the roses”. I hope each and every one of you take some much deserved (and I’m sure, much needed) time in the coming months. Whether that be a trip or vacation, or just time “off”, it’s important to disconnect a little when we can. We hope to see you at one of our upcoming events.



Enjoy your summer and stay cool!

Thank you for reading!

CHRISTINA OADDAMS	FIRST STATE CHAPTER PRESIDENT
www.firststateala.org	

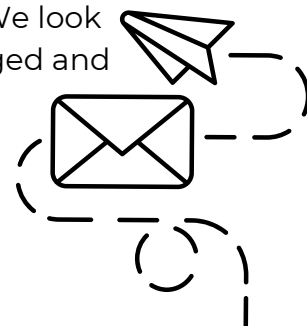
Reminder

We’ve launched an exclusive email list serv for valued members. Enhance communication and stay informed about updates, events, and opportunities by emailing **chaptermembers@firststateala.org**. Remember to whitelist this email to avoid missing any communications.

Stay Updated: Get timely notifications about events and announcements.

Engage and Connect: Join discussions and connect with fellow members.

Thank you for being an integral part of our community. We look forward to staying connected and fostering a more engaged and informed membership!



Business Partner Spotlight

Ashley Buczik is a Lead Benefits Consultant for IFS Benefits/AssuredPartners and has been working in her role there for almost 20 years establishing business relationships with prospective and current clients. Prior to her consulting career, Ashley worked at Coventry Healthcare as the Director of Client Management and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Delaware as a Senior Client Manager. She received her bachelor's degree in business management and psychology from Gettysburg College and is a Registered Health Underwriting (RHU) and Chartered Healthcare Consultant (ChHC). She is also actively involved in the Brandywine Hundred Rotary Club.



Ashley takes the most pride in developing relationships with prospective and current clients and being able to analyze their benefits program to provide significant cost savings. Her approach has always been to adapt to clients varying styles and find the best way to connect with them professionally and personally. She enjoys discovering what challenges they face as a company and working to find solutions to help with those challenges as opposed to trying to sell them something they may not need or won't make sense for their company. In fact, over the year her clients have come to rely on her for support in areas other than employee benefits consulting as they know she is always there to support them and be their business partner.

IFS Benefits is a local employee benefits brokerage and consulting firm originally founded in 2001. In early 2023 IFS Benefits was acquired by AssuredPartners and is now a part of this national partnership of leading independent insurance brokers specializing in both employee benefits and property and casualty. AssuredPartners is ranked by Business Insurance Top 100 Brokers as the 11th largest brokerage and consulting firm in the U.S. Becoming a part of AssuredPartners has allowed IFS Benefits to maintain their strong local presence while being able to pool resources, skills and knowledge with the top agencies across the country to achieve Power through Partnership.

The rising cost of healthcare continues to be the greatest challenge for clients and something that IFS Benefits recognizes. IFS continually looks at new strategies, products and programs to help mitigate the escalating costs of healthcare. Although Ashley works with all size clients, she has a strong background working with self-funded programs and takes pride in working to educate her clients in the 51+ market on the benefits of moving from a fully insured program to a self-funded platform to allow for more control in managing costs over time. Employee benefit captives have been a strong focus area in more recent years for Ashley and IFS Benefits/AssuredPartners. Joining a benefits captive allows companies that may have otherwise been too small to move to a self-funded program to do so by aligning with other like-minded companies interested in mitigating cost increases while adding value to their benefits program for their employees.

When asked why they support the ALA, Ashley said, "We support the ALA because we believe in their mission, and we value supporting organizations that strive to bring professionals together for community collaboration and outreach. The ALA community does a fabulous job fulfilling its mission by providing a combination of educational programs, unique and fun social events, and volunteer and community outreach projects. We are grateful to continue our participation in the ALA and appreciate the opportunity to be a business sponsor.



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Upcoming First State Chapter Events

DELAWARE Paid Leave

Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program



Lunch and Learn July 23, 2024

This will be a ZOOM lunch & learn with Maria Clyde (Assured Partners) and Ashley Buczik (IFS Benefits) to review the compliance requirements of the new DE Paid Family Leave law



Summer Social July 31, 2024

The Chancery Market Food Hall & Bar - 5:00pm - 7:00pm

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First State Chapter Delaware

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First State Chapter Scholarship

Scholarship Eligibility Criteria

- The scholarship is open to students who are interested in attending the Fall 2024 Paralegal Certificate program.
- Cumulative grade point average of at least 3.5 for most recent academic program.
- Demonstrated leadership ability.
- Participation in extracurricular activities.
- Performance of community service.

Supplemental Materials
Required for Application

In addition to the application form, the following information and/or materials are required to qualify for consideration:

- An Official transcript.
- An Essay describing how this scholarship will enhance your current or future legal career (500 words maximum).
- Two letters of recommendation. Please include contact information, relationship to reference and how long you have known them.
- A Resume.



Past Presidents Happy Hour August 20, 2024

Wilmington Brew Works -
5:00pm - 8:00pm

JOIN US TO CELEBRATE OUR
CHAPTERS PAST PRESIDENTS!



Interested in becoming a CLM?

The First State Chapter encourages and promotes ALA's Certified Legal Manager (CLM) Program.

