



ROD CARDINALE, JR has been in the legal field since 2008. He obtained his Paralegal Certification from Evergreen Valley College, San Jose, CA in 2009. In 2014, Rod joined the Law Office of Janet L. Brewer as Paralegal and Office Manager. Rod has been a member of Santa Clara County LPA since 2009; serving as President from 2010-2014 and is currently serving as Executive Advisor. Rod began serving LSI in 2011 when he was appointed as the Legal Procedure Chair. In May 2012, President Brooke Mansfield, presented Rod with the “LSI President’s Award” and continued to serve LSI until he was elected Treasurer in 2016. Rod resides in Santa Clara, California with his wife, Tina, and their three children Alyssa, Anthony and Dominic.

To Serve, Or Not To Serve?

BY ROD CARDINALE, JR., LSI TREASURER

To serve, or not to serve.... Have you ever thought about running for LSI Office, or putting your name in for a chairmanship, but you just couldn’t get yourself to take the chance? I know exactly how you feel! Putting my name out there, especially being one of only a couple of men in a group of women, to be a chairman and then running for and ultimately serving as an officer of our great corporation, were not easy decisions. If you take the chance, it has the potential to have a great impact on you and your life. I want to share my experiences in serving as a chairman, and running for, and serving as, LSI Treasurer in the hopes you will take the chance to challenge yourself, possibly step out of your comfort zone and serve LSI.



My LSI journey began in May of 2010, at my first conference, which was held in Sacramento. Before I attended my first conference, I decided to join my local association. In July of 2009, I took the advice of one of my paralegal professors and joined Santa Clara County Legal Professionals Association (“SCCoLPA”) and was elected and installed as its first male President in May of 2010. I was encouraged to attend conference by my professor and our then outgoing President, Chavez. I was a little reluctant to attend the conference, as I was afraid of the unknown, but took a chance, attended and haven’t missed a conference since. At the conclusion of that conference, I mentioned to SCCoLPA’s newly-installed Governor, Elise Dresser, CCLS (“Elise”), that I had such a good time and I was so energized to go back to SCCoLPA and get to work.

In early 2011, LSI President, Brooke Mansfield, CCLS (2010-2012) (“President Brooke”) asked me if I would consider completing the term for the Legal Procedure Chair, who had to step down. After taking time to think about it and consulting with my family, I ultimately decided to step out of my comfort zone and accept the challenge. I would serve in my first LSI capacity, the

remainder of the 2010-2012 term as Legal Procedure Chair and member of the Continuing Education Council (“CEC”). In early 2012, I was again approached by President Brooke. This time, she wanted me to serve as Assistant Registrar of Delegates at the May 2011 Annual Conference, along with Elise, the 2011 Annual Conference Registrar of Delegates.

After attending my first LSI conference, in May of 2010, I mentioned to Elise that SCCoLPA needed to host a conference and I wanted to be the Conference Chairman. Without hesitation, Elise agreed and we began work on trying to host the best conference ever. At the February 2011 Quarterly Conference, our bid to host the 2013 Annual Conference was accepted and I was appointed the Conference Chairman.

In early 2014, incoming LSI President, Mary Beaudrow, CCLS (“President Mary”) asked me to consider serving as LSI’s Social Media Chairman. I was privately considering running for LSI Treasurer after receiving encouragement from other LSI members who thought I would be a good addition to the Executive Committee (“EC”). I was very conflicted over my belief that I could be an asset to the

EC and the time commitment that it would take and who would be affected by this decision. I have a full time job as a Senior Paralegal and Office Manager, a wife, three children, serve as SCCoLPA's Executive Advisor, and have my own interests. Where would I find the time? Who would feel I was spending less time with them? All hard decisions that were bigger and more far-reaching than just me. I ultimately decided I couldn't give all that the position of LSI Treasurer would require and I accepted President Mary's call to serve as LSI's Social Media Chair and Member of the Marketing Committee. This turned out to be a great decision, as I really enjoyed my position and being a member of the Marketing Committee.

Fast forward to early 2016. Incoming LSI President, Jennifer L. Page, CCLS ("President Jennifer") asked me to consider continuing on as Social Media Chairman. I was again privately considering a run for LSI Treasurer. I found myself in the same conundrum as in 2014 -- should I run or not? My kids were all a couple years older and I felt like I was in a better place to run than I was in 2014, but again, was not sure I could give 100% to the job, so I accepted President Jennifer's call to continue on as Social Media Chair and Member of the Marketing Committee.

At the 2016 Annual Conference, LSI would find itself in a bit of a pickle, as no one had stepped up to run for LSI Treasurer. I went home and shared with my wife, other members of SCCoLPA and LSI that I had twice considered running for Treasurer, but ultimately decided it wasn't the right time for me. What I learned from those conversations was they would support me if I decided to run for the vacant position. After about a month of going back and forth, and armed with the support of those around me, I finally decided that there likely would never be the "perfect time" for me to run for LSI Treasurer, and I submitted my name for consideration for the office of Treasurer. In August of 2016, I was installed as LSI Treasurer and the first elected male officer in LSI's 82-year history.

I'll admit, the job was pretty overwhelming the first month or so as LSI Treasurer. I spent a good amount of time getting to know the policies, procedures and duties of the Treasurer, while trying to keep up with the routine duties of depositing money and paying the bills. Thank God for Lynne Prescott, CCLS, LSI Executive Secretary and immediate past LSI Treasurer. She was absolutely amazing to me! She was somebody to lean on for support and guidance. If I couldn't figure something out, I would reach out to Lynne for help. No matter the time of day

or the scope of the question(s), Lynne always responded to me with a detailed response. She would even call me and walk me through some of the processes. Now that I'm comfortable with the duties, things are far less overwhelming and actually quite enjoyable. I look forward to climbing the "LSI Ladder."

Now that I've shared the story of my rise in the ranks of SCCoLPA and LSI, I'm sure many of you have similar stories about your time with your local association, LSI, or even some sort of board or committee in your local communities. All of us lead extremely busy lives and have fears and reservations about doing things we're not comfortable with. The question we face is, will we succumb to those reservations and fears, or will we tackle them head on? If you're considering a position with your local association, an LSI chairmanship, or even running for elected office of LSI, but can't seem to get past the time commitment or any fears or reservations about the job, you're not alone. There's not one member of the LSI leadership team who doesn't get nervous or feel overwhelmed about their position from time to time. What I've learned along the way is that it's not the fears or reservations about taking on a position, not about what position I've held, what committee I was on, or what accomplishments I've made; rather, it's about the people I've met, the relationships I've formed, and the experiences I've gained. I've made lifelong friendships and relationships that I wouldn't have made if I didn't take the chances I did along the way.

"To Serve, or Not to Serve?" Throughout my journey, the answer to this question has become much clearer. If you experience a similar journey to mine, your life will be richer for the experience and so will LSI's. You will meet interesting people and make lifelong relationships which will add richness to your life that far surpasses the urge to stay inside your box. So, to answer the question, "To serve or not to serve" ...SERVE!!

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