

## Candidate for Secretary, Marlena P. Johnson, PLS



Being a native Ohioan and moving to Texas, I felt it was important to learn the “lay of the land” and I didn’t hesitate joining NALS in 2001. The past 16 years, I have become more confident in my capabilities, more proficient in my job and a more polished legal professional. I achieved all of this because of our tri-level association. I may not always appear outspoken, but I’m always listening, learning and ready for the challenge. It’s my turn to step up to the plate and give back to the Association that has given so much to me.

### **Austin Legal Professionals Association**

2017-18	Director
2016-17	President
2015-16	Vice-President
2014-15	Vice-President
2011-12	President
2010-11	President-Elect
2009-10	Vice-President
2003-04	Corresponding Secretary
2001-Present	Chair and member of multiple committees: Certification, Community Service, Corporate Sponsor Liaison, Member of the Year, Membership, Programs/CLE, Recognition Event, Roster/Communications, Scholarship, The Verdict

### **Texas Association of Legal Professionals**

2017-18	Member Professional Development
2016-17	Fundraising Committee Co-Chair
2015-16	Member Fundraising Committee
2015-16	Fall Educational Conference - Registration
2010-11	Legal Professional of the Year Chair

**Certifications:** NALS Professional Legal Secretary

**Honors:** 2016-2017 Austin LPA Legal Professional of the Year

## CANDIDATE QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES:

1. **Membership.** Do you have a vision for sustaining and growing the TALP membership in the coming year? If so, please describe.

In order to sustain membership you need to engage your members and keep them involved. I would love to see more Facebook activity and perhaps host a non-CLE event for TALP members. Using hashtags (#) is a great way to find information. There are individuals and legal professionals looking for information on LinkedIn, Facebook and even Twitter by implementing hashtags (#texaslegalsupport, #houstoncle, #cle). By increasing our social media use we are branching out to a new audience. The other key to growing TALP membership is through marketing – planning chapter events to reach out to area schools, universities and area law firms. One, two or three members can't do this. It's a group effort and we have a pretty awesome group!

2. **Participation.** Do you have a plan to encourage membership participation at local, state, and national conferences and events? If so, please describe.

First, let's face it we're not getting any younger, myself included, and the association needs the younger generation stepping in to carry on the legacy of founding members like Eula Mae. The younger generation brings in a new, fresh and innovative perspectives and ideas if we give them the opportunity. Secondly, the membership needs a reminder of what the tri-level association has accomplished and what exciting innovative plans we have for the future. We aren't just sitting at our desks, meeting around conference room tables or even sitting at home on the internet. We are sharing knowledge, helping each other and learning from each other – networking. My plan is a “history lesson” so to speak – from Eula Mae to now. I can't encourage membership until I let the members truly know where they are and where they are going. Reaching out to members on how the association is a benefit specifically to you and how we are continually serving you and what you can contribute. Lastly, financial resources are a big burden to some. I've seen TALP raise thousands of dollars through the generosity of our membership. I think it's time we raise thousands of dollars for those less fortunate to join the association.

3. **Commitment.** Describe your commitment to the association and your fellow officers and board for the continued success of Texas ALP in the coming year.

I have been sitting in the background serving on a few committees over the years. I have been watching, listening and learning from the veterans of this association, whom I admire. I am a team player and I am prepared to listen to others, learn from mistakes and grow in this association. We've heard it a thousand times, there is no “I” in team and it takes commitment to make this happen. I'm 100% vested and committed to Texas ALP.

4. **Education.** What suggestions do you have in making the continuing legal education offered by Texas ALP entertaining as well as educational?

I'm sure everyone enjoys a speaker who grabs their attention. Identifying topics from trending cases seems to be attention grabbers and being able to secure a speaker from a high-profile case will highlight the conference. I realize securing speakers is not always an easy task, but with everything, we need to branch out by contacting the local bar associations, law departments of area colleges and even the legal departments of large corporations. Again, social media is 1) entertaining in itself and 2) another avenue to provide entertaining CLE – whether through trivia, puzzles or even video. I realize not all of our membership uses social media, but information can always be submitted multiple ways. As long as we continue to obtain a diverse group of speakers and topics, we are on the right track.