To learn more about CLM please visit [ALA's National Website](#).

Are you an ALA member that has questions or needs help? Please utilize the [ALA Online Community](#) for resources to support you.

Don't forget to check out the ALA's [Legal Management Magazine](#) to stay up to date on trends in our industry.

Past ALA Events



Reflections on the 2024 ALA National Conference

What an incredible experience we had at the 2024 Association of Legal Administrators (ALA) National Conference in picturesque Aurora, Colorado! We are filled with gratitude for the opportunity to connect with industry leaders, gain fresh insights, and be inspired by innovative ideas.

The conference was a whirlwind of thought-provoking presentations, interactive discussions, and valuable networking opportunities. We heard from top-notch speakers who shared their expertise, sat in on engaging educational sessions, and explored the latest offerings from our business partners. The exhibitors were knowledgeable and helpful, making our interactions truly enriching.

We are leaving the conference feeling energized and motivated to apply what we've learned.

Thank you to everyone who made this event memorable, and here's to future gatherings where we continue to learn, collaborate, and shape the future of legal administration!



Congratulations to our treasurer, SHERRY LEARY, CLM
A big winner of the conference!

Won an iPad and CASH



Past ALA Events



First State Chapter's Annual Business Partner Social

What a fantastic evening we had at the First State Chapter's annual social event on June 13th at Buckley's Tavern!

Everyone's attendance made it truly special.

From the riveting three rounds of quizzo hosted by Lew to the delightful food, drinks, and laughter on the upstairs patio, it was an unforgettable gathering. And let's not forget the heartwarming collection for the Community Education Buildings food pantry—a testament to our community spirit. We received a full car load of donations for the food pantry, which is truly remarkable!

Thank you to everyone who attended and for being part of this wonderful occasion. Here's to more shared moments and camaraderie in the future!



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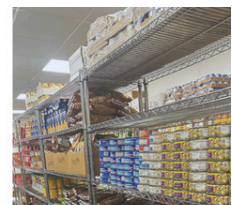
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Past ALA Events



First State ALA Chapter Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Workshop

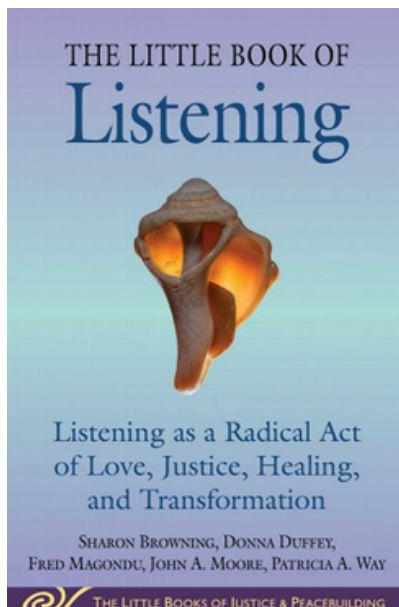
The key concepts related to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)

1. Diversity: Refers to the demographic makeup of an organization, including factors like gender, age, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, nationality, and disability status. Having a diverse team is essential, but equally important is creating an environment that supports and nurtures diverse employees.
2. Equity: An equitable organization ensures that every employee receives equal opportunities, fair treatment, and the necessary resources to succeed, regardless of their background.
3. Inclusion: An inclusive environment treats all employees with respect and care, regardless of differences, making them feel welcome, valued, and heard. Inclusive teams tend to perform up to 30% better than non-inclusive teams.
4. Belonging: Employees should feel accepted, valued, and heard at work. Belonging fosters psychological safety, where team members can express themselves without fear of judgment or retribution. Everyone, regardless of tenure, should receive the same camaraderie and opportunities.

Now, let's address the barriers to effective listening and being heard:

- Assumption of Knowing: Sometimes, we assume we already know how to listen, but active listening involves physical affirmation, restating, reflecting, and summarizing to truly understand others.
- Legal Culture: Reflective listening is essential. Legalistic cultures may hinder open communication, so fostering an environment where people feel heard is crucial.
- Us vs. Them Dynamics: Othering in the workplace—such as dismissing ideas, excluding perspectives, or withholding information—can prevent effective listening and collaboration.

Remember, creating a DEIB-focused workplace involves dismantling biased structures, promoting fairness, and valuing authenticity.





FirstStateChapter

DELAWARE

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BUSINESS PARTNERS

CAESAR RODNEY LEVEL

Parcels is a leading provider of high-quality support services to the legal and corporate community. The one driving force behind the company is simple: the client comes first. Incorporated in 1980, Parcels is owned and operated by James A. and Maureen Cauley Johnson, Delawareans with deep ties to the community.

The company's objective has always been to grow the organization and its reputation through extraordinary service to the client, through the recruitment and retention of exceptional cross-trained staff, and through prudent financial management. The focus has always been on expansion of services that are useful and cost-effective to our clients rather than on increasing the number of locations.

Although Parcels' clients are from diverse segments of the corporate world, it specializes in serving the legal community in Delaware. Established first as a Courier service to law firms, Parcels kept a fine ear tuned to the needs of its clients; it built relationships with the major law firms and with the courts, and it developed a deep, integrated staff with expertise in the services it offered. Parcels, with its wide range of peripheral services, allows law professionals to do what they do best - the practice of law.



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