

Happy New Year!

It is exciting to report that 2024 was NALSC's most successful year in its history on many fronts and we look forward to another blockbuster year in 2025.

The Fall Symposium in Washington, DC was another sell-out event, with meaty content that provided real, implementable advice and excellent networking opportunities with our colleagues in the NALSC Community. Our keynote speaker, three-time Paralympic wheelchair basketball gold medalist and Secret Service professional Trevon Jenifer wowed us with an inspirational talk and received a standing ovation, the only one in NALSC history, as far as I know. The response from Symposium attendees was positive:

- "Well done! The conference was terrific!"
- "Love this!! Trevon was very inspirational and the conference was AMAZING!!! Great to see and catch up with everyone!"

We especially want to thank Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP for hosting our closing cocktail party in its DC offices. In the past, we held our Fall Symposium in the conference space of one of our generous law firm supporting members; however, due to our increased membership and strong demand for in-person event attendance, we have outgrown law firm conference spaces. We met this welcome challenge by adopting a new hybrid model for our two annual in-person events, the Annual Conference in the Spring and the Fall Symposium. We now hold program sessions at a hotel conference facility and our closing cocktail party/dinner events at the close-by offices of a law firm supporting member. This has been a successful solution, but means that we will be seeking law firm venues and support for our conference and symposium cocktail parties in the future. To that end, I welcome discussions with any of our law firm supporting members who would like to host us and showcase their office space!



L-R: Stephanie Ankus, Valerie Fontaine, Melissa Peters, Stuart TenHoor, Trevon Jenifer

In addition to the Conference and Symposium, NALSC continues to deliver on its mission of providing its members with education and information on trends and issues in the marketplace. To that end, over the past several

President's Message



by Melissa Peters, Esq.

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months, the Strategic Planning Committee has planned and executed a robust series of online programs on topics such as Small Search Firm Collaboration; In-House Recruiting; The Latest on Labor and Employment for Legal Recruiters; War Stories: Laugh, Cry, & Celebrate; Placing Partners; Mental Health for Recruiters and Candidates; and Secrets to Success: Tactics, Tools, & Tech Gadgets.

We also released several new episodes of our Recruiting Stories Podcast series introducing members of our Board and the headquarters team as well as special guests such as our acclaimed Symposium keynote speaker Trevon Jenifer, and our own Joe Ankus, who spoke further on the important issue of mental health for recruiters and candidates. Thank you, Jordan Abshire, and the Website/Social Media Committee for all your hard work in producing these programs.

I also want to give a shout out to the amazing job that our committees are doing. They all have been extremely active, meeting regularly, and implementing new programs and initiatives, some of which you can read about in this newsletter. We greatly appreciate the work done by the Advisory Committee, which is comprised of representatives of NALSC's law firm supporting members and provides support and expertise to the NALSC Board.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the Hotel AKA Brickell in Miami, FL on Thursday, February 27th (beginning at 3pm ET) to March 1st (ending at 11am ET). Highlights of what's in store include:

- In our opening Session, **Be a Player in Your Own Game, Not a Piece in Someone Else's**, Seth Makowsky, founder of [Poison Pawn](#), combines game theory with elite-level coaching to guide the most exceptional performers in the world to improved decision-making with extraordinary results.
- **Back to Basics: Candidate Outreach Strategies and Role Playing**
- **Building a Business Case for Partner Candidates**
- **Targeted Growth through Opening Offices, Group Acquisitions, and Lateral Hires**

- **Safely Navigating the Attorney Movement Minefield** - Back by popular demand, HWG LLP ethics partner Hilary Gerzhoy will identify potential hazards and reveal how to navigate around them ethically for the successful placement of associates, counsel, partners, and in-house lawyers.
- **Employment Issues in the AI and Virtual/Hybrid Environment** - How can we get into or stay out of trouble when using AI in the recruiting process? What licensure and tax issues impact a virtual or hybrid law practice? Does it matter where lawyers, their employers, and the clients are located? What other dangers lurk?
- **Associate Movement: Myths and Motivations** - The [NALP Foundation](#) shares key insights from its Stay Study report, detailing the key factors driving associates' moves so we can make more and better matches.
- **Career Paths for Recruiters** - Parlay your hard-won knowledge and skills for long-term career success and satisfaction. Hear from someone who has done it all: lawyer, law school career services, legal recruiter, law firm C-Suite recruiter, law firm recruiting and professional development professional, legal business consultant, coach.
- **Unpacking the Conflicts Checking Process** - What does the conflicts check entail? What derails a placement? What can be worked around? Ethics partner Hilary Gerzhoy at HWG LLP and Bilzin Sumberg's General Counsel Jeffrey Snyder will demystify the process for both partner and associate placement.
- **The Juggling Act: Keeping Your Candidates and Clients Happy During the Recruitment Process**
- **Keynote:** Experienced General Counsel, law firm lawyer, C-Suite executive, consultant, and author Sterling Miller condenses thirty years of experience into ten points in his popular blog, "Ten Things You Need to Know." He will present ten things search firm and law firm recruiters need to know about law practice to boost our success.
- **Privacy and Cybersecurity** – also back by popular demand, Diana Iketani Iorlano, Esq., will fill us in on our legal obligations in handling personal/proprietary/financial information provided by a firm or candidate during the recruiting process and how we can minimize our risk and exposure to a data breach.
- **Firm Growth Strategies: Group Acquisitions, Mergers, Multi-city Expansion—or Not?** This panel of law firm managing partners and industry strategists will discuss the macro-level impacts of contraction on the legal industry as a whole. Is there still a place for mid-sized full-service law firms? What are the varying perspectives on "to merge or not to merge" and which firms would be the ideal target? Why would some firms resist and what is their growth strategy?

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- And don't forget to attend the Saturday morning **Breakfast Town Hall** – One of the attendees at last year's Conference Town Hall said: "Saturday morning was highly useful, talking about the real issues we face as recruiters. Giving the recruiters a chance to bring up what was important to them."

In addition to all the great programming, there will be ample time for schmoozing with our colleagues during coffee and meal breaks, networking receptions, an afternoon champagne toast, and hospitality suite. We greatly appreciate our generous sponsor Akerman LLP for hosting our special networking reception/dinner Friday night at their beautiful Miami offices. We also thank all of our sponsors for making this fabulous event possible.

Note: Registration for the 2025 NALSC Annual Conference is now Waitlist Only! You still may register, however, and NALSC HQ will let you know if/when a spot becomes available. Contact info@nalsc.org for more details.

One of our initiatives is to increase our involvement and partnership with our sister organization, NALP (National Association of Law Placement <https://www.nalp.org/>). NALP is an association of over 3000 legal career professionals, including recruiting, career services, professional development, and DEI professionals from law firms and law schools across North America and beyond. Their Executive Director, Nikia Gray, spoke at NALSC's recent Fall Symposium on "Legal Hiring Market: Trends and Forecasts." She mentioned to me that NALSC members are welcome to participate with NALP by responding to RFPs for conference speakers, providing webinars, or proposing articles for their publications. Members of the NALSC Board will be attending the NALP Annual Education Conference this Spring, representing our organization, as we have done for more than a decade.

Unfortunately, among all this good news, I must pass along some sad news: This past year, we lost two long time and valued members of the NALSC community. Vera Johnson Wright <https://www.parrishfh.com/obituary/vera-wright> and Alan Miles <https://earthfuneral.com/obituary/alan-miles-11092024/> passed away in 2024. We fondly remember their enthusiastic involvement in our organization and will miss them.

Thanks to the NALSC Newsletter Committee chaired by Jennifer Gillman, assisted by former Newsletter editor Valerie Fontaine, along with the contributions of committee members Jordan Abshire, Kevin Bacon, and Natalie Thorsen for another excellent and informative issue. Past issues of the semi-annual NALSC Newsletter can be accessed through the NALSC website at <https://www.nalsc.org/newsletters/>.

I hope to see you at the Annual Conference in Miami on Feb. 27th.

Best regards to all, **Melissa Peters** - President of NALSC®